

HOPE for a NEW DAY

by
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Hope for a New Day
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Contents

Forward

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

Main Message

Topical Index

Also by Author

Forward

This devotional book is designed for those who have gone through traumatic experiences and suffered lingering effects. In having dealt with many who have experienced trying times, we have

witnessed these people lose their focus on God. This book is to help the brokenhearted to place their focus on God and to help with the healing of those traumatic ordeals.

2

Another objective of this book is to get you into a habit of looking to God and His Word every day. It is important to establish a daily time, or a quiet time, with God. This time should consist not only of reading a devotional book, it should also consist of prayer and Bible reading. You should have a goal of reading at least one chapter a day from your Bible. You are encouraged to read more, but one chapter a day should be a minimum.

If you have not read your Bible before, the best place to start is the Gospel of John for that tells of salvation. After John, jump to Romans and finish the New Testament from there. When you finish Revelation, go back to Matthew and read through the whole New Testament. You will want to eventually read through the whole Bible. Many make a goal to read through the Bible in a year. To do this you need to read about three chapters a day. Some use a scheduled Bible reading for mornings and evenings that skips around in their Bible; some just read the Bible straight through. If you get bogged down in a section of Scripture, read a psalm for encouragement, but keep going with your reading.

A big part of your healing from trauma is to keep your focus on God. This devotional book can help you do that. It is designed to help you get into a habit of spending time with God each day. Spend time with God daily, preferably in the morning. When you have gone through this book, you may want to do it again. When you have finished with this book and are ready to move on to other books, please continue to spend time with God daily by reading His Word and praying. Some may sit down and read this book through like a regular book. If you do that, go back through it again as

a daily devotional. The object is to get you into a daily habit of spending time with God and focusing on Him.

In your prayer time, make sure you confess your sins and receive salvation. This is when you place your faith in Christ as your Savior. You can find out how to do this by reading the *Main Message* in the back of the book. Pray also for the needs you see in your life. Philippians 4:6 says, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Pray for things in your life that you would like God to remove and for things you need in order to live a more godly life.

In the back of this book you will find an index of the devotions by subject. Use this index when you are struggling with a specific problem. To get the most out of this book spend time meditating and applying the truths found in the Bible. Please enjoy your time with God.

January 1

Knowing Christ

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (Philippians 3:8)

The apostle Paul calls the knowledge of God excellent. Many people like to know great or famous people. They may even want to brag about who they know. Did you know you can know the Creator and Sustainer of all things? That knowledge starts by trusting Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for your sin, to be your Savior. And it matures by spending quality time with the Savior in prayer and in His Word. Make a resolution or goal that you are going to get to know Christ better this year. Resolve to spend time with Him every day. Communication is a key to a relationship. Spend time talking to Him (prayer) and listening to Him (reading your Bible).

January 2

The Value of Christ

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (Philippians 3:8)

Possibly you feel as if you have already lost everything and that you have nothing left. Paul considered finding Christ worth the loss of all things. When he had Christ, he had everything. Compared to Christ, what you have lost is dung, which is manure or doo-doo. The feeling of loss you have may be because you place too much value on the things you lost, or not enough value on Christ. What is important to you? When you make Christ most important, you will begin to understand His actual value. You may have lost your possessions through tragedy, but they were temporary. Once you have Christ, you cannot lose Him. Paul willingly gave up his things. He left

family, home, social status and friends for Christ. He realized Christ was worth it all. Do you understand the value of Christ?

January 3

Post Holiday Blues

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. (1 Kings 19:4)

Elijah was so depressed he asked to die. One of the contributing factors in depression was that he just had a mountaintop experience. In 1 Kings 18, Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal and saw a great miracle of God. Things were very exciting. Then chapter 19 starts with a turn of events for the worst. Sometimes depression sets in after a holiday. This may be from over-excitement during the holidays or exhaustion. If you are on an emotional high, the only way you can go is down. The down may not be all that down, but compared to the high it seems very low.

Being aware that life is going to return back to normal after the holidays will help take away the blues. Making plans for after the holidays will help you avoid depression by giving you something to look forward to. Finding ways to be around other people after the holidays will help too.

January 4

I Can Do It

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13)

Paul said in the above verse that he could do all things through Christ. When people go through traumatic experiences, they often lose confidence in their abilities. They may start to feel or act helpless. This may result in a dependence on others and a “let others take care of me” attitude.

Remember Paul said that *I* can do all things. Dependence on Christ is all right, but remember, Christ will do it through you. This means you have to get off the couch and out of the house to do what God has for you to do today. Wanting others to do what Christ wants to do through you will rob you of Christ’s miracle in you. Do you doubt the promise of God in Philippians 4:13? Have you wrongly placed your dependence on others? Remember God wants to do it through you.

January 5

I’m Loved

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:23)

This verse is part of a prayer by Jesus shortly before He was crucified. At the end of this verse, Jesus told his disciples that His heavenly Father loved them as much as He loved Jesus. We have to go to verse 20 to find that the “them” refers to all believers. This means that if you believe on Jesus as your Savior, the Heavenly Father loves you as much as He loves His Son. Many times we are fooled into thinking that because Jesus is part of the trinity, that the Father loves Jesus more than us. Since Jesus stated that the Father loves us as much as He loves Jesus, it has to be true. God also has an infinite source of love by which to love you.

January 6

Decision Making

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Trauma makes everyday decision making more difficult as the mind is distracted by the terrible events that took place. The above verse says to trust in the Lord and to acknowledge Him. In making decisions you should ask, “What does God want me to do and what will glorify God?” When making tough decisions, make two lists: one of reasons why you should do it and the second why you should not. After making your lists, compare them and circle the most important items. Put checks by items that would glorify the Lord. Examining these lists will help your decision to become clear.

January 7

Fear of the Dark

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (Psalms 139:11-12)

To God the night is the same as the light. When the sounds of the night and the nightmares come, there is no reason to fear. Because God was there watching over David by night, he knew that the night would be light around him. God keeps watch by night and everything is as clear to

Him at night as it is during the day, He is a good watchman during the night. Psalms 4:8 says, “I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.” Lie down and get a good night’s sleep. Let God watch over you.

January 8

Great Is His Goodness

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! (Psalms 31:19)

When bad things have happened to us in the past, it is easy to start thinking that life is bad. Which carries more credibility—life’s circumstances or God’s Word? Sometimes we act as though problems are more authoritative than God’s Word. When that happens, we lose hope.

Today’s verse says that God’s goodness is great. It also says that great goodness is laid up for them that fear God. If you respect God, that great goodness is laid up for you. Do you put more weight of authority on life’s problems or on what God’s Word says? If you trust in circumstances, you will be discouraged. If you trust in God, you will be encouraged.

January 9

The Tears Will End

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; (Psalms 30:5,11)

It is okay to cry. Even Jesus cried (see John 11:35). Tears are only for a while. Joy will be coming right around the corner. Gladness will overtake you. Let the tears release the sadness and the tension. In the morning joy and gladness will come..

January 10

Forsaken?

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. (Psalms 27:10) Some people have been abused or abandoned by their parents. This may create great emotional pain. If you can focus on the Lord, however, who lifts you up and takes care of you, the feelings of betrayal and abandonment will lessen. What a privilege it is to have the heavenly Father step in and take over where your parents left off. No one can have a better father than God. He is a Father you can trust.

January 11

Christ's Burden Is Light

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Christ wants us to exchange burdens with Him. We are weighed down with problems, worries, and decisions. He wants us to cast all our burdens on Him. No matter how big or how heavy they

are, Christ commands that you bring them to Him. He gives you His burden which is light. He tells us to come to Him with all our heavy burdens and He will give us only one light burden.

That burden is to do His will. Rather than trying to figure out all of life's problems, discern what Christ would have you to do today. The only thing you have to do is do what God has for you to do right now. Let Him handle the rest.

January 12

God's Jewels

Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (Malachi 3:16-17)

The above passage says that God will write a book of remembrance to remind Him about His own people. It is not that God would forget us, but it is double insurance that He will remember to spare us from His judgment. He will spare us as a person would spare his own son. He will remember us at the time He makes us His jewels. Wow, just think, God thinks enough of us that He writes down our names to remind Him and He considers us one of His precious jewels.

January 13

Their End

Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. (Psalms 73:17-18)

In Psalm 73 the psalmist was wondering why the wicked prospered and he did not. He began to wonder if it was vain for him to do right. When he consulted God by going into His sanctuary, he then understood what would become of the wicked. God says in His Word that He will cast them down into destruction. We can only know the end of things by going to God for understanding.

When it seems as if the wicked prosper, go to God with the problem. Pray about it and read in God's Word what the end will be for the wicked.

January 14

Made Male and Female

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:27)

A man's masculinity and a woman's femininity are based on God's creation. There may have been times that someone treated you in a way that was not consistent with your gender. Sometimes the way a person is treated causes a person to be confused about his masculinity or her femininity. Our gender is based on creation, not on how we were treated. Therefore, be the man or woman God wants you to be. Learn from the men and women of the Bible.

January 15

Who's Fault?

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. (John 9:1-3)

Many times a person examines himself when something bad happens. He asks himself if there is something he did to bring this terrible calamity upon himself. Jesus says that it is not necessarily your sin or your guilt that brought the terrible things that happened to you. It may be that God had a higher plan in mind. He may want to show you His salvation from calamity or His power to heal your hurts.

January 16

God's Friend

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (John 15:15)

A friend is someone that you can share your most inner thoughts with. Christ has considered us His friends when He decided to share with us the things He heard from His Father. So when you read your Bible, remember that God has chosen you to be His friend because the Bible is God's thoughts that He wants to share with His friends.

January 17

Formula for Perfect Peace

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: (Isaiah 26:34)

Peace comes when we trust in God. Trust involves having confidence that God will take care of us. When we believe He will take care of us, we do not worry. When we do not worry, we have peace. The trick is to keep trusting our Lord. The verse says, “whose mind is stayed on Thee.” Peace ends when we stop trusting our Lord. So, keep your mind on the Lord and what He can do.

January 18

Healing the Brokenhearted

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, (Luke 4:18)

Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost—namely you and me. He was also sent specifically to heal the brokenhearted. No matter what has broken your heart. Christ can heal that broken feeling. His love, His care, and His touch can heal that inner pain. No doctor can heal a hurt if we refuse to bring it to him. So too we must yield our hurts to Christ for Him to heal them.

January 19

Marriage Bed

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (Hebrews 13:4)

God designed sex for marriage and only for marriage. Sex can be compared to fire. In its proper place, fire can bring warmth and comfort. When out of its proper place, it can rage out of control and be destructive. Sex can be wonderful when it is kept where it belongs and damaging when it is misused. God has a hot place called hell for those who don't keep sexual relationships in their proper place and don't repent of this sin.

January 20

Battle for the Mind

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

When traumatic things happen, they wage war on the mind. They totally occupy our thoughts. Rather than worrying about the traumatic event, we should put it into a biblical perspective. First of all, remember God is bigger than our problem. The problem does not nullify His promises. He has not left us. All we have to do is to discern what God wants for us to do now and do it.

January 21

A Large Place

I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. (Psalms 118:5)

“Being in distress” in this verse literally means being in a tight place or a small space. It refers to the feeling of being trapped or closed in. Haven’t you ever felt you just needed space to breathe or stretch out? Circumstances or people can make us feel that way. When the psalmist felt that way, he called upon the Lord. When the Lord answered, the psalmist felt he had been given that space to breathe and to stretch out. He did not feel trapped any more. When we feel closed in, rather than have a panic attack, call unto the Lord. He will help you.

January 22

Good to Be Afflicted

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. (Psalms 119:71)

When we are afflicted or bad things happen to us, the first thing we ask is, “Why me?” We think that all affliction is bad, but the psalmist said that it was good for him to be afflicted. I know you may be thinking that this person must be nuts, however, the psalmist found that he was able to learn God’s Word better under some adverse circumstances. He valued his spiritual growth more than his comfort. Therefore, he took the attitude that “If trials will help my spiritual growth, then let the trials come.” Some people trusted Christ as Savior and were saved as a result of their trials. Without trials, we wouldn’t see a need for Christ.

January 23

Work in Quietness

For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. (2 Thessalonians 3:11-13)

Traumatic events sometimes put a person in a situation where they find it difficult to go to work. It may happen that this event will cause them to go on disability. But even during this time, we need to do things that are constructive and fulfilling with our time. Idleness is the Devil's workshop. If you can't work for pay, volunteer your time. Your church could probably use your help. Most communities also have an agency that coordinates volunteers in various places. Find that place and give of your abilities. It's biblical, and it will do you good.

January 24

Loving Your Brother

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (1 John 4:20)

A brother is someone who has become a child of God by trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior from their sins. Because they are children of God, salvation makes them all brothers. Hate is a choice. You choose whom you hate. You also choose whom you love. You cannot show your love to God by hating your brother. If there is someone you find it hard to love, you first need to decide

to change your attitude toward that person. Then you need to ask God to help you make that change of attitude.

January 25

Loving Self

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (1 John 4:20)

If you have trusted Christ as your Savior, you are a child of God and someone's brother. The brethren are to love you. God already loves you. But do you love you? Do you think you can show love to God by hating yourself? You cannot show love to God by hating someone He loves. First of all, decide to change your attitude toward yourself. Then ask God for help in changing your attitude toward yourself.

January 26

Deliverance from Affliction

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. (Psalms 34:19)

Afflictions are sufferings and God says that the righteous have many sufferings. That means that if you suffer, it doesn't necessarily mean you are a bad person. There are many reasons people suffer, but the Lord says that He will deliver them out of them all. The Lord does not say He will

deliver you out of sufferings to come, but that He will deliver you out of the sufferings you are already experiencing. This is a promise you can claim.

January 27

God Cannot Lie

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; (Titus 1:2)

Once a person has been lied to or has been betrayed, it is difficult for him to trust again. When you know it is impossible for a person to sin or to lie, it makes it easier to trust that person. God cannot lie or sin. This fact makes Him completely trustworthy. You can trust Him and His promises—especially the promise in this verse of eternal life for everyone who believes in Christ.

January 28

Feeling Little

And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel? (1 Samuel 15:17)

Before God made Saul king, Saul was little in his own sight. Being small in your own eyes does not mean that God cannot do great things in and through you. Doing great things is not dependent on your size; it is dependent on God's size. It is okay to feel little in your own eyes as long as you believe God can accomplish things in and through your life, just as He was able to make Saul king.

January 29

God Is Our Help

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. (Psalms 46:1-3)

It is easy to fear in time of trouble. The psalmist gives us some pretty big circumstances in which it would be easy to fear. Who wouldn't be tempted to fear during an earthquake, a landslide, tidal wave, or a volcanic eruption? Yet because the psalmist knew God was his refuge, strength and help during trouble, he did not fear. Have you experienced troubled times when you felt that God could not help you? Do they compare to the troubles the psalmist is talking about?

God is a reason not to fear.

January 30

Don't Forsake the Brethren

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

When making a campfire, you place many pieces of wood on the fire. Each piece of wood helps the other pieces of wood to stay burning. If you took one of those pieces of burning wood and set it by itself, the fire on that piece of wood would go out. So it is with Christians. A Christian left by himself will lose his fire and his love for the Lord and his interest in spiritual things. We need to be in church and fellowship with other Christians.

January 31

Hope in His Mercy

Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. (Psalms 33:18-19)

When we hope in God's mercy, He watches us. In this case, it is not to see if we are naughty or nice but to watch over us. His eye of protection is on those who fear Him—those who respect God, and those that hope in his mercy—those who believe God will deliver them. There is no one who will be more merciful to us than God and there is no one more able to deliver us than Him.

February 1

Give Them Up

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. (1 Peter 5:7)

What worries and cares are troubling you now? Take a piece of paper and write them all down. Then one by one, give them up to God in prayer. The above verse says to cast *all* your care upon the Lord. All means all. That includes the little tiny ones and the great big ones. God cares for you so much He does not want you to be weighted down with worry. He says that He will carry all your burdens for you. You can trust Him with those important details because He cares for you.

February 2

A Peaceful Future

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (Jeremiah 29:11)

In the USA, February 2 is Ground Hog's Day. As the legend goes, the ground hog comes out of his burrow on this day. If he sees his shadow, he gets frightened and runs back into his burrow and there will be six more weeks of winter. If he does not see his shadow, then spring weather will come soon. Ground hogs cannot predict the future, but if you trust God with your future. He will bring about a peaceful end.

February 3

Higher Thoughts

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2)

The Greek word used here for "affection" means the mind. Some have said of others, "They're so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good." The opposite of this saying is the real truth. Most people are so earthly minded, they are of no heavenly good. Setting our minds or affections on earthly things will only get us stressed out. But if we set our minds on God instead of our problems here on earth, He will help us get through our earthly problems.

February 4

Verbal Abuse

Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished. (Proverbs 17:5)

At some time in your life you probably have been mocked. None of us like to be laughed at or made fun of. According to the above verse, when people put you down or laugh at you, they are really putting down the One who made you. When it happens again, don't take it as a personal offense, but take it as it really is—an attack on God's creative work. In so doing, you will grieve over the mocking, but you won't be hurt by feeling personally attacked.

February 5

Good Medicine

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones. (Proverbs 17:22)

This verse is saying that you feel healthier when you are happy rather than sad. So too, being an optimist is healthier than being a pessimist. Count your blessings instead of your problems. Don't be so serious all the time. Be willing to laugh at life's circumstances. Treat yourself and others to a good time from time to time. It will do you—and them—good.

February 6

Don't Envy Evildoers

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. (Psalms 37:1-2)

It is so tempting to want to give up doing good when we see the wicked prosper. We think to ourselves, *Why shouldn't I be like that evil guy? I am going nowhere being good. I should just chuck it all and live like the wicked.* We have to remember, however, as this verse says that the wicked

will only prosper for a season. God will surely cut them down. We do not want to have the same fate as the wicked, so keep this verse in mind the next time you think others seem to get away with murder.

February 7

Beam in Your Eye

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. (Matthew 7:3-5) The mote spoken of above is a little speck of sawdust, whereas the beam is a big board. When bad things happen to us, it is easy to become bitter or develop a critical spirit towards others. One way to combat a critical spirit is to take a good look at ourselves. Can we honestly say we are doing better than they when we are unforgiving or cutting other people down? Sometimes we feel sorry for ourselves and start thinking that since we had such a rough life, others should take care of us. When they don't do that, we develop a critical attitude toward those people. We need to get the board out of our eye before criticizing the speck in our neighbor's eye. .

February 8

God's Grace Is Sufficient

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

(2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

The Apostle Paul had troubles too—a “thorn in the flesh.” We are not told what this thorn was. Some say it was a physical pain, others say it was a speech problem or eyesight problem, and still others believe it was a disease of some kind. Regardless of what it was, God said He would not take it away that He had a purpose in giving it to him. If you have problems that you have prayed about but haven’t gone away, trust God that He has a purpose in mind for your affliction. In the meantime, as God told Paul, His grace will be sufficient. He will give whatever is needed to get you through the trouble that has fallen on you.

February 9

Feeling Cast Down?

O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. (Psalms 42:6)

If your soul is feeling downcast, do as this psalmist did—remember the Lord. No matter where he was, he could turn his thoughts toward God to pick him up. Too often we concentrate only on

ourselves and our problems. Dwelling on these things can get us depressed. However, turning our thoughts toward God, who is bigger than our problems, can bring relief, joy, and comfort.

February 10

His Love Will Come

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. (Psalms 42:7-8)

When it seems we are over our heads in troubles, God will then command His loving-kindness to come to our aid. The loving-kindness can come whenever God commands it. When it arrives, it will seem like day time and it will carry you through into the nighttime. Sing of God's lovingkindness at night when it is easy to forget what He has just done for you. The song will chase your fears and sorrow away.

February 11

God's Benefits

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. (Psalms 103:2-5)

When memories of trauma or abuse come to mind, they can be overwhelming—so

overwhelming that joy and hope can be lost. David in this psalm tells himself not to forget God's benefits—His forgiveness, health, salvation, loving-kindness, mercies, and food. Remembering these things will bring back a youthful feeling and vitality to you.

February 12

Judging Others

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. (Romans 2:1) At times we in our minds will single out a person or group of people who are vile. We will say to ourselves, "I'll never be like them" or "I could never do that." Remember that we are all made up of the same sinful nature. We condemn ourselves when we take a superior-to-others attitude. We also sin by not forgiving. By not forgiving, we are implying that we want God to bring judgment on them and not us. If we don't want God to condemn us, let us not condemn others.

February 13

Guardian Angels

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 18:10)

Even in your childhood you have had someone watching over you. This verse says that children have angels assigned to them. These angels report to God the Father what happens to you. If anyone has taken advantage of you, God knows about it and it is only by His grace that things were not

worse. It is by God's grace and His watching angels that you made it this far. If you let Him, God will take you the rest of the way through your healing.

February 14

Knowing Love

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16)

God loves you. "How can I know this?" you ask. This verse says that we can know or perceive God's love because Christ laid down His life for us. He died in our place. He suffered the death we deserved in order that we may have life. It is only divine love that would care enough about you to do such a thing. Proof that God must love you. Happy Valentine's Day!

February 15

The Just Judge

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them

speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:1-8)

This parable is to teach us to pray and not to faint or lose heart. It teaches this by showing a contrast between the unjust judge and the just Judge, who is God. If the unjust judge avenges people because of the persistent asking, how much more would the Judge who cares about you avenge. Because He does care about you, that is all the more reason to keep praying and pursuing God.

February 16

Deceitful Heart

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

Man has done many deceitful and harmful things to people. We cannot always trust man. God does not have a deceitful and wicked heart. You can trust Him. Though you may not trust mankind, God holds the future. You can trust that God will work out everything in the end.

Knowing that God will work things out, you can overcome your fear of man.

February 17

A Time to Speak

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; (Ecclesiastes 3:7)

Many people have deep secrets that they have never told anyone. Sometimes these secrets are of

horrible events that still carry deep-seated wounds. If they are still troubling you months and years later, they need to be dealt with. The first thing to do is to tell them to God in prayer and ask Him to heal the wounds. Writing down how we feel or how the trauma impacted us also helps. Seeking godly counsel may also be necessary when the horrible events cause issues we just can't seem to resolve by ourselves.

February 18

Fruit Inspectors

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (Matthew 7:16-20)

We need discernment when choosing friends and entering relationships. The wrong friends can lead us down the wrong path. In choosing friends, we need to watch their actions and listen to their words. Do their words build people up or tear people down? Do their actions show a kind and loving heart or a hateful and selfish heart? To help you walk down the right path, choose friends and relationships with people who demonstrate righteousness and the love of God.

February 19

Rejoice in the Lord

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. (Philippians 4:4)

The Bible commands us to rejoice in the Lord always. It does not take into consideration our circumstances. It doesn't need to. The Lord is always worth rejoicing in, regardless of what we are going through. As we meditate on His love, His salvation, the beauty of His creation, His mercy, His peace, His power, His wisdom, His grace, and His gentleness, how can we but rejoice in the Lord Himself.

February 20

The God of Hope

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. (Romans 15:13)

The source of hope is God. God can fill your heart with hope in many different ways. This verse says the joy and peace we have in believing in Christ can bring hope. Think of the way things were before salvation, compared to after salvation. The joy and peace from believing are only a beginning of great things God has in store for us. Just as God can bring the joy and peace, He can bring the abundance of hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

February 21

Faith Comes By Hearing

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)

Many people have prayed to God for more faith. Perhaps you are thinking that life would be easier if only you had more faith in God. This verse says that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Therefore, if you want your faith to grow, you need to be reading your Bible and attending church. As you read about how God delivered His people in the past, you will gain the faith to know God can deliver you in the present.

February 22

Watch How You Treat Your Friends

He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him. (Proverbs 27:14)

Friends are very important, but in order to keep good friends, you must treat them right. Do not do things that will drive them away. Some people have done inconsiderate things such as calling their friends in the middle of the night, or saying things that destroy their friendship. These acts will only come back to hurt you. Be good to your friends.

February 23

Basis for Forgiveness

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Right in the middle of this verse on confessing and forgiveness is the basis for us being forgiven—the character of God. John tells us that God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

What if this were not so? If He was not faithful, He may miss forgiving some of our sins. This would mean we would still be accountable for them. God's justice brings forgiveness. Our penalty was brought down upon Christ when He died on the cross. Because He took our penalty, we can be forgiven.

February 24

Completeness of Forgiveness

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

When traumatic events happen, we often reflect on the thought, "How much of it was my fault?" When it comes to God's forgiveness it does not matter how much was our fault because God says that He cleanses us from *all* unrighteousness. If we have questions about whether we are at fault, we need to confess the faults to God anyway. He promises to forgive us and cleanse us. Then we need to believe that we are forgiven of everything.

February 25

Cheer Up

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. (Matthew 14:27)

When troubles come, discouragement is usually right behind it. When the disciples in the boat faced a stormy sea, Jesus came along to be with them. He said to them to "be of good cheer" and

not to be afraid. God will also go with you today, so cheer up and do not be afraid. Rejoice, God is with you.

February 26

Doers of the Word

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (James 1:22)

You can read your Bible and go to church, but you don't live the Christian life until you start to apply and live the Word of God in your life. You can call yourself a Christian but not act like it. You really are deceiving yourself—and others—when you say one thing and do another. Live what you call yourself.

February 27

Man's Wrath

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (James 1:20)

When someone has violated us or done us wrong, we are tempted to think that it is right to be angry. Our being angry, however, does not carry out the righteousness of God. In Eph. 4:26, God says to stop being angry before the day is over. Our anger may not hurt the person we are angry at, but it does get us upset. Let God take care of the wrath and the vengeance. You need to concentrate on moving forward in your own life.

February 28

Thirsting for God

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? (Psalms 42:1-2)

A hart is a male deer. Picture this deer during a drought searching frantically for water. Can you relate? Have there been times that your throat was dry and thirsty. When the throat is parched, the mind only thinks of getting water. This is the picture in these verses, except the psalmist is thirsting after God instead of after water. We should have that singleness of mind and that drive to appear before God.

February 29

If You Have to Suffer

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. (1 Peter 4:15-16)

If a person suffers for wrong doing, he should be ashamed. If he suffers for being an obedient Christian, however, he should not be ashamed. Innocent and righteous people sometimes suffer. As we study our Bible, we will learn right from wrong. As we practice what is right and still suffer for it, the Bible says there is no reason that we should be ashamed. By doing what the Bible says, we can glorify God.

March 1

God Helps

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalms 46:1)

When we are in trouble, we often feel all alone. This verse says that God is a very present help in trouble. He is right there with us and He will help us. Just go to Him for refuge, strength and help. He will be there for you.

March 2

What Is Eternal Life?

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3)

This verse describes what eternal life is all about. Eternal life is knowing God. The thing that makes heaven so fantastic is that we will be with the One who loves us more than anyone else. We will be able to get to know Him and His love even more as eternity progresses. If eternal life is knowing God, then this life begins at the time we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior through faith. It then continues as we are ushered into His presence for all eternity. This should also give us incentive to get to know Him better on earth.

March 3

Reason for Obedience

To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? (Deuteronomy 10:13)

God does not give us a command to make our lives miserable. He gives us His commandments for our good. Parents teach a child not to touch the stove for his protection, not to deny him a hot time. God's "shalt nots" are the same way. Because God made life, He must know the best way to live life. So it is best for us to obey God.

March 4

Prayer for Strength

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; (Ephesians 3:16)

This verse is part of a prayer that starts in verse 14. If Paul prayed for others to be strengthened, we can pray for strength for ourselves. God gives strength because He is a giving God. He strengthens the inner man by the Holy Spirit. The inner man is the place where we make the decisions to resist temptation and do what is right. This is also the place where we need the motivation and the strength to seek out and do God's will each day. Pray for strength.

March 5

Bondage to Fear

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (Romans 8:15)

Are there bad habits or bad thought patterns that you find in yourself? The bondage in this verse is that of sin or the flesh. It can include thought patterns that can be fearful or bothersome. The Holy

Spirit, whom God gives us at salvation, can help us overcome those habits and patterns that place us into bondage. Rely on the Holy Spirit to help you change.

March 6

Heirs of God

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Romans 8:16-17)

Through faith we become children of God. Once we become His children, we are in line to receive His inheritance. God wants us to receive gifts from Him. These verses say we will be joint-heirs with Christ. As parents want good things for their children, God wants us to have good things and will glorify us with His Son Jesus Christ.

March 7

Sufferings of This Present Time

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)

I do not believe Paul is belittling a person's suffering in this verse as he himself suffered greatly from beatings, stonings, and shipwrecks. He is saying that the glory we are to receive is so great that the sufferings we bore on earth will seem small in comparison. These sufferings are like paying

a few cents for a mansion. When we get to heaven, we will see that great glory which God will reveal.

March 8

Corruption of This World

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:19-23)

At the time Adam and Eve sinned, this world was cursed. This world was given over to hardship, corruption and sin. People on earth commit sinful and grievous acts upon each other. God's people are eagerly waiting for the time when our adoption will be complete. Then this world will be changed. It will no longer be under the curse, and the sinful effects on this earth will disappear. What a glorious day that will be. Let the day come soon!

March 9

Change

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Do you ever pick up the mannerisms or habits of the people you spend time with? When you look to God and maintain your focus on Him, you become more like Him. By spending time with God through praying and reading His Word, you will pick up some of His attributes in the areas of His goodness, love and gentleness. This should motivate you to spend time with God.

March 10

A Holy Temple

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

At the time you place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you and this makes you a temple of God. Any place that God dwells is holy, thus the Holy Spirit dwelling in you also makes you holy. Let your actions reflect that holiness.

March 11

In God's Hands

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which

gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:27-29)

Eternal life is a gift from Christ. Those who are given eternal life will not perish. Christ reinforces the truth of eternal security by stating that no man can snatch His sheep out of His hand. Then, on top of that, they are in the Father's hand as well. God is our strength and our safety. No place is more secure than being in the hands of God. The Scripture says that His sheep cannot be plucked out. We cannot even pluck ourselves out of God's hands. We are secure.

March 12

Overcoming Lust

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Galatians 5:24)

This verse can be used to overcome those lustful thoughts with which we struggle. Paul is saying here that we have a unique position in Christ we can rely on to overcome lust and the flesh. Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh. This means that we do not have to yield to lust because through Christ we have the power not to respond to sin and temptation. When we are tempted by the flesh or lust, we can quote this verse and ask God to help us overcome the temptation and He will do it.

March 13

The Lord Does Not Forget

But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. (Isaiah 49:14-15)

Zion is the city of Jerusalem. In this passage Zion is accusing God of forgetting her. God responds by saying it is not likely that a nursing mother will forget her baby, but it is possible. Even if a nursing mother did forget her child, or if your mother has forgotten you, that does not mean the Lord will do the same. He Lord will never forget you

March 14

Justice Will Come

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth. (Psalms 58:10-11)

God has promised that He will bring vengeance and justice upon the wicked. The righteous will rejoice when that time comes. God has also promised a reward for the righteous. Even though you have not yet seen the vengeance of the Lord, that does not mean it will not be coming. It may seem the day of rejoicing will never come, but God says it will come and we can believe His promise.

March 15

God Enjoys Your Prayers

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. (Proverbs 15:8)

Growing up I always thought that God listened to our prayers just because that was His job. I thought He only tolerated our prayers only because He had to. Reading this verse was a shock to me when I realized that God did not just tolerate my prayers, but that He really enjoyed hearing from me. He also enjoys hearing from you when your heart is right with Him. Do you rob Him of being delighted by not praying?

March 16

Fear of Dying

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: (Philippians 1:21-23)

While some people fear dying, Paul actually looked forward to it. The things that brought him to that point are; first of all, Paul trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior. Secondly, he knew that when Christians depart from the body, they go to be with Christ. Paul longed to grow closer to Christ; so being with Him was something he looked forward to. He knew that being with Christ was better than being on earth. This knowledge took away Paul's fear. Believing this will take your fear of death away too.

March 17

Certainty of Comfort

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. (Matthew 5:4)

Because God says, “Blessed are they that mourn,” it must be okay to mourn or cry. Those that mourn over their sin will be blessed and comforted. It is comforting to read things in print in the Bible because we know that God will bring His promises to pass. This is one promise you can be assured of.

March 18

Renewing the Mind

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (Ephesians 4:23)

Many times our minds get cluttered with worries and memories of the abuse or trauma that we have received. When our minds are stuck in the past, it is hard to move forward. We need to have our minds renewed. This can be done through reading the Bible and keeping our minds stayed on God and His promises.

March 19

Not for My Sin

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD. They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold. (Psalms 59:3-4)

A lot of evil things are happening in this world such as war, abuse, rape and accidents. God through David is saying that it is not always because of the victim's sin that these things happen. It is the aggressor's fault that these bad things happen to their victims. Don't feel you deserve bad things to happen to you or that you are being punished because you are a bad person. It's only because Satan and his cohorts lie in wait for your soul.

March 20

Doing Your Own Thing

Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. (Deuteronomy 12:8)

Many people make up their own rules of what is right and wrong. However, God has designed life to be lived a certain way. And because of this, our life is to be lived consistent with the way God created life. He has told us in His Word how we are to live that life. We are not to make up our own rules, but follow God's rules. His rules are right, and they are always best for us.

March 21

Keeping God's Commandments

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

After evaluating many situations in life, Solomon came to the conclusion found in the above verse: Life boils down to fearing God and keeping His commandments. It is not doing our own thing like we saw in yesterday's devotion. It is looking to God and living life His way.

March 22

A Reason to Forgive

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:1415)

A good reason to forgive is because we want our heavenly Father to forgive us. These verses tell us that if we don't forgive others, God will not forgive us. There are times we need His help to be able to forgive. We need to plead and ask Him to change our heart. Our forgiving others is an evidence of His working in our life.

March 23

A Complete Change

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; (Colossians 1:21-23)

These verses start out with people being God's enemies and having wicked works. God then changes them to be holy, blameless, and irreproachable. Christ accomplished this for you through His death. These changes are made effective in your everyday life through your faith.

March 24

Christ's Joy

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

The joy that was set before Jesus was not only the opportunity to go back to heaven to be with the Father. It also included His obedience to the Father. One of the greatest joys of Christ is to have accomplished salvation for people so they can come into His presence in heaven. It is a joy to Jesus to receive His children and give them eternal life.

March 25

Showing God's Love

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:9-10)

At times it is hard for us to see and understand the love of God. To show us His love, He sent

His Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Because of Christ's death, we are able to have life through Him. Christ's sacrifice for our sins is one way that God shows us that He loves us.

March 26

A Living Hope

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (1 Peter 1:3)

The time of year that we celebrate the resurrection of Christ is a time for hope. Because Christ rose from the dead, we can have hope that we will live in heaven some day. This hope is applied to our life at the time of our spiritual birth. It is a living hope because it is a promise of life in heaven for all eternity.

March 27

My Redeemer Lives

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. (Job 19:25-27)

Job was a man who had suffered much. He lost his wealth, his children, and his health. But even through his sufferings, he held onto his faith in God. He knew his Redeemer lived and that He would

return to this earth. He also knew that one day he would see God. In fact, he longed to be able to be in the presence of God where he could see Him face to face.

March 28

Furnace of Affliction

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. (Isaiah 48:9-11)

Precious metals, such as gold and silver, are refined in a furnace. They are heated until they melt. When the metals have melted, the impurities float to the top, then the refiner skims them off. When the metal cools, it will be pure. God refines us with trials. Through these trials sin is purged from us. God does this so we will not pollute His name by our actions and attitudes.

March 29

Ministering to Others

For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

Christ is to be our example. When Christ came to earth, He was not seeking for men to minister to Him. Instead He sought to minister to us. After traumatic events, we are tempted to seek sympathy and attention. Christ never looked for such attention. His focus was always on giving and

ministering to others. We will be a lot happier if we follow Christ's example of giving instead of seeking attention.

March 30

Man of Sorrows

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (Isaiah 53:3)

Isaiah 53 is a prophecy of Christ suffering for our sins. It says of Christ that He was despised and rejected of men. Perhaps you feel men treated you this way too. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. You may be thinking, *I can identify with Him*. Christ was despised and not esteemed. Has that happened to you too? If you can identify with how Christ felt, then that must mean that He is able to identify with how you feel and what you go through. Christ is not without knowledge of your situation.

March 31

He Carried Our Sorrows

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4)

Certainly Christ suffered much while He was on earth. What He suffered, however, was not because of His own wrong doing. He suffered because of the wrong doing of others. Our griefs and

our sorrows were placed on Him when He was nailed to the cross. Because He bore our griefs and sorrows, we will not have to bear them ourselves.

April 1

With His Stripes We Are Healed

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

Christ suffered in our place. He bore our sins on the cross. Because He suffered, we are now able to make our peace with God and be reconciled to Him. Because Christ was whipped, we can have spiritual healing now. The emotional healing comes as we draw near to Him, and it will ultimately be completed in heaven where there are no more tears. Physical healing will be complete in heaven as well.

April 2

It Pleased the Lord

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (Isaiah 53:10)

Why would it please the Lord to bruise and to put to death His Son Jesus Christ? The Lord is not someone who finds pleasure in people suffering. He takes pleasure in saving lost souls. He takes

pleasure in making it possible for you to be able to go to heaven to be with Him. He does this because He loves you and wants you to come into His presence for all eternity.

April 3

Christ Was Made Sin

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Many people believe they must suffer for their own sins. As a result of this belief, they will bring suffering on themselves in various ways. The Bible says that Christ took the suffering for our sins. If He took the suffering, then we do not have to suffer for our own sins. This means that we do not have to suffer through not eating properly, cutting on ourself, underachieving, substance abuse, or any other way.

April 4

Becoming Righteous

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Not only did Jesus take our punishment for us, but He also gave us His righteousness. God now sees believers as being righteous, having no sin, and having no guilt. This enables us to enter into His presence through prayer and ultimately to enter His presence in heaven.

April 5

Loved as Children

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (1 John 3:1)

It is God's design for families that parents love their children. It takes a special love for parents to love a child who was not their own, then make them their own through adoption. God has this love toward believers. He took us, who weren't His own, saved us, and made us His children.

April 6

We Shall Be Like Him

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2) When Christ comes back, He will change our earthly bodies into heavenly bodies fashioned after His resurrected body. That means we will no longer have a sin nature, no longer get sick or weak, and no longer deteriorate with age. Not only will we be like Him, but we shall see Him face to face.

April 7

Victory at Last

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15:54)

When believers pass into eternity, it is not something to be feared. Passing on into eternity means that this mortal body will be changed into an immortal body that will live forever in heaven. When that happens, death is swallowed up in victory. There will be no more dying and all the terrible things that take place on earth will all pass away. Believers will forever live in the perfect world we all have dreamed about.

April 8

The Power of the Resurrection

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (Philippians 3:10)

God wants us to know the power of Christ's resurrection. The biggest way Satan could stop Christians and Christianity is to prevent Jesus Christ from rising from the dead. As a result, the resurrection of Jesus is one of the greatest displays—if not the greatest—display of God's power. It is this same power that will raise every other believer from the dead and the same power that can change your life to be more like Jesus.

April 9

What Happens to Our Soul?

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

Many people have wondered what happens to believers when they die. This verse tells us. When believers die, their souls and spirits leave the body and they go to be with the Lord in heaven. Then according to 1 Thessalonians 4, when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in the clouds, the body will be raised a spiritual body to join the soul and spirit.

April 10

What Is Heaven Like?

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

(Revelation 21:4)

The Bible is not real descriptive of what heaven will be like. As described as in this verse, however, it gives hope and comfort. Knowing that the things that trouble us now will be gone in heaven is a great relief. Tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain will all be gone. It is comforting to know that emotional pain as well as physical pain will be no more when we get to heaven.

April 11

Help My Unbelief

Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. (Mark 9:23-24)

There are times in our lives that doubts arise in our minds. Sometimes, like the man in these verses, we struggle to believe. It is acceptable to cry out to God to help us in our unbelief. When you struggle to believe, ask God to help you and ask that He might answer in spite of your small faith.

April 12

Reason to Be Strong

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. (Deuteronomy 31:6)

This verse gives us reasons to be strong, to have courage, and to not be afraid. The first reason is the promise that God is with us. The second reason is that God will not fail us nor let us down. The third reason to be strong is God will not forsake us. He will not give up on us, nor will He leave us.

April 13

Betrayed with a Kiss

But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? (Luke 22:48)

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Judas was supposed to be a trustworthy, loyal disciple, but this kiss led to his Master's arrest and crucifixion. Like Jesus you may have had a loved one betray you. The closer the person is to you, the deeper the hurt when he betrays you. Jesus knows about being betrayed and He can help you heal from it.

April 14

Jesus' Response

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: (1 Peter 2:21-23)

Jesus gave us an example of how to respond when we are mistreated. He watched His words. He did not sin in the things that He spoke. He did not speak hateful things, feed an argument, or threaten His abusers. He simply committed Himself to God, who would judge righteously. When bad things happen, just ask God to handle it. Then trust that He will.

April 15

Live for Righteousness

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

Christ dying on the cross for us should bring about a change in us. His death on the cross makes it possible for us to keep from responding to sin in our lives. Instead of falling into the clutches of sin habits in our lives, we can live unto righteousness. The God-given ability to live a righteous life instead of a sinful life is part of the healing that Christ brings through His suffering.

April 16

Christ Can Sympathize

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

The Person that we go through to get to God is the Lord Jesus Christ. He lived a life like we live. He suffered similar abuses and traumas as we do. Because the Bible says He experienced infirmities like we do, we can know that Christ feels our pain. He is not out of touch with what we are experiencing. He is so powerful that He was able to experience suffering without sinning. This does not diminish His knowledge of our feelings. Instead, it should give us hope that we too can overcome our trauma with His help.

April 17

Crown of Thorns

And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! (Matthew 27:29) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18)

The crown of thorns is one of the many abuses the priests and Roman soldiers put Christ through during His trial. The crown of thorns was used to make a mockery of Christ and to inflict pain. The word *succour* in Hebrews 2:18 means to aid, relieve or help. Because Christ suffered pain and ridicule, He is able to help us when we face such circumstances in our lives. All we have to do is ask Him for that help.

April 18

Way of Escape

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Some people think that they are alone in what they have experienced. This verse says that many have experienced similar sufferings. The temptations with the suffering will never be greater than the ability that God gives to help us overcome the temptation without sinning. He will provide a way not to sin. The way of escape He provides may seem harder than yielding to sin, but He still provides the way. And we need to take the way that He provides.

April 19

Crown of Life

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. (James 1:12)

The crown of life is a reward for Christians who have endured temptation and have stuck with God regardless of the circumstances. It is the love for God that helps a person to endure the temptation and avoid sin. A person will go farther for—and do much more for—a person he loves than for a person he does not love. Developing a love for God will help keep you from sinning. So work on your love for God. This will help you earn this reward.

April 20

God Does Not Tempt

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: (James 1:13)

To help us understand this passage we need to understand the difference between a trial and temptation. A trial is a test to see what we will do or what is in our heart. Temptation is an invitation or an enticement to do evil. God is holy and cannot do evil. Nor does He entice anyone to do evil. This promise of God makes God worthy of our trust.

April 21

The Source of Sin

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:14-15)

The enticement to do evil comes from within a person, from one's own lust. The lust here is a person's sin nature, sometimes referred to as the flesh. Sin comes from a person's own sinful desires. Another person or the devil can tempt one to sin, and make it easier for someone else to sin, but it is the sinful nature in a person that actually brings that person to sin. Neither you nor the devil can cause a person to do wrong.

April 22

Source of Death

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:15) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

There are three types of death referred to in the Bible. Physical death—when the soul and spirit are separated from the body. Spiritual death—when we are separated from God’s fellowship, and eternal death—when we are eternally separated from God’s presence or cast into hell. Sin brings all three types of death, but God—through Christ’s death on the cross in our place—gives eternal life in heaven. This eternal life can be ours when we repent of our sins and trust Christ as our Savior from the penalties of our sin.

April 23

Set Your Mind on the Spirit

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (Romans 8:5)

Those who live by their flesh or sin nature place their minds on the flesh. In other words, they spend much time thinking about sinful things. Those who would live by or follow after the Holy Spirit set their minds on the things the Holy Spirit wants them to think about. They think about things that are pleasing to God.

April 24

Spiritually Minded

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

(Romans 8:6-7)

Carnally minded means fleshly minded. Thinking sinful thoughts separates us from day-to-day fellowship with God. It hinders our prayer life and God's peace in our lives. Placing our minds on God and placing Him first in our thoughts and life brings spiritual life and peace in our hearts.

April 25

Need for Faith

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. (James 1:2-4)

The word temptations is better understood in this verse as trials. It is hard to have joy when things seem to be going wrong, but we can have joy if we think about the good that the trials will produce.

These verses teach that trials produce patience which is a good and godly quality. The production of patience in our lives will make us a better person and that should bring us joy.

Thus, we can have the joy of becoming a better person at the time we are experiencing the trials.

April 26

Source of Wisdom

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. (James 1:5)

Upbraideth means defame, reproach or revile. God gives wisdom. He gives it generously and without reproach. All we have to do is ask. We all face difficult decisions in our lives. Having gone through traumatic experiences makes decision making even more difficult, but relying on God to give us direction in life's situations can make life easier. He has given us the Bible for help and guidance in decision making and for direction in life.

April 27

Need for Faith

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James 1:6-8)

We should not waver from our faith in God. When we doubt, we lose our hope, stability, and foundation in life. These verses describe doubt as a wave driven by the wind. The wave goes this way and that way and is tossed about with no direction of its own. When we have faith in God, His Word, and His ability to answer prayer, we can rest on and be anchored to His promises. Knowing He will take care of us and He has the answers to our problems offers stability, compared to having no hope.

April 28

God Will Bring Justice

He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. (Psalms 72:4)

God judging the poor in this verse has the idea of bringing justice for the poor. His promise is that He will bring justice. We need to believe His promises and leave the revenge to Him. When we believe verses like this, life seems fairer and there is more hope in life.

April 29

God Will Deliver

For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. (Psalms 72:12-13)

It is so easy to focus on our problems instead of God's promises. Focusing on our problems creates hopelessness and depression. Focusing on God's promises brings hope. Today's verses tell us God will deliver the needy. If you are needy today, God will deliver you. Do you believe this promise?

April 30

Does God Care?

He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. (Psalms 72:14)

When we are hurt many times we ask, “Where was God?” or “Does God care?” When a person is harmed God takes it to heart. He does not always stop the violence but the blood that is spilled is very precious to Him. He gives the person who committed the violence a chance to repent and if he does not, He will bring justice because the spilled blood of the needy is precious to Him.

May 1

God’s Heart Ache

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city. (Hosea 11:8-9)

God says in these verses that His heart is turned within Him. There are situations we face that create great emotions within us. Under those circumstances we will say that our heart is turned within us. Events on earth do wrench the heart of God. Because God has infinite love and His heart is so big, He will ache all the more over the grievous things that people do. God hurts because of the bad things done to us and He is hurt by the bad things we do to others and Him.

May 2

Satisfying the Soul

For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul. (Jeremiah 31:25)

Satiate means to give more than enough. There will come a time when the weary soul will have more than enough to satisfy its need. The soul that is empty with sorrow will be filled to overflowing with joy and exuberance. If you know Christ as Savior, your soul will be satiated and replenished as well.

May 3

In God's Presence

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Psalms 16:11)

God will certainly show us the path of life that leads to Him. Once we enter His presence, we enter into the presence of the fulness of joy. God's right hand is full of pleasures. He will hand out those pleasures for all eternity and those who enter His presence will receive them.

May 4

How Big Is God?

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (Isaiah 40:12)

God is so big, He can measure the oceans in the palm or the hollow of His hand. Just think how small the hollow of a person's hand is compared with the rest of the body, then think that God is

able to place all of the waters of the earth in that hollow, it must mean He is huge. He is also able to measure the mountains and heaven with ease. If He can do this, He is big enough to take care of you and your problems.

May 5

Be Merciful

The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh. (Proverbs 11:17)

Being merciful to others helps you. I believe God designed life in such a way that we are happier when we are helping others. God made the principle that we reap what we sow. If you help others, God will see to it that you will be helped. Being cruel makes for a very unhappy life, but when you are doing for others, you are not thinking about your own problems and you are gaining a sense of accomplishment as well.

May 6

Hope Deferred

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life. (Proverbs 13:12)

When things that we desire or long for don't come when we expect them, it causes discouragement or depression. When desires come to pass, we are glad and encouraged. The way to keep from getting discouraged or depressed from unmet expectations and desires is to give those desires to

God. Believe He will take care of your desires in His perfect time. In the mean- time, rejoice knowing that God is going to do what is best for you.

May 7

Rebuke and Forgiveness

Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. (Luke 17:3-4)

There are times in which a Christian should stand up and confront another Christian about his sin. If a person is repeatedly doing wrong towards you, it is right to lovingly tell him what he is doing wrong, well maintaining an attitude of forgiveness. Even if the offense is repeated many times, Christ said you must forgive.

May 8

Christ's Blood

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (Ephesians 1:7)

Christ's blood is the purchase price for our lives. It bought our way into heaven. It was a price that God paid, not us. Christ's blood also bought us forgiveness and cleansed everything that we have ever done against man or God. All of this has been paid for by God out of the riches of His grace.

May 9

Flee Fornication

Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18)

God made sex for marriage. When you are sexually active outside of God's design of marriage, you harm yourself. Any time you disobey one of God's commands, you do yourself harm. But when you give yourself away to another sexually, you give part of yourself away that you can not get back—unless that person belongs to you, which only happens in marriage. After a sexual encounter outside of marriage, you may feel guilt, shame and cheap. That is why God commands to wait until marriage. If you are feeling guilt because you have not waited, see yesterday's devotion.

May 10

Ruling Your Spirit

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. (Proverbs 16:32)

Terrible things that have happened because someone was angry. People have said hurtful words, broken things, hurt people, and even killed people through anger. This is one reason why God says that he who "is slow to anger is better than the mighty." To be slow to anger, a person needs to be able to rule his spirit. This means he prepares himself not to react before thinking when strong

emotions arise. Then when strong emotions do arise, he thinks through what he should say and do before doing anything, in order to keep from doing harm.

May 11

Do Not Fret

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. (Psalms 37:7)

Too often we fret or worry about what happens to other people or what other people do. We need to be concerned about what the Lord would have for us instead of what others are doing. If someone is doing evil, let God handle it. Our responsibility is to rest in the Lord. By resting, we are not letting what the wicked individual does upset us. God will set things straight in this world.

In the mean time, we wait patiently for God to do what He plans on doing.

May 12

God Is a Shield

After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. (Genesis 15:1)

The Lord declared to Abram that He was his shield. In other words, God was a buffer between Abram and problems with their dangers. He is a shield to us as well. He is a buffer between us and

our problems with their dangers. That is a reason not to fear. God will be our reward and our shield forever.

May 13

If Tempted

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. (Proverbs 1:10)

An anti-drug campaign says, “Just say no to drugs.” That is good advice and biblical advice too. Just say “no” is also good advice for all temptations and evils that come along. Temptations will come. And since they are a certainty, are you prepared to resist when they do come? Having a determination that you will not yield to temptation will go a long way in not falling into sin.

May 14

Don’t Hate Your Brother

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. (1 John 2:9)

Hate is a sin. Matthew 5:44 says that we are to love our enemies. If we are to love our enemies, how much more should we love our brother? Sometimes unforgiveness can feed the hate. We must consciously decide to forgive and to not have an attitude against our brother. Hating our brother shows that we are not walking with God. We cannot walk with God and hate our brother at the same time. Ask God to help you forgive.

May 15

Do Not Go with an Angry Man

Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul. (Proverbs 22:24-25)

One reason not to make a friendship with an angry man is because you pick up the habits of people with which you associate. God does not want you to become an angry person. Another reason is that an angry person may take their anger out on you and when this happens, you may get hurt. The friendship in these verses can include dating relationships.

May 16

Do Not Get Drunk

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (Ephesians 5:18)

People think they can control their alcohol but alcohol really controls the person drinking it.

People do things they may not normally do under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We should really be controlled by the Holy Spirit instead of alcohol or drugs. We cannot be controlled by the Holy Spirit and alcohol at the same time because drunkenness is a sin.

May 17

Don't Feel Ashamed

As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (Romans 9:33)

There may be things in your life that you are ashamed of or embarrassed about. These memories can be troublesome and make you feel bad. This verse says that when you believe on Christ, you will not be ashamed. Anything bad you did is forgiven and removed from you. Also, anything bad that was done to you has passed away and you are made a new child in Christ. You have a new beginning in Christ and He will totally remove you from evil when you get to heaven.

May 18

Covering a Transgression

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.

(Proverbs 17:9)

If a friend wrongs you and you forgive them and don't tell it to others, you will keep the friendship. Don't let one offense ruin a friendship. Repeating an offense to a friend, however, when you know the person does not like it will cause the friendship to end. Be considerate of others and be willing to overlook an offense and you will have better friendships.

May 19

You Are Not Alone

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. (John 16:32)

As it was getting near the time for Christ to be arrested and crucified, He told His disciples that they would abandon Him. They were going to scatter and He would be left alone to face the most

difficult time in His life. Christ knew, however, that even though humans would abandon Him, His heavenly Father would still be there. When it seems as if everyone else has abandoned or left you, remember that your heavenly Father is still there. He will never leave you alone.

May 20

Love God

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)

When Christ was asked what the greatest commandment was, He stated that the greatest commandment is to love God. If this is the greatest commandment, then we ought to place a lot of time and effort into keeping it. Part of this commandment includes that we place our whole being into keeping this commandment.

May 21

Love Your Neighbor

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:39-40)

Christ stated that the second greatest commandment after loving God is to love your neighbor as yourself. Some have said that a person needs to love himself before he can love another person. I believe a person can still carry out the actions of love as found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and can care for someone else even if he does not love himself. Love is a decision backed up by action.

So, decide to love and show it in action to others and yourself.

May 22

Fellowship of His Sufferings

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (Philippians 3:10)

The apostle Paul knew what it was like to suffer. In fact, he was in prison for his faith at the time he wrote the book of Philippians. Paul wanted to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and how much He suffered for us. Those who have suffered have a greater understanding and appreciation of what Christ did for us when He suffered for our sins, than those who have not suffered.

May 23

Future Joy

The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 29:19)

In the future the meek shall have joy. God is not promising the joy to the proud and powerful. He promises it to those who humbled themselves. The poor shall also rejoice. God will certainly take care of the people who have the right attitude and who have been disadvantaged. There will be joy for them and for you if you have humbly turned to Christ.

May 24

Written for Our Hope

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

One of the purposes of the Bible is to give us hope. We can gain this hope by reading about the patience of the Old Testament saints. As we read about their patience and trials, then we see how God rewarded them. That gives us hope. Job is a good example of this. The Scriptures can also grant us comfort in the same manner, which leads to hope.

May 25

Hope for the Grace

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (1 Peter 1:13)

Our minds can become distracted upon many different problems or wants, or perhaps by alcohol or drugs. These distractions can take us away from Christ and our hope of heaven. We must discipline our minds to focus on the main thing—or Person—which is Christ. We need to work on blocking out of our minds that which will not bring us joy when we meet Jesus at the end of our lives on earth.

May 26

He Shall Supply Your Need

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:19)

This verse tells you that it is God who will supply, so you should look to Him. He will supply *all* which means you don't have to look elsewhere. All your need means you will not lack and "according to His riches" means in proportion to His riches. God has infinite riches in glory. Any percentage of infinity is still infinity which means you will have infinite riches. It is all by Christ Jesus.

May 27

Lie Down in Peace

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

(Psalms 4:8)

Only God can guarantee our safety. If the Lord makes you dwell in safety, why do you sweat and fret at night? When David practiced this truth, he laid down in peace and slept. Remember David was a military man. There were people out to kill him, yet he could sleep in peace because his safety was in God's hands.

May 28

Decently and in Order

Let all things be done decently and in order. (1 Corinthians 14:40)

Sometimes we leave things undone or do things halfheartedly, or we go overboard when we do things. Everything should be done well but not to the neglect of other things, especially to the

neglect of your health. Learning moderation and balance can sometimes be difficult. We don't have to be perfect, nor do we have to make our lives miserable by leaving things undone.

May 29

Nothing Is Impossible

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. (Mark 10:27)

Sometimes we look at a task and think it is just too big to conquer. Our healing, fears, or responsibilities might be the things that seem impossible in our lives. With men, these things are impossible. If we leave God out of our lives or out of the equation, our problems will seem insurmountable. Remember, however, all things are possible with God, so let us not leave God out of our lives.

May 30

Complete Rest

And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, (Isaiah 14:3)

This verse has a promise to the people of Israel. What God did for Israel, He can do for you. This can include rest from sorrow, from fear, and from hard bondage. These are all things that those who have gone through trauma can certainly use. Look to the Lord for this rest.

May 31

Troubles Are Forgotten

That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. (Isaiah 65:16-19)

When a person experiences a traumatic event, he rehearses that event over and over in his mind. The memories can be quite troubling and frightening. These verses say that when a new heaven and a new earth come, the old troubles will be forgotten and will not come to mind. Rejoicing will replace the old troubling memories. God is so good to make such a promise.

June 1

Salvation Is a Gift

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Salvation is a free gift. Some people believe they must earn salvation or work for it. This verse says that salvation is not dependent on you or your works. Salvation is by grace, which is undeserved favor. If a person is worthy of salvation, it would be a reward instead of a gift. But

because it is a gift, one can be unworthy and still receive it. In fact everyone is unworthy of salvation. We receive the free gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ's sacrifice for our sins.

June 2

Chief of Sinners

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (1 Timothy 1:15)

The apostle Paul considered himself as being in the chief class of sinners. He did some terrible things. He assisted in the murder of Stephen and threatened to murder others. He persecuted and arrested innocent Christians. Even after doing all these things, however, God forgave and saved him. Moses and David both committed murder. If God can forgive and save these men, He can certainly forgive anything that you may have done and save you.

June 3

Don't Repay Evil

Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee. (Proverbs 20:22)

To recompense evil is to repay evil. We should not make plans in our own heart to pay back evil for evil. That is God's and the government's job. Instead of making our own evil plans, we should wait on the Lord, who promised to save us. Instead of taking the law into our own hands, we should call the police. We ought to wait for the Lord to fulfill His promise of deliverance. That will save us from being in trouble with the law.

June 4

A Refuge in Times of Trouble

The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. (Psalms 9:9-10)

Have you been oppressed? If yes, the Lord says that He will be a refuge for you. Do you ever have times of trouble? If yes, the Lord says that He will be a refuge for you. Whatever you are facing now, you still must seek the Lord. The Lord has not and will not forsake them that seek Him.

June 5

You Are Not Your Own

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

The price God paid for us was the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through faith in Him, we belong to God and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. At the time of our faith in Christ, we become the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because we are God's temple, we should treat this temple with respect and with care. This means you should treat yourself with respect and care, if you believe Christ died for you and the Spirit dwells in you. This is one way you can glorify God.

June 6

No More Pain

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Revelation 21:4)

This verse is a description of what heaven is like. You may have cried till you thought you could cry no more. There will be no need to cry in heaven. You may have lost a loved one in death. That won't happen in heaven. You may possibly be feeling physical or emotional pain. Both the physical pain and the emotional pain will be non-existent in heaven. Pain, death, and sorrow are all things that happen only here on earth; they will not be part of heaven.

June 7

A Snare

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. (Proverbs 29:25)

There are times that the fear of man can cause us to do the wrong thing. But if we have a proper respect or fear of God, we will do the right thing. When we are faced with situations of whether to do right or wrong, who we fear the most will be a factor in what we do. If we fear man more, it can lead to sin; if we fear God more, it will lead to doing right. There is a promise in this verse that says that putting our trust in the Lord will keep us safe.

June 8

Saved to Work

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)

When we are saved, we do not automatically become perfect. We are changed at the time of salvation but not totally. There are gradual changes that God makes in our lives as we grow in Him. Part of the reason God saves us is to do good works. If you are a person with a lot of spare time on your hands, look for ways to use your time to help others. Help out at your church or volunteer through a local organization.

June 9

Working Together for Good

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

This verse does not say that everything is good. It says that God can work everything out for good. He can turn a terrible situation into something that will work out for the good in our lives. This is true for past traumatic events and future traumatic events. This is a good verse to memorize, then quote this verse when things seem to be going wrong. There is also a condition to this verse. We need to love God for things to work for our good. “The called according to His purpose” is the call to salvation.

June 10

He Also Glorified

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

(Romans 8:29-30)

God is in complete control of our salvation from beginning to end. When He saves us, He makes us more like Jesus. He also justifies us which means that He declares us righteous. So when God sees us, He sees us as being righteous. The people He justifies He glorifies. The glorification is the state we will be in when we get to heaven. It is God's work that will bring us to that exalted place in heaven.

June 11

God Is for Us

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

(Romans 8:31-32)

Sometimes it is easy to think that everyone is against us. At these times it is encouraging to remember that God is for us and not against us. He showed that He is for us by not sparing His own Son. Instead He delivered Jesus Christ up to die for each one of us. If God is willing to give up His Son for us, He wouldn't withhold anything good for us, but freely give us all things.

June 12

God Justifies

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (Romans 8:33-34)

Paul asks the question, “Who can accuse God’s people of wrong doing?” When God justifies someone, they are declared righteous and no one can make an accusation stick against someone whom God has declared righteous. The next question Paul asks is, “Who can condemn?” If Christ provides the way of salvation and intercedes for His children, He certainly will not condemn them. If you know Christ as Savior, no one else can condemn you either.

June 13

More than Conquerors

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (Romans 8:35-37)

Though terrible things may happen such as tribulation, distress, nakedness, or peril, yet God says that we are more than conquerors. In the end, God will work evil out for our good and will give us

victory over sin, death, and hell. He promised that He will raise us far above the terrible things that happened to us and we will be victorious.

June 14

Not Separated from Love

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

Nothing can separate you from the love of God. Added to this list is the list in the verses of yesterday's devotions. Some people see themselves as unlovable, but even this cannot separate us from the love of God. This verse says, "nor any other creature." This other creature also includes you. You can do nothing to separate yourself from God's love.

June 15

The Lowly Brother

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: (James 1:9) Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5)

Many a mistreated person will feel lowly and unworthy of good things. It is the humble that are more likely to trust Christ as Savior. These lowly Christians will be heirs of heaven and earth, brothers to Christ, recipients of forgiveness, honored by God, made to be God's own possession, and made to rule with Christ. These are things to rejoice over.

June 16

Orphaned No More

A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. (Psalms 68:5)

Perhaps your father was not the father he should have been, or you never knew your father. God said that He would be your Father in these situations. He is the perfect Father. As a judge of the widows, God will bring justice to them and against those who would take advantage of them.

June 17

Alone No More

God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land. (Psalms 68:6)

There are many who through hurt or other reasons isolate themselves. They don't want to be lonely, but they are not comfortable being around people either. God sets these solitary people in families—godly families which will foster the love and support that everyone needs. The church can be one of these families.

June 18

Whom Shall I Fear?

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalms 27:1)

This verse gives us reasons not to be afraid. The Lord being our light means He will guide us in safe paths. The Lord being our salvation means he will deliver us from harm. The Lord being the strength of our life means that He will give us the strength that we need to get through any situation. With the Lord being our light, salvation, and strength, we can face our day-to-day situations with boldness and lack of fear.

June 19

A New You

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:21-22)

A person who has been mistreated many times has a low opinion of himself. Yet through Christ dying on the cross, He makes a change in the believer so that he becomes holy, blameless, and irreproachable in Christ's sight. Instead of viewing yourself as unlovable, unclean, and shameful, see yourself through the eyes Christ.

June 20

Give Yourself to God

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)

This verse commands us to give ourselves to God. Once we do this, we do not belong to ourselves; we become God's property. Then if something happens to us, it is no longer our problem. It is God's problem because we belong to Him. Our safety is God's problem and God's responsibility because we belong to God.

June 21

Moving Mountains

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (Matthew 17:20)

As fears and problems mount during the day, it is easy to be overcome by them. This verse says that all you need is the faith of a mustard seed to move the mountains in your life. Use that small amount of faith to go to God in prayer and give all your problems and fears to God one by one. Let God move the mountains in your life.

June 22

The Lord Gives and Takes Away

Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the

LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. (Job 1:20-22)

These verses are recorded as Job's response when he was informed that he had lost all his possessions including his children. Job viewed his possessions as gifts from God. And as gifts, God had the right to take them away as well as to give them. Having this view will help you to deal with your losses. Because all things belong to God, He can do with them as He pleases.

Instead of accusing God of wrongdoing, worship Him in whatever He decides to do with His belongings.

June 23

Strengthen the Weak Hands

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. (Isaiah 35:3-4)

Sometimes we feel that we just don't have the strength to keep going any more. At those times, we need encouragement. This is a verse of encouragement. We need to hang in there just a little bit longer because God will come with vengeance, set things straight again, and save you.

June 24

Don't Be Weary

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. (Galatians

6:9)

When problems mount, the temptation is great to give up and chuck it all. God tells us not to be weary in doing good things. Even when it seems like we are not making any progress, we still need to keep trying—because it is the right thing to do and God commands us to. If we do not faint or give up, we shall reap. In other words, we will make progress if we keep doing good things.

June 25

Be Transformed

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:2)

Part of being conformed to this world is having this world's values and way of thinking. For someone who has had a very difficult life, thoughts of hopelessness, despair, and not caring are parts of this world's way of thinking. You need to have your mind renewed by the truths of the Word of God. The Bible offers hope, mercy and love. Through studying the Scriptures, God can change those old thoughts to thoughts of hope, love, and joy, if you let Him.

June 26

He Will Give You Rest

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, (2 Thessalonians 1:6-7)

God says that He will deliver trouble to those who have troubled you. He promises you that He will give you rest from your troubles. The rest that these verses are talking about is the rest that Christ will give when He returns to earth to restore all things to Himself.

June 27

Be Friendly

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24)

A person who is lonely needs friends. This verse tells us that to have friends we must show ourselves friendly. Be the type of person that people want as a friend. Part of that is to be loyal, and also interested in others. People like to talk about themselves. Ask questions about the person you are talking to, listen, and show genuine interest in them. By doing these things, you will gain a friend.

June 28

Be Diligent

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. (Proverbs 13:4)

A sluggard is a lazy person. He has nothing because he does not work for anything. This not only refers to material goods, but for good physical and mental health as well. If you sit and let your life pass by, you will not make any progress in life. But if you work at taking care of yourself and work at your emotional healing, you will make progress.

June 29

When Your Enemy Falls

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him. (Proverbs 24:17-18)

You shouldn't rejoice when you see your enemy get caught or punished. The Lord does not take pleasure in punishing the wicked and neither should we. Though it is right that the wicked be punished, we should be grieved that they chose a wicked way to begin with. If God sees that we are rejoicing in our enemy's fall, He will remove the punishment of the wicked because of our wrong attitude.

June 30

He Loves You as You Are

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

One way that God shows His love to mankind is by sending His Son Jesus Christ to die for us. What is so amazing is that when God loved us, we were not very lovable. We were sinners when God loved us; we did not have to clean up our act first or perform any great feat. God is able to love even the person who does not deserve love. That is part of what makes Him God. God certainly loves you too.

July 1

The Heart that Stoops

Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad. (Proverbs 12:25)

A heavy heart that is weighed down with worry, big decisions, and fear can cause a person to be depressed. When one's mind is occupied with thoughts of safety, daily cares, or decision making, joy and comfort escape that person. When the heart is able to refocus on an encouraging word, it is uplifted and is made glad. This is why it is important to read your Bible every daily.

July 2

The Unruly Tongue

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. (James 3:8-10)

People can do lots of damage or lots of hurt with the words that they say. When a person is cursed, yelled at, or put down, he can begin to feel worthless. You feel bad when it is done to you and others will feel bad if you do it to them. One reason verbal abuse is bad is because people are made in the image of God. When a person is cursing or putting down a person, they are putting down the image of God.

July 3

How Not to Be Ashamed

According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. (Philippians 1:20)

Many people feel ashamed of things that happen to them. We cannot always control what others do to us; we can only control our own actions. If there is an action of our own that we are ashamed of, we should confess it. To prevent being ashamed of our actions in the future, do as the verse says: magnify Christ in your body. If we always exalt Christ in our attitude and action, there will never be a need to be ashamed in the future.

July 4

Made Free

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John 8:34-36)

Because this is Independence Day in the USA, this devotion is on being made free. The bondage that all people struggle with is the bondage to sin, which can be in action or in thought. There's good news, however. The Son of God can free you from this bondage of sinful actions and thoughts. He can also free you from thoughts of depression, guilt, discouragement, or selfharm.

July 5

The Lord Rejoices over You

The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. (Zephaniah 3:17)

Reading this verse and seeing what the Lord plans on doing is pretty exciting. Just think, the Lord will rejoice over you, will give you rest, and will sing over you. He must think you are quite special to have such actions toward you. I cannot wait to hear Him sing over me in joy.

July 6

The Workers of Iniquity

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. (Psalms 37:1-2)

It is easy to look at workers of iniquity and say, “Their life is so easy, I wish I had life as well as they have it.” Remember that a worker of iniquity is a person who works evil. God said that He will be cutting off the evildoers. Just like the grass is cut down when it gets too high, so will the evil doer be cut down.

July 7

Delight in the Lord

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. (Psalms 37:4-5)

When a person delights himself in the Lord, He gives that person what he desires. Keep in mind that the person that delights himself in the Lord is someone who wants to live a life pleasing to the Lord. If you commit your way unto the Lord and trust in Him, He will bring about that healing that you have been longing for.

July 8

The Problem with Anger and Wrath

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. (Psalms 37:8) Don't let anger, wrath, and fretting take control of your life. Letting them take root in your heart will bring you evil. They will eat at you, tie your muscles in knots, and rob you of your joy. If you let the anger, wrath and fretting fester in your soul, the emotions can carry you away to do something you may regret later.

July 9

Wait on the Lord

For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

(Psalms 37:9)

This verse tells what will happen in the future. Evildoers shall be cut off. This does not seem like a reality now, but God promises He will bring this about. In the meantime, He wants us to wait upon Him, promising that those who wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth. Evildoers will not inherit the new earth, but those who wait on the Lord will.

July 10

The Upright Shall Not Be Ashamed

The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. (Psalms 37:18-19)

The upright have an eternal inheritance waiting for them. God will see that this will happen. Because they are upright, they will not be ashamed in the evil time. The evil time in this verse can apply to many varying difficult kinds of times, but those who walk with God will always come out on top. There is no reason for those who walk with God to be ashamed because their deeds are righteous and their sins are covered by the blood of Christ.

July 11

The Steps of a Good Man

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. (Psalms 37:23-24) The Lord is going to direct a person who is willing to follow Him. The Lord will also delight in the way of a person who walks with Him. No one is a perfect follower, but when a person does fall, the Lord will pick him up. The Lord will also uphold this person with His hand.

July 12

The Saints Are Not Forsaken

Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

(Psalms 37:27-28)

The Lord loves to see right prevail and He will not forsake His saints. That is why He commands us to depart from evil and do good. He does not want us or anyone else to suffer at His judgment. The wicked shall be cut off, they will not spend eternity with the saints—people who have been made righteous or holy through faith in the Lord.

July 13

The Victim Is Not Condemned

The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. (Psalms 37:32-34)

The Lord will not leave the righteous person in the hands of the wicked forever. He will cut off the wicked so they cannot touch the righteous. Many who are victimized by the wicked blame and condemn themselves, but these verses say that the righteous person will not be condemned. In other words, the victim will not be condemned with the evildoer. So, do not condemn yourself.

July 14

Because They Trust in Him

But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. (Psalms 37:39-40)

Why will the Lord deliver and save the righteous? It is because they trust in Him. The promises to the righteous in these verses can be yours if you become righteous by trusting in and obeying Christ. When you are in trouble, look to Him. He is your strength in time of trouble. He will deliver and save you from the wicked.

July 15

Glory in Tribulations

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:3-5)

God produces godly character through tribulation in the person who lets God do so. When facing trials and tribulations, look at the good that God can do through the trials, rather than at the trials themselves. This is also true about the flashbacks of traumatic events. Instead of being horrified by them again, look to the Lord to build godly character in you through the flashbacks.

By doing so, you will see the love of God being shed in your heart.

July 16

Pleasing God

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:10)

Some who have been mistreated by people will end up becoming people-pleasers in the hopes that if they are good enough, they will not be mistreated anymore. A wicked person will mistreat a person no matter how good he is. Christ was perfect yet people still mistreated Him. Instead of trying to please men, make it your goal to please God.

July 17

Root of Bitterness

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; (Hebrews 12:15)

This verse speaks of a root of bitterness. In order to get rid of bitterness, the root must be dug out. If you chop off a weed, it will grow back because the root is still there. The same with bitterness. The cause must be eliminated for the bitterness to go away. The causes can be unforgiveness, resentment, and hate—all of which can trouble you. They can rob you of joy, cause physical problems such as ulcers, high blood pressure, and painful muscles, and bring you to say and do things you will regret later.

July 18

Forgiving Others

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. (Mark 11:25-26)

Some reasons to forgive others are 1) God commands it, 2) we want God to forgive us as we forgive others, 3) we have more sins against God than any person has against us, 4) we have no right to not forgive what God is willing to forgive, 5) unforgiveness blocks our prayer life and our relationship with God, and 6) unforgiveness robs us of peace and joy.

July 19

Do You Love God?

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (1 John 4:20-21)

To truly love God you must also love His children. Love is commanded by God. Not to love is sin. You can show your love to God by loving others. It is inconsistent to say you love God and to not love a fellow Christian who wants to be like God. To love God you must love the brother who is made in His likeness.

July 20

Discretion

The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. (Proverbs 19:11)

This verse teaches that a person can learn to become slow to anger. By thinking before acting, many anger issues can be avoided. Think about where your anger has gotten you in the past. Has it caused you more harm than good? If it did, then decide now that you will not act on anger until you think your actions through when you are not angry. Many times we get angry over situations that are not worth getting angry over. Much anger starts with an unforgiving spirit. Being quick to forgive will help us to get rid of anger.

July 21

They Cannot Kill the Soul

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matthew 10:28)

When fear of man or the fear of harm grips a person, it takes over that person's thinking and actions. The fear controls the person. One way to overcome that fear is to respect God more than you fear or respect man. Let your determination to obey God be stronger than your fear of man. Another way to overcome the fear of man is to see heaven as a great place to go to and see it as our home instead of this earth. When we long to be in heaven with God, it will help us overcome the fear of dying.

July 22

You Are of More Value

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)

Many people think that they are not worth anything, but to God you are of much value. God tells us that He takes care of the sparrows and that they do not fall to the ground without His knowledge. He also says you are of much more value than the sparrows. He takes such notice of you that he knows the number of hairs that you have. If He places that much value on you, you have no reason to fear.

July 23

Worrying About Your Needs?

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? (Matthew 6:26-30)

You are part of God's creation. If you take a look around you, you will see that God takes care of His creation such as the birds and the flowers. If God takes care of His creation of which you are a part, He will take care of you and meet your needs.

July 24

Seek First the Kingdom

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33)

In this verse, "all these things" refer to our needs such as drink, food, and clothing. By seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, He will supply these needs. Sometimes there is a temptation to seek the provision for the needs instead of the One who supplies the need. God says that the needs will be met when the Supplier and His righteous are sought.

July 25

Tomorrow's Worries

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (Matthew 6:34)

Someone once said that over eighty percent of the things we worry about never happen. The farther in the future our worries are, the possibilities of those worries coming true are more remote. Today has enough problems. Let God take care of tomorrow's problems.

July 26

Bless the Lord Every Day

I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. (Psalms 145:1-2)

The psalmist extolled and blessed the Lord every day. What about you? Do you take time every day to extol the Lord for who He is and bless Him and praise Him? Sometimes we are so focused on ourselves that we forget how great God is. Purpose in your heart that every day forever and ever you will praise His Name.

July 27

Great Is the Lord

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. (Psalms 145:3-5)

Our God is a great God. His greatness is unsearchable, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try looking for it. As we declare His mighty acts and speak of the glorious honor of His majesty and His wondrous works, we begin mining the depths of His greatness. He is so great and I am so small, yet He cares about what is happening in my life.

July 28

The Goodness of God

The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee. (Psalms 145:8-10)

The Lord is gracious. He doesn't just have a little compassion; He is full of compassion. He doesn't have a short fuse; He is slow to anger. He doesn't just have a little mercy; He has great mercy. He is good to all. That is sometimes hard for us to understand—either because we don't feel we deserve anything good or we want to take revenge on people who have done nasty things to us. God sends rain on the just and the unjust. He is merciful to all His works. There is no one so bad that God, in His mercy can't forgive him. Our response to His goodness and mercy should be praise. Have you praised your God today?

July 29

God Satisfies Our Desires

The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. (Psalms 145:14-16)

Do you ever fall? Are you ever bowed down in despair? The Lord upholds all those who fall. He raises those that are bowed down. We need to have our eyes on God and wait for Him to meet our needs in His time. He has an open-handed policy. He satisfies the desire of every living thing.

Sometimes you may feel dead, but if you still have breath, God will satisfy your desires. “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Psalms 37:4).

July 30

The

Lord Hears Our Cry

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. (Psalms 145:17-19)

My God is a righteous God in all His ways. He is holy in all His works. As a result, He draws near to all who call on Him. He knows everything; we need to call upon Him in truth. We can't pull the wool over God's eyes. We can be honest with Him about what we are feeling. When we fear Him, He fulfills our desires. He hears us. He saves us. Sometimes, as we cry out to Him with our rotten feelings that are not based on the truth, He has to save us from ourselves and change our desires to conform to His will. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

July 31

The Lord Preserves Us

The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy. My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever. (Psalms 145:20-21)

Those who love the Lord are preserved by Him. Preserve means to save from injury or destruction; to protect, shield, guard, or defend. The wicked do not have this protection. They will ultimately be destroyed. We need to be in the group that loves the Lord instead of part of the wicked. Our response to God's protection should be praise. With our mouth we need to speak His praise and bless His holy name forever and ever.

August 1

Believing God

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; (Titus 1:2) He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. (1 John 5:10)

There are people who for one reason or another do not believe that God's promises apply to them. God does not lie. To try to say God's Word does not apply to them is calling God a liar. God will not slight or skip anyone because they feel unworthy of His love and blessings. His promises apply to all those to whom they are directed.

August 2

What Defiles a Man

There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. (Mark 7:15) And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (Mark 7:20-23)

Many believed that a person is defiled when they are raped or molested. These verses say that the person who forces the sexual relationship is defiled, not the person that is forced. The person who did not want the relationship is not defiled before God. It is the desires within a person as listed above that defile a person. God looks at the heart.

August 3

You Are Jesus' Friend

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

Giving of one's own life for another is the ultimate sacrifice and demonstration of love. The fact that Jesus laid down His life for you shows that He considers you a friend. He died in your place so you do not have to pay for your own sins and you will be able to spend eternity with Him.

Through faith you can have this gift of eternal life and forgiveness applied to your life.

August 4

Being Jesus' Friend

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (John 15:14)

Jesus says that you are His friend if you do what He commands you. In a day when it seems as though friends are hard to come by, Jesus gives you an opportunity to become His friend. You show your friendship to Jesus by obeying Him.

August 5

God of All Comfort

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

All comfort comes from God. When we are grieving over a loss or a tragedy, He gives comfort. He can comfort you directly through His Word or His Spirit or He may use another person or circumstance. If you need comfort now, spend time in the Psalms. Look to Him to comfort your heart. Then use the comfort that He gives to you to comfort others.

August 6

Extent of God's Grace

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20-21)

Many people think of themselves as too sinful or hopeless to be forgiven or saved. These verses say that where sin abounded, grace abounded even more. No matter how sinful you think you are, God's grace is so great it will cover that sin and grant to us the gift of eternal life.

August 7

Faith Is the Victory

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4)

If you have been born again i.e. saved, you will overcome the world. Some of you feel defeated and feel as though you will never heal from your hurts. The key element needed to overcome the world with its sins and hurts is faith. Through faith, you overcome sin; and through faith, you overcome hurt and the tragedies of life.

August 8

His Angel Is There

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (Psalms 34:7)

People talk about guardian angels. This verse says that the angel of the Lord camps around about those who fear Him. It is comforting to think that the Lord's angel is close by, watching over us as we revere Him. This same angel is there to deliver us when we need Him.

August 9

The Lord Is Good

The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

(Nahum 1:7)

Sometimes it is a struggle to believe that the Lord is good when something terrible happens. But the Bible is true. You need to give God a chance to show His goodness and fulfill His promise that He will work all things together for good. He knows those who trust in Him. For them, God is a stronghold in the day of trouble. Go to Him for that refuge and experience His goodness.

August 10

Be Careful for Nothing

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (Philippians 4:6)

The phrase “be careful” in this verse means worried or anxious. Instead of worrying about things, we ought to be praying about them. There is no concern too big or too small that we cannot pray about it. We can tell God every detail and explain why it is important to us. By giving thanks during our prayer about our worries, we show God that we trust that He will take care of the matter and that we believe He will do the right thing.

August 11

The Peace of God

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

When we give our worries to God, He will replace the worry with peace. When we trust God with the things that are most dear to us, His peace will keep our minds on Christ. Although God's peace is something we cannot explain, it will keep our focus on Christ instead of our worries.

August 12

Think on These Things

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

Many flashbacks and nightmares are caused by seeing or being reminded of violence. Sad and violent memories also cause stress, which is a major cause of flashbacks and nightmares. By focusing on the things in this verse, you can reduce your stress. To help keep you from being plagued by things that trigger flashbacks, screen what you watch and read by the qualities listed in this verse.

August 13

Affliction Can Be Good

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. (Psalms 119:71-72)

Most of us don't think it is good to be afflicted. The psalmist looked back and saw that as a result of being afflicted, he learned God's statutes which are better than silver and gold. One day while I was carrying a basket of laundry, I tripped over my dog and broke my arm. The affliction hurt at the time and I still have twinges of pain depending on the weather, but looking back I can say it was good that I broke my arm. For years, I had to put a sleeve on that arm first or I couldn't stand the pain of getting dressed, but now I have no pain getting dressed. I also had more time in God's Word as I couldn't do dishes or other chores for a few weeks. Sometimes our pain drives us to God because we have nowhere else to turn. This is a good thing and is worth more than money. (We didn't have health insurance at the time, so it cost plenty of money, but the Lord provided.)

August 14

Live to Praise

Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. (Psalms 146:1-2)

What do you live for? The psalmist lived to praise the Lord. Sometimes, we don't feel like living. Despair takes over and we feel we have nothing to live for. If we get our eyes off of ourselves and turn them to God, however, our soul will be full of praise to the Lord. We will have

a song in our heart. We know that in heaven we will spend our time worshiping the Lord, but why wait? Today, while you have being, praise the Lord with all your soul.

August 15

Help and Hope Come from God

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God: (Psalms 146:3-5)

Our help does not come from government programs (princes) or from any doctor or the latest self-help book. Those people and their ideas will die unless the ideas are based on the unchanging truth of the Word of God that endures forever. The person whose help is God will be happy. You can't lose if your hope is the Lord God. Men will disappoint us, but Jesus never fails.

August 16

God Loosens the Prisoners

Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever: Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners: (Psalms 146:6-7)

God is the creator of all and He keeps truth forever. He sees those who are oppressed and executes judgment on their behalf. Have you been oppressed? Does it appear that the person who

abused you is getting away without punishment? God is just and judgment will come. He will take care of your needs. You won't starve. God also loosens the prisoners. Are you a prisoner of nightmares, fears, negative thoughts, and hate? God loves you. He wants you to come to Him and be made free. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"

(John 8:32). Don't remain a captive when the truth of God can make you free.

August 17

Don't Stay Down

The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: (Psalms 146:8)

At one time all of us were blind, spiritually blind. Jesus came to open our blind eyes and give us spiritual sight. He will also raise up those who are bowed down. Are you ever bowed down? Nothing seems to be going right? Things seem hopeless? God is there waiting to raise you. Just look to Him. Let Him open your eyes to the help and hope He offers. Remember when you are at your lowest, that God loves the righteous. He makes us righteous when we believe on His Son Jesus Christ our Savior.

August 18

The Lord Reigns

The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD. (Psalms 146:9-10)

The Lord shall reign forever unto all generations. He is in control. He watches out not only for His own people, but for the strangers. He takes care of the fatherless and the widows in their need. The way of the wicked He will turn upside down. It may appear that the wicked are getting away with abusing the foreigners, orphans and widows, but “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). There is a final judgment for the wicked. We don’t have to take care of punishing those who abuse us. Let God reign. There will be a final judgment of the wicked.

August 19

God Will Help You

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (Isaiah 41:10)

Many fear the future because of things that have happened in the past. But God says in this verse that He is with us. His presence in our life is an ongoing thing. He is there now and in the future. Notice also the three “I wills” in this verse. He will strengthen, He will help and He will uphold you. These are promises for the future. Rely on this verse to face future danger.

August 20

Fellowship with God

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. (1 John 1:3-4)

John wrote of his experiences with Christ, so you could believe and enter into a fellowship with Him. This fellowship is greater than just fellowship with other believers. This fellowship includes God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. We can commune and share with God. This expanded relationship is so our joy may be full.

August 21

Strength through Waiting

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

Waiting is a hard thing to do, especially when we do not know how long the wait will be. The promise in this verse is that those who wait upon the Lord will have their strength renewed. When we look to the Lord and wait on Him, He will not disappoint us. He will give us the strength to keep going so we will not be weary or faint.

August 22

Wine Is a Mocker

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. (Proverbs 20:1)

Though violence and abuse come from the heart and sinful nature of a person, alcohol and drugs can enhance the sinful nature. Alcohol can cause a person to do or say things that he normally would not do or say. Avoid people who are intoxicated or high. By avoiding people who drink or do drugs, you will help protect yourself. Also avoiding drugs and alcohol yourself will enable you to make wiser choices in the situations which you put yourself.

August 23

Betrayed by a Friend

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. (Psalms 41:9)

King David and the Lord Jesus Christ each had a friend betray them who was close to them. This verse can also relate to Judas' betrayal of Christ. The closer the person, who betrays us, the more it hurts when the betrayal comes. Man may betray us or forsake us, but God says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). We can always trust God.

August 24

Remedy to Bitterness and Abuse

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:31-32)

God commands that all bitterness, wrath, anger, loud quarreling, evil speaking, and malice are to end. Those who do such things disobey God. Instead He commands all to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving. When a person does the second list of commands, that person will automatically not do the things that are prohibited in the first list of commands.

August 25

Be Very Courageous

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:7)

It takes strength and courage to obey God. He commands us to be strong and courageous that we may observe to do what He says. Keeping from turning away from God's Word is not easy, but there is prosperity in obeying it. The prosperity may not show up in material things on earth, but it will certainly bring a richer fuller life here and eternal life after death.

August 26

Meditate on the Word of God

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

Sin, discouragement, depression, and despair may come from getting away from the Word of God. When we lose our focus on what God has said and start focusing on life's problems, stress mounts up. To keep us on track we should meditate on God's Word day and night. When we do this, we will have success in our healing and other areas in our lives.

August 27

The Reason for Courage

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:9)

Joshua 1:7 talked about having courage in order that we may observe the Word of God. The reason we can have courage and strength is the Lord our God is with us wherever we go. Once we trust Christ as our Savior, God comes to live within us. Once He lives within us, He promises that He will not leave us or forsake us.

August 28

You Owe Love

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:8)

This verse not only teaches that we should pay our debts, but it also teaches that we owe love to everyone. God has put everyone under the obligation to love everyone else. We should love everyone and everyone should love us. Love automatically does what is right towards another person. Thus, by loving everyone else, you will automatically obey the law of God.

August 29

Love Does No Harm

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10)

Love does no ill or harm to another person. Love does not verbally, emotionally, physically, or sexually abuse another person. If someone is abusing you and is telling you that they love you, according to God's word they are lying. Love seeks the highest good for another.

August 30

Giving

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)

Blessed can mean happy. If you look around you, you find that those who are doing for others and giving are happier than those who are selfish. This is because God made life so that people would be happier when they are doing for others. Look for someone each day that you can help or encourage and it will make your day brighter.

August 31

In the Day of Rest

And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, (Isaiah 14:3)

There is a coming day that the Lord will give you rest from all your hardships. Knowing that He will remove your sorrow, your fears, and your bondage, will help you face the future. Some of that rest may come on earth as you learn to lean on Christ. You will receive complete rest— and the full burden you face will be lifted—in heaven.

September 1

Praise is Pleasant

Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. (Psalms 147:1)

Praising the Lord is good, pleasant and comely or beautiful. Do you ever have days when nothing seems to go right? Our family has three cars. In one month, all three cars needed to be fixed twice. Instead of griping and complaining about our circumstances, we chose to praise the Lord. We praised Him that no one had an accident as a result of the mechanical malfunctions. We praised Him that the cars broke down at our house, so we didn't have to tow them. We praised Him for developing patience in our lives when the parts to fix the cars were not immediately available. And we praised Him that others were willing to give us rides to church and to the auto

part's store. Can you sing praise to God in the midst of trials? Try it. You'll like it and so will God.

September 2

The Lord Uses Outcasts

The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. (Psalms 147:2)

Do you ever feel like an outcast? You just don't fit in with everyone else? I think all of us feel that way at one time or another. We are all uniquely created. No one else is quite like us. God gathered together the outcasts of Israel to build up Jerusalem. Today, He uses outcasts to build up His church. He has a job for each of us in the body of Christ. Don't worry about being different. Let God use you for the purpose for which He created you.

September 3

God Heals the Brokenhearted

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. (Psalms 147:3)

Doctors don't have any medicine that can heal a broken heart. They may prescribe something to mask the hurt, but only God can heal the pain. He binds up our wounds, those emotional gaping wounds that no one else can see. Go to Him for healing. Only He has the power to heal a broken heart.

September 4

God Knows Your Name

He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. (Psalms 147:4)

Did you ever try to count the stars? God knows how many stars there are. He also knows their names. He knows your name too. I read through the Bible every year. Some chapters that are just lists of names that I can't pronounce. Even though the names may bog down my reading and seem boring, I remember that all of those people were important to God. He knew them all by name. He knew what kind of people they were. It reminds me that He knows my name. He knows all about me and still sent His Son to die on the cross for me. Praise the Lord that He knows all.

September 5

Infinite Understanding

Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. (Psalms 147:5)

The Lord is great and of great power. His understanding is infinite. My understanding is finite. "Why did this happen to me?" I ask. I don't understand, but God understands. There are no limits to His understanding. We need to rest on the fact that God is great and powerful and that He works all things together for good in our lives. He knows how all the pieces of the puzzle of our lives will fit together to make a beautiful picture in the end.

September 6

The Lord Lifts up the Meek

The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground. (Psalms 147:6)

The Lord lifts up the meek. Who are the meek? Those who have their power under control. Meekness has to do with humility. “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). Matthew 5:5 says “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” The wicked on the other hand, will be cast down to the ground. They may think they have it made, but God in His power will judge the wicked.

September 7

Thankfulness

Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. (Psalms 147:7-9)

Earlier in Psalm 147, we were told to sing praises unto our God. Now we are told some ways to do that. One way is with thanksgiving. We are told in Eph. 5:20 to “[Give] thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;” It takes faith to give thanks for *all* things *always*. It is easy to give thanks for good health, financial gain, and family, but do we also give thanks for bad health, financial loss, being alone, traumatic events and things breaking down? If we remember that God controls all things such as rain, grass growing, food for beasts and birds, then we can be assured that He will take care of our needs. Therefore, no matter what our circumstances, we should sing to the Lord with thanksgiving.

September 8

How to Please God

He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. (Psalms 147:10-11)

How can we please God? It isn't in the strength of our legs or what kind of car we drive (how much horsepower it has). The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear Him and hope in His mercy. Do you fear the Lord? Do you have a reverence for Him? Where is your hope? It needs to be in the mercy of God. He loves you and sent His Son to die on the cross for your sin. He offers His mercy and grace to all. Our only hope is in the mercy of God. It makes Him happy when we fear Him and put our hope in Him alone.

September 9

God's Care

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. (Psalms 147:12-14)

We are to praise the Lord. Why? Because He protects us and strengthens the bars of our gates. He gives us families including a Christian family. He gives us peace within our borders. He fills us with the finest of wheat. Not just any old wheat, but the finest of wheat. Remember to praise Him everyday for His wonderful care for you.

September 10

God Is Righteous

Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee! (Psalms 71:19)

The Bible tells us that God is righteous. God has a right to allow the things that happened to happen. With allowing terrible things to happen to us, God promises to set things right. We get angry and upset because we do not understand what God is doing in allowing these things to happen. To help us accept our lot in life, we must remember that God is righteous and is right in all He does. It is man and Satan that does wrong.

September 11

Seek Peace

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (Romans 12:18)

We should try at all times to be at peace with all men. Notice that the verse says, “If it be possible.” Sometimes it is not possible to be at peace with someone because they do not want to be at peace with us. Sometimes it is easier to keep the peace by staying away. We should not be the cause of conflict with people, however. We can seek peace by being kind and considerate of others.

September 12

Vengeance Belongs to the Lord

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (Romans 12:19)

It is so easy to react to some injustice and say, “I am going to get him.” Vengeance does not belong to individuals. Vengeance belongs to God and government which is ordained by God.

We do not have to worry about whether justice will be served or not. The Lord said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” When you see an injustice, pray about it and call the proper authorities.

September 13

Feed Your Enemy

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (Romans 12:20)

The Bible commands us to do good to our enemy and meet his needs. This runs against our sinful nature. The Scriptures tell us that by doing good to our enemy, we will make him more ashamed of his actions. By making him ashamed, hopefully his shame will lead to repentance and his ceasing to be your enemy.

September 14

Overcome Evil with Good

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21)

Evil is all around us. Perhaps it has been done to you. How are you going to respond to this evil? Are you going to let it turn you into an evil individual? You can let it overcome you by deciding to be just like every other evil person around you. You can let the evil turn you into a bitter, hateful person. Do not let evil have a negative impact on you. Instead, decide that you will do what is right and good, no matter what everyone else around you is doing.

September 15

Love as Your Own Soul

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. (1 Samuel 18:1)

David and Jonathan became very good friends. One of the reasons for their friendship was that Jonathan was knit with the soul of David. This means that Jonathan was loyal and faithful to David. Another reason for their friendship was Jonathan's decision to love David as he loved his own soul. Friendships work when people give of themselves to each other.

September 16

Fear in the Night

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (Psalms 139:11-12)

Often people who have suffered trauma have fears and anxieties during the night. A person who is very watchful of their surroundings can have heightened anxiety because they cannot see their surroundings. Though you may not be able to see well at night, God can. Day and night are alike to Him. Trust that He will take care of what you cannot see.

September 17

Suffering Yet Innocent

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD. They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold. (Psalms 59:3-4)

Sometimes people suffer even though they did nothing wrong. These verses tell of a time in David's life when men sought to kill him, even though he did nothing against these men. Experiencing trauma and suffering does not mean that you are a bad person or that you have sin in your life. People sometimes inflict suffering because they are wicked, not because the person who was harmed deserved it.

September 18

God Makes Us Beautiful

For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. (Psalms 149:4)

Do you ever feel ugly? I do! The above verse tells us that God beautifies the meek with salvation. If we humbly come to Him and admit that we are sinners who can't save ourselves, He gives us salvation. Salvation makes us beautiful. God takes pleasure in His people. If we are one of His people, then we can be pleasing to God.

September 19

A Good Night's Sleep

I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. (Psalms 3:4-5)

Do you have problems sleeping? Do you have nightmares? These verses give you the remedy. First, cry out to God in prayer. He will hear you. Believe that the Lord will sustain you during the night. Then you can lie down and sleep because the Lord will watch over you. He cares for you and wants you to cast all your burdens on Him.

September 20

The Attacker Is Guilty

But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die: But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter: For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her. (Deuteronomy 22:25-27)

These verses teach that the rapist is the guilty person and not the survivor or victim of the attack. These verses even say that the woman shares no guilt with the attacker. Only the attacker is guilty in this situation. There is no fault in you that you should feel guilty or ashamed as a result of an attack.

September 21

Fear of Enemies

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence. For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. (Psalms 9:3-4) Those who have harmed you will be judged by God. They may make plans to harm you, but in the end, they will need to face God and they will fall and perish at God's presence. God's judgment will be right and He will maintain your cause. Remember these verses when you meet your abuser or are reminded of him.

September 22

Turn Sorrow into Joy

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (John 16:22)

Many times a person is reminded of a tragedy that has happened in the past. There is usually much sorrow associated with that tragedy. Jesus will turn that sorrow into joy when He returns. Because Jesus wants you to have joy, He can help you change the sorrowful reminders into times

of rejoicing. You can do this by planning something special and festive on anniversaries of sorrowful events. When triggers remind you of tragedies, use the triggers as reminders to pray and quote verses that bring comfort and joy.

September 23

Hope in God

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. (Psalms 42:5)

This verse gives a remedy for feeling down in the dumps. That remedy is to hope in God. Without God and His promises, this world would be quite bleak. When we believe that God will right the wrongs, it gives us hope and reason to praise Him. Praising God and meditating on His goodness brings joy.

September 24

Becoming like Grasshoppers

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. (Numbers 13:33)

People while growing up learn to view themselves the way others viewed them—whether good or bad. Another twist to this is that—as this verse shows—others will view you like you view yourself. This is all the more reason to view yourself as fearfully and wonderfully made and as

precious in God's sight (see Psalm 139). By respecting yourself as a child of God, others will respect you more.

September 25

Whatsoever Is Not of Faith

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (Romans 14:23)

Faith is important. We must believe in Jesus Christ's death on the cross for our sins in order to be saved. After salvation, we must believe the commandments and the promises of God for everyday life.. If we do not believe a command of God is best for us, we will not follow it and it becomes sin. If it is a promise we do not believe, we will be left in fear or despair and thus in sin. Believe God and His word.

September 26

Safety

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. (Philippians 3:1)

It may seem like you are hearing the same verses over and over again. Paul wrote to the Philippians that it was safe for them that he wrote the same things to them. We learn by repetition. To learn a new word in a new language, we need to hear it sixty times. It takes six weeks of not doing something to get rid of a bad habit. Paul reminded the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord. If

you can't think of anything else to rejoice in, you can always rejoice in Him and His promises. This will help keep you safe.

September 27

Knowing Christ

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (Philippians 3:7-8)

Knowing Christ is excellent. There may be accomplishments that we are proud of and other things we have done that we are not proud of. Paul considered all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. He considered all the things he had done as manure when compared to knowing Christ. We do not have to earn God's love by doing good things. The one thing God really wants is for us to know Him. Read His Word. Trust His promises. Show your love to Him by obedience. Get to know the Lord Jesus Christ better every day.

September 28

Righteousness

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (Philippians 3:9) When we are in Christ, we receive the righteousness of God by faith. It is by faith that we are found in

Christ. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). We have Christ’s righteousness. We could never keep the whole law. No matter how dirty you feel, if you are in Christ by faith you have the righteousness of God. God doesn’t look at you as dirty. He looks at you as white as snow, through Christ’s righteousness. Praise the Lord!

September 29

Knowing God

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (Philippians 3:10)

In Philippians 3:8, Paul talks about knowing Christ. Here he gives some details about what this entails. Part of knowing Him is knowing the power of His resurrection. It takes a lot of power to come back from the dead. Do you think you can never overcome your past? Christ had the power to overcome death, so He certainly has the power to overcome the difficulties we have faced in life. The next part of knowing Christ is knowing the fellowship of His sufferings. Most of us would rather avoid suffering. Christ was ridiculed, abused, tortured and killed. If we endured abuse, we have the fellowship of His sufferings. The last part is being made conformable unto His death. Are you willing to die to selfishness, to die to sin? We should pray that the Lord will help us to know Him so well that we are willing to give all for Him.

September 30

Following after God

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:11-12)

Are you saved from your sins? Do you have eternal life? If you have received Christ as your personal Savior, you can answer, “Yes!” Have you attained the resurrection of the dead? Are you perfect? Not until you die or Christ returns. What does God expect of us in the meantime?

He wants us to follow after Him, walk in the Spirit, and don’t fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Do what pleases God in your actions and attitudes not just what pleases you.

October 1

Forgetting What Is Behind

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (Philippians 3:13)

Paul’s focus was on reaching forth unto those things which are before instead of dwelling on the things that were behind. That is easier said than done, but it is necessary. Paul had done some pretty bad things which he needed to put behind him.. He persecuted believers. He was a Pharisee, so he had a list of dos and don’ts that he kept. He also needed to forget the good things that he had done. We can’t rest on our past accomplishments or get mired down in our past defeats; rather we need to reach forth to what God has for us today and tomorrow and for eternity. We

can't move forward if we are continually looking backward. I don't know about you, but I don't like backing up a car. It is much easier to drive when you are going forward.

October 2

Pressing On

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:14)

Olympic athletes go into strict training to win a medal. They press toward their goal by rising early, enduring grueling workouts, and giving up certain foods and time with friends. Are we that dedicated in our Christian walk? Are we pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus or are we just sitting in the stands being entertained? We don't have to work our way to heaven, but it is work to maintain a close relationship with God. It may mean rising earlier to spend time in prayer and in the Word. It may mean giving up sleeping in to attend church. It may mean that we can no longer participate in activities with old friends because we want to please God and not do things that would destroy our bodies.

October 3

Continue in the Fear of the Lord

Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off. (Proverbs 23:17-18)

It is easy to let your heart become bitter towards sinners. These verses give good advice when you are tempted to envy sinners. It says to fear the Lord all day long. Your focus should be on

God and what He is doing, not on the sinners. There will be an end to the sinners and there will be an eternal bliss for those who fear the Lord. Your expectation or your hope will not be cut off, for it will last for eternity.

October 4

The Lord Will Hold Your Hand

For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

(Isaiah 41:13)

I remember when I was young and it came time to cross a busy street. My parents would hold my hand. Their holding my hand made me feel secure. This verse promises that the Lord will hold your right hand through any fearful situation that you may face in the present or in the future. He is there offering His help. The next time you are tempted to fear, remember that He is holding your hand today.

October 5

When You Feel Overwhelmed

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate. I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works;

I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah. (Psalms 143:3-6)

In this verse David gives his formula for times he feels persecuted, smitten, overwhelmed, or desolate. First of all, he remembers the times the Lord brought him through in the past. Then he meditates on all the works of God. Next he stretches forth his hands to God in prayer, desiring to be closer to Him. You can also use this formula to cure your feelings of being persecuted, smitten, overwhelmed, and desolate too.

October 6

Christ Will Give You Rest

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Do you feel overloaded with your burdens and responsibilities? Christ commands you to come to Him. When you come to give Him your burdens, He will give you rest. Sometimes those burdens entail emotional pain, but even in those situations you can cast them on Christ and you find rest for your souls. The giving of rest in these verses is a promise.

October 7

The Lord Executes Judgment

The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. (Psalms 103:6)

Sometimes we wonder if the Lord sees, cares or is fair. But we see in this verse that He does see, does care, and is fair. He executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Notice that it says, “*all* that are oppressed.” If someone has oppressed you, this verse applies to you.

At this point in your life, declare by faith that God will do as He says.

October 8

He Removes Our Transgressions

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalms 103:11-12)

One interesting thing about Earth is that you can only go so far north, then once you reach the North Pole, you have to start going south. That is not true about going east and west. You can always keep going west or you can always keep going east. That is how far God has removed our transgressions from us. The distance He has removed our sins from us keeps getting infinitely further; as far as the east is from the west.

October 9

God Hears

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. (Psalms 40:1)

Sometimes when we pray, we wonder if God is listening. The answer to our prayer doesn't come instantly, so we think He didn't hear us. This verse tells us that God inclines unto us. He does hear our cry, but sometimes we have to wait patiently for Him to answer. In our society of fast food, instant messaging and high speed internet, we need to learn patience and wait on the Lord.

October 10

God Lifts Us out of the Pit

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. (Psalms 40:2)

Have you ever felt that you have been in the pits? God can lift you out of the horrible pit and set your feet upon a rock. He is the rock of your salvation. God also establishes your goings.

You don't have to fear. He said that He will never leave you or forsake you. Whatever your circumstances or your mood, God is there. Remember, if you know Jesus Christ as your Savior, your feet are on the solid rock.

October 11

A New Song in My Heart

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. (Psalms 40:3)

One of the ways to know that you are filled with the Spirit is that you have a song in your heart to the Lord. (“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” Ephesians 5:18-19). God puts a new song in my mouth—a song of praise. Are you constantly thinking about yourself and your woes or is your heart filled with praise to God? The result of this praise for God is that many see it and fear and trust in the Lord. If you want your life to be a witness to others, be filled with the Spirit and sing praises to the Lord in your heart and with your mouth. Focus on God.

October 12

Trust in the Lord

Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. (Psalms 40:4)

Blessed means happy. A person who makes the Lord his trust is happy. If you are not happy, maybe it is because you are not trusting in the Lord. The second part of the verse tells us not to respect the proud or turn aside to lies. We need to be discerning about what others tell us and their attitudes. The Bible is our source of truth, and God is the one who deserves our trust.

October 13

God Thinks about Us

Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. (Psalms 40:5)

One morning I got up early and rode by bike to Lake Michigan to watch the sunrise. I saw many of God's wonderful works: the sky, the clouds, the sun, the crashing waves, and the green grass. God's creation makes my thoughts turn in praise to Him. He thinks about us as well. His thoughts toward us can not be numbered. Sometimes we think no one cares about us, but God cares. He thinks about us all the time. Because He is thinking about us, we don't need to worry.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you" (I Pet. 5:7).

October 14

Delight to Do God's Will

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. (Psalms 40:6-8)

Sacrifices and burnt offerings were a required part of worship in the Old Testament. God doesn't desire just an outward form of religion. He wants us to delight to do His will. He doesn't want us to grudgingly go to church, read our Bible, pray, and give offerings. He wants us to delight to do what He asks of us. His law needs to be within our hearts. We need to know and memorize His Word and then obey it cheerfully.

October 15

Speak Out for God

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation. (Psalms 40:9-10)

In yesterday's Scripture reading, the Psalmist declared "Thy law is within my heart." In today's reading, he expresses his desire to not just keep it in his heart, but share it with others.

Our relationship with God is personal, but it isn't supposed to be so personal that nobody else knows about it. Christ commanded us to go and tell others about Him. Don't be a closet Christian. Show by your life and actions God's righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, lovingkindness, and truth.

October 16

God's Deliverance

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me. For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me. (Psalms 40:11-13)

Do you ever feel that innumerable evils encompass you? Does guilt for your sins take hold of you, so that you can't look up and your heart fails you? That's how the psalmist felt. He wanted

the Lord to make haste and deliver him. God has delivered us. He sent Christ to pay the penalty for our sins. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9). God’s loving-kindness and truth preserve us continually.

October 17

A Prayer for Abusers

Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha. (Psalms 40:14-15)

How are we supposed to pray for those who abused us? David in this psalm prayed that those who were seeking to destroy him would be ashamed and confounded; those who wished him evil would be driven backward; and those who taunted him would be put to shame and desolate.

There is a principle in the Bible that you reap what you sow. On the other hand Jesus told us, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;” (Matthew 5:44). We do need to pray for the salvation of our abuser, but it may take being ashamed, confounded, driven backward and desolate for them to come to the point of salvation.

October 18

Joy

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually,
The LORD be magnified. (Psalms 40:16)

Joy comes from seeking the Lord. Circumstances may be depressing, but we can always be glad in Him. Paul says to “rejoice in the Lord alway” (Philippians 4:4). One night I couldn’t sleep. Every time I tossed and turned I quoted this verse. I didn’t get much sleep, but I had a great time praising the Lord. If we love our salvation, we should be continually saying, “The Lord be magnified.” It should be our goal to magnify the Lord in all areas of our life. If you are struggling with a situation today, think of something that would magnify the Lord and give Him praise.

October 19

I Am Poor and Needy

But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. (Psalms 40:17)

When I feel poor and needy, I need to remember that God is thinking about me. He is my help and deliverer. He is my God. In my weakness, God shows Himself strong. His grace is sufficient to meet all my needs. It is not a bad thing to have weaknesses. Paul gloried in his infirmities because the power of Christ rested on him during the hard times.

October 20

Grace Is Sufficient

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

(2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

We do not know what the thorn in the flesh was. We do know that the Apostle Paul had asked God to take it away and He would not. God wanted to use that thorn for something good, such as to keep Paul humble, and He promised that His grace would be sufficient. This means that God would give Paul enough strength he needed to get through the tasks that He wanted him to do. God will give you enough grace to get through each day and each task too.

October 21

Strength in Weakness

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

God said to Paul, “my strength is made perfect in weakness.” As Christians, we should want to do things in God’s strength and not our own. When we are weak, God can show His strength.

When we feel weak, it is easier to rely on God's strength rather than being tempted to rely on our own. It is exciting and faith building when we see the Lord's strength take over. It is times like these that we can glorify the Lord.

October 22

It Is Okay to Be Weak

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10) It is human to want to feel strong, to feel that you can do it or you are in control. Paul took pleasure in feeling weak and vulnerable instead of feeling strong. You may be tempted to resent feeling weak when you should actually welcome it. From a point of weakness you have the opportunity to see the power of God work in your life as you draw upon His power for everyday activities. Paul didn't want to be tempted to live by his own power. This is why he took pleasure in things that made him weak. Living by God's strength is so much better than living by your own strength.

October 23

Being Soon Angry

He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated. (Proverbs 14:17) A person who is angry does not usually think before he reacts. As a result, he may harm others or damage something. This person has let his emotion carry him away which can lead to a foolish act. If it is the person you are with that is angry, it is best to stay away from him to avoid harm. If

it is yourself who is getting angry, you need to resolve your anger to avoid doing something foolish. Anger can often be resolved by forgiving and by not being selfish. Thinking before acting can also help you from acting foolishly.

October 24

Comforted By Others

For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more. (2 Corinthians 7:5-7)

When there are troubles all around and fears inside of us, that is the time we need comfort. At times God will use other people as He did in this passage to comfort us. Just hearing that someone loves us is comforting. Will you be used of God to comfort others by telling them that you love them and that you care?

October 25

Do It for God's Glory

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)

We are to do all for the glory of God. This should be our motivation for everything we do. Sometimes with abuse and trauma, appetites for food go away. When we are tempted to not eat right, we need to stop and think what would give God the glory. Eating right and maintaining our health is something that will glorify Him.

October 26

What's Ahead?

And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed. (Deuteronomy 31:8)

When bad things have happened in the past, we often fear more of the same for the future. It is comforting to know we can ask the Lord to go before us and prepare our way. He promised that He will be there; He will not fail you or forsake you. With the Lord both going before us and being by our side, we don't need to be dismayed or afraid.

October 27

Called Sons of God

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (1 John 3:1) Before salvation, we were considered enemies of God. It takes a special love to reach out to an enemy and make him a son with all the privileges that go with it. God loved us enough to make us His

own. In doing this, He also gave us His name and called us the sons of God. What a special love and privilege He gives us.

October 28

Does God Understand?

Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. (Psalms 139:3)

Sometimes when we have been mistreated or suffered in unfortunate circumstances, we wonder if God knows. This verse says He does. Other times we may wonder, Does God know what I am feeling and does He know the agony that is in my heart? He is acquainted with all our ways. This includes our thoughts and our feelings.

October 29

Marvelous Are God's Works

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (Psalms 139:14)

God made you in such a way that your soul and body are wonders to behold. Because of the way He created you, you are worthy of respect. You are a marvelous creation. It has been said that God doesn't make any junk. You are so wonderful that you should be treated well. You should treat others well too.

October 30

Precious in His Sight

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. (Psalms 139:17-18)

We are all very precious to God and He has many precious thoughts toward us. The number of these thoughts is more than there are grains of sand. Have you ever tried counting the grains of sand in the desert or on the beach of a lake or the ocean? There are too many to count. That is how many precious thoughts God has toward each of us.

October 31

How to Know If You Have Sinned

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

Part of knowing if you have sinned or not is knowing the difference between temptation and sin. Temptation is the enticement to do wrong. Sin is yielding to that enticement. Temptation itself is not sin, only yielding to it is. If you wonder if there is sin in your heart, you can ask God to show you. If there is sin, confess it and forsake it. You only need to confess a sin once and then it is forgiven. If you feel guilt over a confessed sin, remind yourself that God forgives confessed sin, according to 1 John 1:9. Thank Him for His forgiveness, and move on.

November 1

Hatred Stirs up Strife

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins. (Proverbs 10:12)

A hateful person will cause trouble for others and will make their lives miserable. Love, on the other hand, will forgive or overlook sin. Love will not commit sin against another person.

You do not like it when hateful people do bad things to you, so don't turn around and do hateful things to others. Love instead.

November 2

God Gives His Beloved Sleep

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. (Psalms 127:1-2)

Because of anxiety and stress, we may try to protect ourselves or try to accomplish more by staying up late or rising early. Those who place their safety and hope in the Lord will rest comfortably knowing that God will take care of things while they sleep. Our rest is much sweeter when we are in the Lord's hands.

November 3

God Can Do More

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

Sometimes we feel we just can't make it through the day, or we feel we are not going to get any better. These verses teach that God's power can go beyond what we believe is possible.

This power is also a power that works in us. In other words, God's power can get us through the day and can help us heal and get better.

November 4

Fear of Man Brings a Snare

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. (Proverbs 29:25)

The Apostle Paul sometimes fled when people tried to kill him. Other times he faced those who wanted to see him dead. Just like Paul had to evaluate each situation whether to flee or fight, so we also must do the same. Paul used God's guidance and godly counsel to make his decisions. We also should seek the will of God in dealing with dangerous people and situations.

November 5

God's Truth Brings Joy

For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring

me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God. (Psalms 43:2-4)

When oppressed by an enemy, the best places to go for joy are to God and God's Word. The psalmist here mourned because of what his enemy was doing. When he sought God's light and truth, they brought the psalmist to God Himself. When he came to God, he had joy. With his joy, he praised the Lord.

November 6

Be Not Unequally Yoked

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14) Being yoked together is being in a binding relationship. Marriages, business partnerships or church memberships are yokes. It is good to be yoked with other Christians, but it is wrong for Christians to be yoked with unbelievers. Because dating can lead to marriage, it is best not to even date an unbeliever.

November 7

The Lord Hears

The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. (Psalms 34:17)

When the righteous cry out to the Lord, the Lord hears and delivers. When you cry out to God, make sure your heart is right. These verses say that the Lord delivers the righteous from all their troubles. Sometimes His timing and the His ways of deliverance are not always what we want or expect. But because the Lord said it, deliverance will surely come, and when it does, it will come in a way that will cause us to praise the Lord.

November 8

The Lord Is Near the Brokenhearted

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

(Psalms 34:18)

It is during the times that our hearts are broken that it seems that the Lord is far away. It reminds me of the story, “Footprints” by Margaret Rose Powers. In it the author asked why it seemed that during her lowest times that the Lord left her. The Lord answered that it was during that time that He carried him. When we feel brokenhearted, that does not mean the Lord has left us. This verse teaches the opposite. We can be assured of His presence when we are brokenhearted because of the promise in this verse. Let your brokenhearted feeling be a reminder that the Lord is near.

November 9

Use the Word

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Sometimes for physical healing to occur, a person needs to go under a surgeon's scalpel. For emotional healing a person needs to go under the Lord's two-edged sword, which is the Word of God. His Word can get to the places where you are hurting and help make the necessary adjustments. For your healing, read and meditate on the Word daily.

November 10

Listen to Wisdom

But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. (Proverbs 1:33)

In the context of this verse, wisdom is speaking. This is the wisdom of the Word of God which can give you many practical lessons on how to keep yourself safe. Study to learn the practical lessons that the Word of God has on life. God's Word will also have a quieting and assuring effect on you as well. As you meditate on His Word, God gives the faith to believe that He will take care of you and will work for good all that happens to His own.

November 11

It Is All Nailed to the Cross

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (Colossians 2:13-14)

People who have gone through traumatic experiences often feel a lot of guilt, but many times the basis of that guilt has no foundation. One thing we can say about the cross of Christ is that it takes care of all of your guilt whether it is real or imagined. You are forgiven all trespasses. What has been written against you is blotted out. All your transgression is taken from you and is nailed to the cross of Christ. When you feel guilt for something you have confessed, just believe that it is now nailed to the cross of Christ and thank God it is taken care of.

November 12

A Sound Mind

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)

Our fears do not come from God. Our fears come from expecting the worst. God has given us many wonderful promises to rely on to help combat those fears, and we are able to overcome them to the extent that we are able to believe those promises. We need to look to God for power, love for others, and a sound mind which also has with it the ideas of self-control and good sense. Drawing near to God will improve our emotional and mental health.

November 13

Faith Tested

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (1 Peter 1:6-7)

Faith is very important to God. In this life, our faith will be tested and when this happens, it can be very devastating. Let your faith stand firm through such trials. In the end, both you and the Lord will receive the praise, the honor, and the glory. Don't give up! God has great things ahead for you.

November 14

Joy Unspeakable

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:8-9)

As of yet we have not seen God with our eyes, but even though we have not seen Him we believe that He is there. Through faith, we can have joy in the truths and promises that He has revealed to us. The more we believe and meditate on what God has in store for us in glory, the more we rejoice in Him and His provision of salvation for us.

November 15

Set Him in Safety

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. (Psalms 12:5)

Two things that make the Lord rise are the oppression of the poor and the sighing of the needy. If you find yourself in one of those two categories, the Lord will rise for you. And when He rises, He will set you in safety from the one who threatens you.

November 16

Merry or Sorrowful?

A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. (Proverbs 15:13)

Your mood will affect the way you look and the way you feel. Everyone looks better with a smile than they do with a frown. Sorrow takes away from your ambition and your energy. When the heart is sorrowful, even the good things seem less appealing. The key is to focus on the One who can lift anyone's spirits—the Lord Jesus Christ.

November 17

Source of Comfort

This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me. (Psalms 119:50)

The psalmist found comfort from his affliction in the Word of God. When sorrows or other circumstances put you in a state where you feel as though life has left you or you don't feel like living, then you need to look in God's Word for the answers. The psalmist said that the Word quickened him (gave him life). The Word of God will make every day brighter, so make a goal to read at least one chapter of your Bible every day.

November 18

Learned Contentment

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:11-13)

Paul learned to be content. There were times that life didn't seem to be going well with him. There were times that he felt physical and emotional pain. There were times he felt as though he was on top of the world. However, he learned to be content in whatever circumstances he found himself. He was able to do this through Christ who strengthened him. You also can find contentment in life through Christ's strength.

November 19

Your Own Way

The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself. (Proverbs 14:14)

A backslider is a person who leaves God's way to follow his own ways. There are always consequences to being disobedient to God. He made life and He knows the best way to live life. When we deviate from God's design for life, we will suffer the consequences. But when we take God's way, life will be better and we will become more satisfied.

November 20

God Shall Cover You

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; (Psalms 91:4-5)

In this psalm, God is pictured as a bird with feathers. Like a mother bird, which will cover her young with her feathers to protect them, the psalmist pictures God covering us to protect us. We can take refuge under His wings. If we arm ourselves with the Bible for our protection as well, we do not have to be afraid of the terror by night.

November 21

Need to Be Positive

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear? (Proverbs 18:14)

Physical ailments are easier to deal with than emotional pains. A positive attitude during a sickness will help a person recover. A broken or wounded heart will take away a person's will to live. This is why you need to look at the positive side of things. Looking at the bright side of things will make life go better.

November 22

Thanks in Everything

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

This verse says to give thanks in everything. Does that mean that we should give thanks for sins that were committed against us? Even in the midst of trauma, we can give thanks that it was not worse and for the health and safety we do have. We can be thankful that God will work it out for good for those who love Him (see Romans 8:28). And we can be thankful that God can use the bad experience to make us a better person. We need to look for the good and then to give thanks.

November 23

Need Faith

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)

You need faith in order to please God. You cannot go to Him without faith. Believing in His existence is not the hard part. The hard part is to believe that He rewards those who diligently

seek Him. Do you believe this verse enough to start seeking Him with a whole heart today and for the rest of your life? This is another thing to be thankful for.

November 24

Thanks to God

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;
(Ephesians 5:20)

God makes no mistakes. He has a purpose and plan for His own people. Because He makes no mistakes, we can always give thanks to Him for all things. Notice our thanks is directed to God. It is because of Christ's death on the cross in our place that we can direct our thanks to our heavenly Father.

November 25

A Strength to the Needy

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.
(Isaiah 25:4)

The Lord is a strength to the needy in distress. Whatever situation you find yourself in, look to the Lord for your strength. This verse speaks of hard times being like storms. During storms, a person seeks shelter. The Lord is a shelter to us from even the most violent of storms. Thank the Lord that He is a refuge for us.

November 26

Reasons to Be Thankful

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. (Psalms 100:4-5)

As we approach God, we should thank Him for His goodness He has shown in saving us. As we live for Him, He will reveal His goodness in other ways. Thank Him for His mercy that keeps Him forgiving and accepting us in the present and forever. And thank God for His truth, which is our guide for all eternity.

November 27

Give Thanks to God

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (Colossians 3:17)

Doing things in the name of the Lord Jesus means that we are to do things for His glory and through His strength. When we do things in Jesus' name, we are not doing things for our selfishness or our glory. Rather, we are being lead by Jesus to do the things He wants. This puts Him in control. We are also to give thanks to God by Jesus' power, even when it is difficult to do so. When we put Jesus in control, the results are His and it is easier to give thanks.

November 28

Thanks for His Unspeakable Gift

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. (2 Corinthians 9:15)

God's gift of salvation by grace through the Lord Jesus Christ is so wonderful that words cannot describe it. If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have already received some of the benefits that God intends for you. There are still far more things that are involved in God's grace towards you that you have not realized or experienced. Both the present grace and the future grace of God are too great for words. You can thank Him for what you have experienced already and what you have not received yet.

November 29

Looking at the Bright Side

There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. (Psalms 4:6-7)

There are many who look at the negative side of things. This type of person is not happy. The person who looks at the positive side of things, however, will be happy. Which person are you? Are you unhappy because you are always finding the negative of every situation or do you look for God's blessing? Your happiness in life will be determined by what you look for.

November 30

Finish the Course with Joy

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24)

Many people do not care for themselves; they are filled with self-hate. Others think of themselves too highly. Paul said that he did not count his life dear to himself. What you think about yourselves does not matter—only what God thinks. Paul’s ministry for Christ was much more important than what he thought of himself. So who you think you are is not as important as what you do for Christ. Finish your course and ministry with joy. Get your eyes off yourself and onto the task at hand.

December 1

Love Is Kind

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, (1 Corinthians 13:4)

The next few devotions are on the subject of love—to help you will distinguish between what is love and what is not love. The word “charity” in the KJV is the word for love. Love suffers long or is patient. Love waits for the other person. Love is kind. Love will do nice things for the other person. The kindness that love gives does not have to be earned.

December 2

Love Is Not Selfish

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
(1 Corinthians 13:4)

Love does not envy. Love is not upset when nice things happen to the other person. Love does not show off or try to bring attention to self. Love does not think that self is more important than the other person. Instead, love is interested in the welfare and the best interests of another.

December 3

Love Does Not Seek Its Own

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; (1 Corinthians 13:5)

Love not behaving itself unseemly means that love is not rude. Love does not cuss another person out. Love is polite. A person should mind his manners and say please and thank you. Love does not try to see what it can get for itself. Instead love wants to see the other person happy and prosper.

December 4

Love Thinks No Evil

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; (1 Corinthians 13:5)

A person is provoked when he becomes angry or irritated. A loving person does not easily become angry toward a person he loves. Love thinks no evil plans to destroy or to harm another

person. Love is not suspicious of wrongdoing by another person. A loving person does not think the person loved is up to wrongdoing without evidence.

December 5

Love Believes All Things

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Corinthians 13:6-7)

These verses continue describing the characteristics of love. Believing all things involves trusting a person. Marriages and friendships need to be based on trust. If a person has proven himself untrustworthy, then it is not wise to establish a close relationship with him. A person must commit himself to the relationship willingly without being controlled. Love bearing and believing all things includes giving a person some independence.

December 6

Love Your Enemies

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (Matthew 5:44)

When a person, who is supposed to love and care for you, actually abuses you, you may be tempted to hate him and consider him an enemy. Anger, hate, and bitterness do not bring happiness. So, God gives a formula in this verse to overcome the horrible feeling of hate within us. This verse says to love, bless, do good to, and pray for these people. This verse also shows that love is a

decision. No one has a nice feeling toward an enemy, but we can choose to love an enemy and display the characteristics of love mentioned in the previous days' devotions from I Corinthians 13.

December 7

Don't Be Ashamed

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (Romans 10:10-11)

When you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are completely forgiven, made righteous, and given a place in heaven. Part of the forgiveness involves erasing the past and being made righteous in the present. If you believe in Christ, you will follow Him, and to the extent that you follow Christ, you do not sin. If you are forgiven and do not sin, you have nothing to be ashamed of.

December 8

Trust in God

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. (Psalms 57:1) During those times that we are beset by calamity, we need to cry out to the Lord to be merciful to us. Our soul needs to trust in God in the midst of trials. We need to hide under the shadow of His wings and make Him our refuge until the trial is over. Who do you turn to in trouble? Do you put your

trust in the government, doctors, or pills to meet your needs? God wants you to put your trust in Him.

December 9

Where Are My Expectations?

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. (Psalms 62:5-6)

When our expectations aren't met, we become depressed. Someone forgets our birthday or anniversary and we are bummed out. If our expectation is from God, we will never be disappointed. Sometimes we have to wait, but God is our rock, salvation and defense. We shall not be moved if we are waiting on Him to meet our expectations.

December 10

Meditate on God in the Middle of the Night

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

Are you ever awake in the middle of the night? Do you spend that time worrying and fretting? The next time you can't sleep, meditate on God. Think about His character. He is holy, righteous, almighty, loving, merciful, all-knowing, all-seeing, everywhere present and just. Go through the alphabet and think about a characteristic of God for every letter. Then, cast your cares upon Him for He cares for you.

December 11

Handling Fear

Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. (Psalms 64:1)

The psalmist's prayer here is not that God would save him from his enemy, but preserve his life from fear of the enemy. Many times we become paralyzed by our fears. Long after our enemy is no longer a part of our lives, we live each day in fear because of what the enemy has done to us. We fear it will happen again. God is bigger than our fears. He wants us to trust Him to be with us, no matter what happens. He promised He will never leave us nor forsake us. Many times in the Bible, God says, "Fear not." He doesn't want us to live our lives in fear.

December 12

Continual Praise

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. (Psalms 34:1)

What is your attitude the majority of the time? Are you a grumbler? Do you always look at the negative side of things? The psalmist's attitude was that he would bless the Lord at ***all times***, even when things didn't look so good. God's praise needs to be continually in our mouths. If our focus is on Him, everything else looks brighter.

December 13

Magnify the Lord

My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. (Psalms 34:2-3)

What do you boast about? Do you boast of your accomplishments? The psalmist made his boast in the Lord. We need to brag on the Lord to others. To magnify is to make something greater, to amplify, to increase the power, or glory of something or someone. We can't make God any greater than He already is or increase His power, but we can proclaim His greatness and power so others may know Him. When you are with other people, make sure to exalt God's name together with them.

December 14

Seek the Lord

I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. (Psalms 34:4-5)

When we are afraid, we need to seek the Lord. He will hear us and deliver us from our fears.

Many times our fears are not based on facts. When we look unto God, He takes away our fears and lightens our faces. We radiate the love and peace of God. Don't be crippled by your fears.

Seek the Lord.

December 15

The Lord's Deliverance

This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (Psalms 34:6-7)

When we cry out to the Lord, He will deliver us. He hears us and saves us out of all our troubles. If we really believe that, we will not hesitate to cry out in the midst of our trials. If we fear God, the angel of the Lord encamps round about us and delivers us. What a comfort in times of trouble to remember who our God is and what He promises to those who fear Him.

December 16

Taste Test

O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. (Psalms 34:8)

Many ice-cream parlors offer multiple flavors, and they allow you to sample flavors to see how they taste. God wants us to taste and see that He is good. Try Him, you'll like Him. The person who trusts in God is blessed or happy. If you aren't happy, maybe you need to take a taste test.

Trust in God, you won't be disappointed.

December 17

Needs Met

O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing. (Psalms 34:9-10)

This verse promises that if you fear the Lord, you will have no want, nor lack any good thing. If you are lacking something, there are three possibilities. One, you don't fear God and aren't seeking Him first in your life. Two, you don't really need the thing you think you absolutely must have. And three, God is telling us wait, that He will give it to you in His time. "But seek ye first the

kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33)

December 18

Right Living

Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. (Psalms 34:11-14)

The verses preceding those above teach us how to live as though we really fear the Lord. We have to live right. Watch our tongue. Keep our tongue from evil and our lips from speaking guile or deceit. Don't do evil, instead do good. Seek peace and pursue it. Sometimes, we want to give back the same treatment others gave us. We aren't to have verbal battles with nasty words and lies. We are to turn the other cheek. As far as it is in our power, we are to seek peace. The other person may want to fight, but we are to pursue peace. Sometimes that means avoiding this person or giving them time to cool down. Ask God to give you wisdom to walk in His ways.

December 19

My Heart Is Overwhelmed

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. (Psalms 61:1-2)

Do you ever feel overwhelmed? When David felt that way, he cried out to the Lord. It seemed like he was calling from the end of the earth. When you come to the end of your rope, God is there. He will listen to your prayer. He is a rock that is higher than you are. He never reaches the end of His rope. He is always there for you.

December 20

Run the Race

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:1)

In this verse, life is compared with running a race. When athletes run a race, they sacrifice things that will hinder their running. When they practice, they will use weights, but when they race they lay aside those weights. If we want to do well in life, then we must put aside sin and other things that will harm and keep us from finishing well.

December 21

Looking unto Jesus

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

Because Jesus authored life, He knows the best way to live life. God has given to us the Bible to show us how to live the life that He has given to us. Following God's Word is the best way to live life. The Bible also leads us to eternal life. We need to keep our focus on Jesus and His Word and ask for Him to lead us.

December 22

Consider Jesus

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. (Hebrews 12:3)

Yesterday's devotion told us to be looking unto Jesus. Today's devotion tells us to consider Jesus, who endured hostility from sinners. If Christ was willing to suffer for us, are we willing to suffer for Him, or are we willing to accept the path of life that Jesus has for us to live now? That path may be the painful road to healing and recovery. We are to consider Jesus to keep from becoming wearied or faint in our minds. The weariness in our minds can include all types of mental and emotional problems such as depression, despair, hopelessness, grief, and fear.

December 23

Made Righteous

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

As Christmas approaches, we think of the reason Christ was sent to earth. This verse says that God made Christ to be sin for us. Christ bore our sin for us on the cross. The result of believing this truth is that we become the righteousness of God in Christ. This means our sin was placed on Christ and His righteousness was placed on us. God now sees the believer as a righteous person. As believers, we have no grounds to view ourselves as defiled.

December 24

Saved from Our Enemies

That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; (Luke 1:71-72)

These verses are a prophecy of what Christ would accomplish with His coming. This prophecy will be completed in His second coming because of what He accomplished in His first coming. In addition to being saved from our sins, Christ will save us from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us. This will happen when we get to heaven. This salvation was promised in the Old Testament.

December 25

He Will Save His People

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by

the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matthew 1:21-23)

God's Son was called Jesus because He shall save His people from their sins. The name Jesus means savior. Jesus came specifically to earth to save people from their sins. Another name God's Son is called is Emmanuel, which is the Hebrew word that means God with us. The names of God's Son show God's care for us by providing salvation and His presence with us.

December 26

Doing Good

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. (James 4:17) I want to apply this verse to the present and the future. We all have shirked our responsibilities at one time or another. All those past sins are covered by the blood of Christ and we cannot go back and undo them. As for the present and the future, we all need to decide that from now on we will do what is right. This includes following God's answers to difficulties that we struggle with on a daily basis.

December 27

Forgiving as God Forgives

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (Matthew 6:12)

This verse is from the Lord's Prayer. We repeat this prayer often, but how many of us think about what they are saying in this prayer? The words ask God to forgive us to the same extent that we

forgive others. If we do not forgive, the prayer is then asking God not to forgive us. Of course, we want God to forgive us, and if we want this, then we need to decide to forgive others. Ephesians 4:32 approaches this from the other angle. There it says that we are to forgive as God forgives us.

December 28

Who Are We?

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Our old nature is to be crucified with Christ. We are not to live in sin any longer. Instead of depending on self and doing what self wants, depend on Christ and let Him take control of your life. Believe what God says is right for you and obey it. Be an obedient Christian. God loves us, we can trust Him. Are we Christians where Christ is dominant or where sin is dominant?

December 29

Where Do Good and Evil Come from?

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. (Luke 6:45)

When people do bad things to people, many times the victim asks, “Did this happen because I am a bad person?” This verse says that people hurt others because the heart of the person doing

the hurting is evil. The person who is hurt is not hurt because he deserved it. If you were not loved when you were growing up, it was not because you were unlovable. You were not loved because the person who was supposed to love you did not because his heart was evil.

December 30

Meditate to Heal

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Psalms 1:1-3)

The one who delights in and meditates on God's Word will flourish like a fruit tree planted by the water. For anyone to heal or flourish after being used and abused, he must renew his mind or thinking by constantly meditating on God's Word. Consider how God's promises of working all things for good (Romans 8:28), of Him never forsaking you (Hebrews 13:5), of His grace being sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9), of His power being made perfect in your weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9), and of tribulations developing character (Romans 5:3-5) apply to your past and to your present circumstances. Through understanding and believing the promises of God as they apply to you, you will be healed of your emotional pain.

December 31

Do It for the Lord

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; (Colossians 3:22-23)

Many verses and helpful ideas have been presented to you in this book. What will you do with these verses and with your life? Will you do what you know God wants you to do and will you do it heartily as unto Him? Don't do it to please man but do it because it is the Word of God and because God wants you to. If need be, go through this book again with a determination to follow what God has said.

Main Message

The first thing we must realize is that no one measures up to God's perfect standard of holiness. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." None of us deserves to go to heaven. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death." This death includes an eternal death in the lake of fire. All hope is not gone, however. Christ took the punishment that we deserved upon Himself. Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Because our transgression was against God, He has the right to forgive us. Because of His holiness, there can be no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. So Christ shed His blood in our place, the just for the unjust.

Christ paid the price for our sin. How is this forgiveness applied to our lives? Romans 10:9-10 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This forgiveness is applied to our lives when we place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior. You can place your faith and trust in Him right now through prayer in your own words. Simply confess to Him that you are a sinner, ask Him to forgive you and give you eternal life, and He will do it. Then thank Him.

Topical index

Abuse - April 17, May 5, August 22, 24, 29, November 4, December 29

Afflictions - (see trials or suffering)

Alcohol - May 16, August 22

Anger - February 27, May 10, 15, July 8, 20, August 24, October 23

Anxiety - (see worry)

Ashamed - February 29, May 17, July 3, 10, September 20, December 7

Betrayal - April 13, August 23

Bitterness - July 17, August 24

Change - March 9, 23, June 10

Christ - January 2, March 24, 29, 30, 31, April 1, 13, 16, 17, July 4, October 10, December 21, 23, 25

Christian living - January 30, February 26, September 13, 14, November 27, December 14, 18, 26

Comfort - March 17, August 5, October 24, November 17

Contentment - November 18

Courage - April 12, August 25, 27

Critical attitude - February 7

Crying - January 9, March 17, June 6, September 22

Death - March 16, April 7, 9, 22, July 21

Decision making - January 6, July 20

Defiled - August 2, December 23

Deliverance - January 31, April 29, July 4, 14, August 8, 16, October 16, November 7, December 15

Dependence - (see faith and trust) January 4, December 17, 28

Depression - January 3, February 9, April 29, May 6, July 1, 4, August 17, September 23,

October 10, December 19

Devotions - (see quiet time)

Diligence - June 24, 28, October 2

Direction - January 6, July 11, December 21

Discouragement - February 25, May 6, July 4, November 21, December 19

Eating disorders - October 25

Embarrassed - (see ashamed)

Eternal life - January 27, March 2, 11, April 22, December 21

Faith - January 8, 27, February 16, 21, April 11, 27, June 21, July 14, August 1, 7, September 25, November 13, 23

Fear - January 7, 29, February 16, 25, March 5, April 12, June 18, 21, July 21, 22, August 19, 31, September 16, 21, October 4, 26, November 4, 12, 20, December 11, 14

Feelings - (see anger, crying, depression, discouragement, fear, grief, and joy) April 16, October 5, November 8, December 9

Fellowship - January 30, August 20

Flashbacks - July 15, August 12

Forgetting - October 1

Forgiveness - February 12, 23, 24, March 22, May 7, 8, 18, June 2, July 18, 20, August 24, October 8, 31, November 11, December 27

Forsaken - January 10, April 12, July 12

Friendship - February 18, 22, May 18, June 27, September 15

Fulfillment - May 5, June 13, August 30, November 19

Giving - March 29, August 30

God - January 27, 29, May 4, June 22, September 5, 6, October 28

God's friend - January 16, August 3, 4

God's goodness - January 8, February 23, March 6, 13, June 11, July 28, August 9, September 23, November 26, 28, December 16

God's love - January 5, February 10, 14, March 25, April 2, 5, 30, May 1, June 14, August 17, October 27, December 28

God's treasure - January 12, April 30, July 5, 22, October 30

Grace - February 8, June 1, August 6, October 20

Grief - March 30, 31, June 22, September 23, November 8

Guidance - (see direction)

Guilt - January 15, March 19, April 4, July 4, 13, August 2, September 20, October 16, 31, November 11 **Happiness**

- (see joy)

Hate - May 14, July 19, November 1, December 6

Healing - January 18, February 17, April 1, July 7, September 3, October 5, November 3, December 30 **Heaven**

- March 6, 7, 27, April 6, 7, 10

Help - January 29, March 1, April 17, July 11, August 15, 19, October 4,

Holy Spirit - March 5, 6, April 23, May 16

Hope - January 31, February 20, March 26, April 29, May 6, 24, August 15, September 8, 23

Joy - January 9, February 5, 19, March 24, April 25, May 2, 3, 23, June 15, July 1, August 20, September 22,

October 18, November 5, 14, 16, 29

Justice - January 13, February 6, March 14, April 28, 30, June 29, July 6, 9, 12, August 18, September 12, 21,

October 3, 7

Knowing God - September 27, 29

Loneliness - May 19, June 17

Love - January 24, February 14, May 20, 21, June 14, July 19, August 28, 29, November 1, December 1, 2, 3, 4,

5, 6

Lust - March 12, April 21, 22

Memories - (also see mind) January 20, February 11, May 31, August 12

Mercy - January 31, May 5, September 8, December 8

Mind - February 3, March 18, April 23, 24, May 25, June 25, November 12, December 22

Needs - May 26, July 23, 24, September 9, October 19

Nightmares - January 7, May 27, August 12, September 19, November 2, 20

Obedience - February 26, March 3, 20, 21, July 12, August 25, September 30, October 14, November 19,

December 31

Panic attacks - January 21, June 9

Peace - January 17, February 2, April 24, August 11, September 11

Perseverance - February 15, June 24

Pleasing people - July 16, September 13, 14, December 31

Power - (see strength)

Praise - July 26, 27, 29, August 14, September 1, 7, December 12, 13

Prayer - February 15, March 15, June 21, July 30, August 10

Protection - (also see security) February 13, June 16, July 31, November 20

Quiet time - January 1, February 21, 28, March 9, May 24, June 25, July 1, August 20, 26, November 5, 9, 10, 17, December 30

Rest - May 30, June 26, August 31, October 6

Revenge - (see vengeance)

Rewards - April 19, May 12

Righteousness - April 4, 15, June 7, 12, September 10, 28, October 7, December 23

Safety - (see protection and security)

Salvation - April 2, June 1, 2, 10, 12, August 3, September 18, December 24, 25

Security - (also see protection) May 12, 27, June 20, July 22, September 26, October 4, November 2, 10, 15 **Self-blame** - (see guilt)

Self-concept - January 14, 28, March 10, 19, June 5, 19, July 22, September 2, 4, 24, October 29, 30, November 30, December 28

Self-harm - March 10, April 3, June 5, July 4, October 29, December 20

Self-love - January 25, May 21, November 30

Separation - May 15, August 22, November 6

Sex - January 19, May 9

Shame - (see ashamed)

Sin - April 14, 21, 22, October 31, December 20, 28

Singing - February 10, July 5, August 14, October 11

Sorrow - (also see crying and depression) September 22, November 16

Strength - January 4, March 4, April 8, 12, May 29, June 18, 23, July 14, August 19, 21, 25, 27, October 21, 22, November 3, 12, 25

Suffering - January 26, February 8, 29, March 7, 8, 30, 31, April 16, 17, 18, May 22, August 13, September 17, October 22, December 22

Tears - (see crying)

Temptation - March 12, April 18, 19, 20, 21, May 13

Thankfulness - September 7, November 22, 24, 26, 27, 28

Thoughts - (also see mind) March 5, April 23, 24, October 13, November 21, December 10

Trials - January 22, March 28, April 20, 25, June 9, 13, July 15, September 1, October 19, November 13, December 8

Trust - (see faith) June 7, July 7, 14, October 12, December 8

Vengeance - April 14, June 3, 23, 29, September 12, October 17

Verbal Abuse - February 4, July 2

Wait - July 9, August 21, October 9

Witnessing - October 15

Work - January 23, May 28, June 8, 24, 28

Worry - January 11, 21, February 1, May 11, July 8, 23, 25, August 10 **Wrath**

- (see anger)

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