

PERSONAL WORSHIP

Intimacy With God

Volume Three

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Matthew 17:24-18:35

Mark 9:32-9:50

Luke 9:46-Luke 14:6

John 7:1-John 10:42

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APPLYING THE TWELVE STEPS TO PERSONAL WORSHIP

Addiction to alcohol, or what the Bible calls “drunkenness” is a reality. It is *a terrible reality!* The millions who are addicted to drugs live in a slavery unimaginable by those who are not addicted.

BUT — that is not all — *there are other addictions!*

I want to suggest to you that addiction to failure in personal worship is also a very real, hurtful reality. It has far-, far-reaching consequences. The *twelve steps* taken by every member of *Alcoholics Anonymous* can give you the same liberty and freedom. We shall state briefly *the twelve steps* of AA and then develop their application to your personal worship. *This can mean your deliverance.* Please read it carefully.

A working method for overcoming: DEAR GOD!

Step One: “I admit my desperate need for your help in managing my time for personal worship. I just can not or will not do it. *I must have your help* — I have tried too often and failed too often to believe anything else.”

Step Two: “I do now believe your power — which is within me and beyond me — can and will transform me. I believe I am now being strengthened by the person of the Holy Spirit in my inward man (Eph. 3:16; I John 4:4).”

Step Three: “I now turn my will over to you. Right here and right now I yield my desires to your desires. I believe you can both ‘*will and do in me your good pleasure*’ (Phil. 2:13).”

Step Four: “I now repent like I have not repented before. I am making right now a moral inventory. It is a searching, fearless inventory of my own heart. I *specify* my sins — my excuses — my weaknesses. I do not do this to earn anything — just to be rid of the burdens. I lay them at your feet.”

Step Five: “I admit to my Lord, to myself and to another person who has committed himself or herself to personal worship the exact nature of my failure. Such a person will in turn do the same for me.

Step Six: “I now yield my whole heart to the Great Physician for healing. My yielding is in confidence and trust in his love and mercy. I accept his acceptance of me, and the forgiveness he gives to me — the peace he gives me in his heart.”

Step Seven: “I bow before my Lord in humility and ask him right now to transform me through the renewing of my mind. I lay my body on his altar as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1,2). I am perfectly confident that this offering is acceptable to him. ‘And this is the confidence which we have before him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us’ (I John

5:14). I wait before him in the sense of rest — awaiting your working in me.”

Step Eight: “I here list all the persons I have ‘*let down*’ by my failure to keep my personal worship. I confess to each of them my failure and decision to recommit myself. I assure them, and myself, that I believe I could go to heaven without personal worship as spelled out in this book. *But* I already know what a sense of wholeness personal worship gives me and I am not going to live without it.

Step Nine: “I want to meet with my dear friends in group worship — just two or three of us with Jesus in the midst! I want to be an encouragement to them — and to myself — as they are to me. *I right now* make an appointment for such a meeting.”

Step Ten: “I continue to take a fearless personal inventory. When I have failed I admit it — I do not hide it or justify it — I *admit* it! I also take knowledge of my successes. I tell others about them. I thank and praise you for them. I share my testimony with others often.”

Step Eleven: “I believe in my heart of hearts that personal worship is NOT optional. I can not and will not make this intimacy with my Lord a matter of choice. I have already gone through my Gethsemane. Right here I regive myself to *prayer* (Acts 6:6).”

Step Twelve: “Since I have experienced through this time of personal worship such a *vast improvement* — such a *blessed reality* — such a *peace* that does indeed pass human explanation I *must* — I *will* share this joy with others! I will do this each day as I am moved to do so by yourself.”

I want to now summarize and expand these *twelve steps* as they relate to our personal worship:

Step One: *There is something strange* about my inability to establish and maintain my personal worship! I can and do establish and maintain a job for my “bread and butter.” I know the real meaning of the verse that says “he that will not work will not eat” (II Thess. 3:10). Somehow I do not feel the same urgency about eating the bread “that has come down from heaven” — or drinking of “the water of life.” The real equation here is: “he that will not make provision for personal worship will not eat and drink under the rule of God in his life.” I *know* and I agree with this truth — but I can not or I will not do it! I now admit my total inability. I need your help. I *must* have your help. If you do not will it and do it — it will *not* be done. I bow and wait before you. There is an enemy

— he is most active. He is here now opposing you in me — and through me. I bind Satan by your power — not mine — I agree with others in this request to bind him (Matt. 18:18-20).

Step Two: There is something equally strange and wonderful about your promise to help me. I read these words with my whole heart: “. . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph. 3:16,17a). If we do not believe you live in us we short-circuit your strength-giving power in us. We are spirit-beings. Since “God is Spirit” (John 4:24), and we are created in his likeness how could we be anything else but spirit (I refer of course, to the inward man)? You strengthen our resolve to obey you — you lift us up by promising to forgive us. In what sense is it true that “greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world”? Please embrace these truths to your heart as I do to my heart: (1) The Holy Spirit is greater in the help he has to get his job done. The only help Satan has is the selfish servants of his in this world. They begrudgingly serve their master — we have loving self-giving servants to help us. (2) The Holy Spirit is greater in what he offers — Satan can not forgive you — or love you or intercede for you. (3) The Holy Spirit is greater in the hope of a world and life where there will be no such limitations as we have here.

Step Three: This is a most crucial step — indeed it is THE crucial step. Our dear Lord gave us the example. It IS POSSIBLE to will to do his will — we *can* say and mean: “NOT MY WILL but YOUR WILL BE DONE.” Will you right now read these two verses with me and apply them to your life: “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12,13). Please, please, mark it carefully! When you *work out God works in!* This is a synchronous or simultaneous action. *If you do not work out God will not — can not work in. He has bound himself by his own lanes of production.* There is no victory in words only — in action — in obedience — in getting out of bed — in turning off the TV — in opening up your Bible and the song book. We are weak and tremble in our weakness — but we *can* obey. He is able when we are willing!

Step Four: Repentance is indeed an attitude. *It is also a time and a place where I decide enough is enough!* If we never take inventory we will never find out how much we have sold or how much we have to sell. How many days have gone by without devoting even one hour of time in exclusive interest in yourself? I have not talked to you and you to me for one hour. A recent survey was made of over one hundred preachers — the honest admission was that the average time given to our Lord was *three minutes!* This is a terrible sin against those to whom they minister who expect better of them. It is a sin against

their wives many of whom want to be more spiritually minded but are dragged down by the apathy — the indifference — the busyness — or the moral failure of their husbands. It is a terrible sin against the future of their children who reject “out of hand” the whole thought of serving you if it amounts to nothing more than a religious routine they see their fathers caught up in. Enough is enough. I repent. I will change. I ask you for your help.

Step Five: I now seek out that dear person I can trust and confess my sin as it relates to this practice of personal worship. I *know* how to do it — but I do *not* do it. They also know how but are not doing it. I right now take the phone in hand and call them for an appointment. I am going to say something like this: “You know, Jerry, I have a great interest in daily devotions or personal worship — and I know you do too. I want to confess to you that I am a miserable failure here. But I also want you to know that I *am* going to change beginning tomorrow morning. I’ll check with you and report every day for the three weeks it takes to make this practice a habit. Will you help me? How are you getting along with your quiet time or personal worship?” Just here you could hear a recital of very much the same thing you confessed to them. You could be just here making the dearest friend you ever had as well as establishing intimacy with our Lord.

Step Six: We have already talked about repentance and forgiveness but it is quite another matter to embrace to our heart your acceptance of us. If you could accept a murderer like Saul of Tarsus — an adulterer like David — a failure like Peter — a weak young man like John Mark who would not go into the dangerous territory between Perga and Pisidia — then you *can* and *will* and *do* accept me! Not once — not twice or even seventy times seven — but every time I turn and repent and ask. I know you forbid continuing in sin that grace may abound — and this is NOT my reason for failure — I *do not want* to hurt you. I *love you* and yield myself to you. But I want the security of your arms around me — even when I have just returned from the pig pen. Your love will conquer my willfulness — but with some of us it takes one long time. But if your love is not represented by the waiting father who longs for us and only awaits our return and welcomes us with open arms we are hopeless. Hope and tears of joy spill over on my Father’s robe. I relax in your love.

Step Seven: If you teach me anything you teach me that I live in the body but I am not the body:

Read these words and notice the bold face words:

“For we know that if the earthly tent **which is our house** (we are not the house, but the occupant) is torn down, **we have a building from God** (we move from this tent to God’s building), a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (II Cor. 5:1).

Paul said of this tent — this body:

“. . . I buffet my body and **make it my slave**, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (I Cor. 9:27).

We control our bodies — our bodies need NOT control us. We can present our bodies as a priest presented the body of a sacrifice:

“. . . **present your bodies** a living sacrifice”
(Rom. 12:1,2).

Step Eight: All who have followed my teaching procedure know I believe very strongly in repetition: I believe it will be enough for steps *eight through twelve* to simply restate them in other — but no more words: “I now go to all persons I know who believe I am involved in personal worship and who do not know I have not been faithful in this commitment. They know with me that I could die and go to heaven without personal worship as spelled out in this book, but I just do not want to miss the wholeness this personal worship gives me. I confess to them my failure — but my decision to recommit myself — and ask for their prayers. This will not be easy but it will help you like no other step — please do it.

Step Nine: “I want to meet with some of the dear friends (perhaps some of the same people to whom I went in step eight) — I want to worship with this small group — just two or three of us with Jesus in the midst. I will try to encourage them — myself as they encourage me. I now reinforce my decision to call them and make an appointment.”

Step Ten: “I continue to take a fearless personal in-

ventory. Just here I read these most helpful words from *Michael Hall*:

Would you like to know **the key to emotional vitality**, to feeling highly motivated, to personal confidence and to a sense of destiny? The key is realizing that **your thoughts directly and solely create your emotions**. Other factors obviously enter in. Relationships, health, weather — these and many other factors influence, intensify and complicate our emotions. People also “push our buttons” and **trigger** thought processes. Yet in spite of all **these evocative triggers**, ultimately **all of your emotions come from your thoughts**. As you think in your heart — so you are (Prov. 23:7). (Good News Encounters, P.O. Box 40222, Grand Junction, CO 81504)”

Step Eleven: “I believe in my heart of hearts that personal worship is NOT optional. I can not and will not make this intimacy with my Lord a matter of choice. I have already gone through my Gethsemane. Right here I regive myself to *prayer* (Acts 6:6).”

Step Twelve: “Since I have experienced through this time of personal worship such a *vast improvement* — such a *blessed reality* — such a *peace* that does indeed pass human explanation I *must* — I *will* share this joy with others! I will do this each day as I am moved to do so by yourself.”

WEEK ONE

—Sunday—

If the heavens, angels, the heavenly host, sun, moon, and stars praise him who are we to do less?



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him from the heights above. Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies” (Psa. 148:1-4). Our Savior taught us to pray: “Your will be done on earth just as your will is done in heaven.” The most obvious expression of your will is praise. Your greatness and goodness prompt such a response. No one needed to lead the angelic beings in a song of praise. Their expression was truly spontaneous! If somehow we could wing our way through the heavens and view first hand the planets and stars we would immediately wonder how great would be the One who created it all!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How good it would be to be translated into the presence of the angels and identify with them. You have created them and placed them in “the heights above.” They need not live by faith — there is no question about who did what. They live in the realm of sight. Is this why they cannot be forgiven? How many angels are there? There is an unnumbered multitude. There must be billions upon billions of such heavenly beings. The sun, moon and stars of our little galaxy must seem insignificant indeed to the angels. That man should live without praising you appears strange indeed. No wonder our Lord used heaven and its host as an example for us! I am full of unspeakable wonder and praise!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Our sin becomes a monstrous affrontery from the

perspective of the heavenly hosts. It is most difficult to do more than pause in amazement before you. The psalmist calls on inanimate objects to develop a voice and cry out your praise. And, considering the circumstance such would be but a natural request. Consider the power and beauty all about when one’s view is in the midst of outer space. What would be the natural response? If one was taught and believed there was an intelligent loving Creator behind all he saw then he would cry out in praise. If he had been rebelling against such a Creator he would cry out in fear. Dear Lord forgive me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Crown Him the Lord of life,
Who triumphed o’er the grave,
Who rose victorious in the strife
For those He came to save!
His glories now we sing,
Who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring,
And lives that death may die.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁴After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?”

²⁵“Yes, he does,” he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes — from their own sons or from others?”

²⁶“From others,” Peter answered.”

“Then the sons are exempt,” Jesus said to him.

²⁷“But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.” —*Matthew 17:24-27, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Only Matthew records this most interesting incident. I do want to take hold of the meaning. I wonder why this record was included by Matthew? It does teach us a facet of the life of your Son we would not otherwise have. These men were collecting two days wages from every Jewish man over twenty years old. This was no small demand — not every man could immediately produce such a payment. Why did the tax collectors ask Peter about the payment from Jesus? The answer should be obvious: “he had no place to lay his head; he was an itinerant preacher who depended totally on others to feed and clothe him.” This being so where would he get two days wages? Our Lord has such a kind generous attitude toward Peter. Jesus teaches something far more than obedience to the authorities in paying taxes.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

We wonder why Peter didn't say anything to Jesus when he entered the house in Capernaum? Where had the encounter with the tax collectors occurred? Was Peter in downtown Capernaum doing some much needed shopping for provisions? At whatever juncture it was not in the presence of our Lord. And yet Jesus *knew* what had happened. It must have been a real shock to Peter! What a revelation of the omniscience and omnipresence of our Lord! What a renewal of the deity of Jesus in the heart of Simon! Jesus was the son of the King of heaven — he need not pay taxes to his own father: to give no offence he did pay taxes. But also in such a manner as to indelibly impress his divinity upon all.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this record of taxes — it speaks to all of us who pay them. (2) Thank you for the temple tax — which was the atonement tax — we are so glad we need not pay that — *he paid it all!* (3) Thank you for Peter's willingness to defend his Lord in any way he could. (4) Thank you for the wonderful evidence of deity seen in this incident. (5) Thank you for the infinite patience and kindness here expressed by my Lord. (6) Thank you for the innovative exciting way our Lord lived and acted in meeting problems and questions. (7) Thank you for that valuable fish caught by Peter — it has not lost its value since.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin.” What a remarkable miracle this is! (1) Jesus anticipated Peter's discussion of the temple tax. (2) Jesus identified himself as the son of the King or as the Son of God. (3) He did not take offense or want to be offensive to those who did not understand who he was. (4) The omnipotence of my dear Lord is seen in bringing the right fish with the right coin in its mouth as the *first* fish that Peter would catch. (5) He foretold the method of paying the temple tax. (6) He was generous, not critical with Peter. What a wonderful Lord we serve!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I lift up these requests out of these blessed verses: (1) I do so need to be able to answer those who make demands of me on behalf of my Lord — give your own wisdom in doing this. (2) How difficult it is to meet unjust demands — ones I know I do not owe — and yet there is a “watching world” — I need your own patience. (3) Speak to me on the private, personal level of my problems — give me ears to hear. (4) Hold before me my birth certificate as your son — as the brother of my Lord. (5) You have given me certain marvelous exemptions no stranger could ever know — “no condemnation” — “a clean — clear conscience.” Remind me once again dear Lord!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me as you did to Peter: (1) “What fish have you caught for me today? (I am speaking of men.)” (2) “I am *always* thinking of you and how we can together meet such needs.” (3) “Relax — I love you.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Togo — Population 3 million. Point for prayer: *Togo is the least evangelized non-Muslim country in Africa.* For years the door to Protestant missionaries was open, but the opportunity was lost. Entry for new missionaries is only practical at present for service with existing missions.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!

WEEK ONE

—Monday—

How comforting it is to know you have a much larger interest in me than I in you — I want to worship in thanksgiving.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish” (Psa. 1:6). Blessed Lord, how well does this verse describe our whole relationship with you and your basic attitude toward all men. This verse tells me that you have an interest in all our lives. We need often to renew our understanding of this wonderful fact. You have given us the ability to respond and choose in any given situation, but this does not negate your involvement in the very same situation. You are even now taking a fatherly interest in the plans we make for this day and every event in it. It would seem that the wicked bring about their own destruction. It is not outside your knowledge any more than the way of the righteous.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I do want to be “the righteous.” I cannot in any way qualify as the one who has perfectly obeyed all you have said, or that I have obeyed in a way superior to others — or even as well as I want to. My righteousness must be out of your grace and only in my intentions. At the same time I do not purpose to willfully disobey you in anything. I do not have a desire to sin against you. I claim your interest in my life because I love you. I am constantly amazed at the many ways you have of watching over my life. Praise to you for such a consistent varied interest in one unworthy person.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

My sin is that I neglect my awareness of your awareness. If a father is watching over his child and the child is so involved in his play that he either is

oblivious or neglectful of the presence of the father both are losing. The father is grieved that what he has given the child to do has become more important than the one who gave it. The father can at any time decide the play is over and interrupt the child and take him home. The father can participate in the game and teach the child — albeit without the child’s knowledge. Dear Lord, I stop even now in the midst of this little game called life and acknowledge you and ask your forgiveness and your help in everything I do!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Be not aweary, for labor will cease
Some glad morning;
Turmoil will change into infinite peace,
Some bright morning.
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
When the sun is shining in th’eternal sky;
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
We shall see the Lord of Harvest,
By and by.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

²He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³And he said:

“I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵And whoever welcomes a little child in my name

welcomes me.” —Matthew 18:1-5, NIV
Read also Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How I *do* want to read with the eyes of my heart enlightened every word of these lovely verses! How did the disciples (apostles) *ever* get the idea that there would be *anyone* who would be *great* in the kingdom of heaven? It is easy to blame this on their political materialistic view of the kingdom — i.e. a restoration of the kingdom of David and Solomon. But this does not really answer the question. The answer is found in their selfish pride. The answer is found in comparing themselves with themselves. In interpreting their master’s words to their own advantage. Dear Lord, from all such attitudes deliver me!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Even as I pray this prayer I know how guilty I am! Forgive me! I see and hear my Lord as he looks among the crowd for a little child. How old is this beautiful candidate of heaven? Perhaps five or six years old. There he is standing wide-eyed in the middle of the crowd of men. He now moves nearer to our Lord. As he looks into the faces of some present he moves even closer to the ineffable kindness he sees in the face of Jesus. My Lord is about to say something: it so perfectly matches reality that I want to absorb every word: “I tell *you* the truth, unless *you* change and become like little children, *you* will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Dear Lord, you are not asking something of me I can not do. I hear you again: “therefore, *whoever* humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this probing question: “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (2) Thank you that heaven can rule in the hearts of men. (3) Thank you most of all for the King of heaven who can rule from the throne of our hearts. (4) Thank you for that wonderful little child who stood in their midst — I hope to meet him in the eternal kingdom. (5) Thank you that we *can* change. (6) Thank you for the terribly sobering word: *unless you change . . . you will never enter the kingdom of heaven*” (here or hereafter). (7) Thank you for the tremendous promise associated with welcoming little children.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . *whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.*” What a blessing is here promised! We can claim this promise just as if we were

standing there in his presence. There is something about a little child that is very attractive. But one must take time to find this out. It is not immediately apparent. At first contact we might see very little to admire in the actions and attitudes of children. An open heartedness is what every child looks for in adults — and seldom finds. How can we see Jesus in a little child? Look more closely — you will find him! (1) The wholeheartedness of the child’s actions is the attitude of my Lord. (2) The total trusting reliance upon those who love him — how much like our Lord. (3) The quickness to forgive and forget is just like Jesus. How I do want to pause long and listen the next time I talk with Jesus through a little child.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am truly prepared to lift up petitions to you: (1) Keep me more aware than ever that “the kingdom of heaven” is simply your role in the hearts of men. (2) How I *do* need to redefine greatness — help me just now. (3) I do want the kindness of my Lord that attracted little children. (4) I do want to be “converted” all over again. (5) Just now, can I enter into your rule in my heart? (6) I *can* — I *will* humble *myself* — it is not waiting for you to do it — the job is mine.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You have been speaking to me throughout this text — continue to do so! (1) “Your humility is measured by your concern about your own sins.” (2) “Whoever receives — as I have received — a little child receives me.” (3) “Every generous self-forgetful act opens your life to understanding me more fully.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Tonga — Population 108,000. Points for prayer: (1) *The Tongan church* has had a glorious history of missionary outreach. Pray that the vision may be restored. (2) *The last century has been one of spiritual decline*, bitter schisms within the Methodist groups, and the rapid growth of Mormons to almost a quarter of the population. Oh, for revival!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

This is the day the Lord has made;
He calls the hours His own.
Let heav’n rejoice, let earth be glad,
and praise surround the throne.

WEEK ONE

—Tuesday—

If “a day” is a thousand years “a moment” is much more than a lifetime. What a great King we have to worship. Obeisance is all together appropriate.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him” (Psa. 2:12). We hesitate and procrastinate when we read of your anger or wrath or judgment. We do not like to face into these realities. But, dear Lord, they *are* there. The obeisance suggested here is altogether fitting. You *are* the King, we *are* the subjects. You *are* the Creator, we *are* the created. You *are* the Potter, we *are* the clay. It is the best part of wisdom to kneel before him today and kiss his hand — or feet lest we wait until the judgment day and do this to our eternal shame. Dear Lord, I welcome the opportunity to escape my own destruction.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

This verse identifies the source of real responsibility. The kings and rulers of the earth are warned to “serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.” I serve you with awe and reverence, I rejoice in a full knowledge of your judgment — my rejoicing is out of your grace and because of your mercy. It will be because of my ignorant willfulness that I am destroyed. It will be in *my way* that I find destruction. What will seem one day to be but a capricious move of fate was really the long smoldering fires of my stubborn willfulness that were ignited by the events of the moment. How often is a lifetime of effort “lost in a moment”! Ah, it is but the culmination of a multitude of moments. Right now I want to take refuge in you and stay there!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Most of the above is a confession, but it is easy to ex-

tend such. When we live in such ease and comfort it is very easy to forget where we are. I am living under an absolute monarchy — i.e. the rule of a King with total authority. In reality I live under a theocracy because the King is yourself! If I never read your instructions — if I never contact your throne room how can I imagine you are pleased with me? If I use up all your resources and never replenish them what will you say to me? If I use all you have given me as if I had created it myself will there be no day when the king returns to claim his goods? Dear Lord, I want to be your most loyal subject! I am candidly afraid not to be. I do indeed want to “kiss the Son . . . lest I be destroyed in my own way.”

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I shall see the King
Where the angels sing,
I shall see the King some day,
In the better land,
On the golden strand,
And with Him shall ever stay.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶“But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ⁷Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! ⁸If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. ⁹And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and

throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.” —*Matthew 18:6-9, NIV*
 Read also *Mark 9:42*.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Jesus transfers the principle of his comment from the child in their midst to the child of God. It helps me much to remember these gospels were written *after* the church was started on Pentecost. I must read these accounts aware of this fact. The tender thoughtful treatment we should give to little children is now related to our attitude with new Christians. The term “*stumbling*” or “*stumble*” does not appear in the NIV. I feel this is unfortunate because this translation does not indicate the cause or method involved in causing these little ones to sin. The term stumbling suggesting a trap or bait in a trap speaks to our conscience. All things are lawful but not all things are expedient and when my expediency leads some new Christian to sin I am in a dangerous position.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I have never read a more severe word from my Lord than this one. I am shocked that he speaks in such strong words: “. . . it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.” Can you see (with me) a group of men in a boat, possibly only one or two along with the culprit, because in the boat is also a large millstone such as was pulled by a mule in the grinding of grain for flour. Fastened in the center of this heavy stone is the head of the offender. Having rowed to a deep place in the lake the stone and the offender are pushed over the side of the boat. With a splash and a gurgle the stone and the man sink to the bottom! *Oh my soul — do you really hear his words?*

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Savior knew all of us start out as “little ones.” (2) Thank you that my Lord knows much of “the little ones” remain in us all our lives. (3) Thank you we are made responsible for our sin AND for the sinning of others. (4) Thank you for the creative imaginative method my Lord used to describe punishment. (5) Thank you for the tremendous value my Lord placed on “follow up” for new Christians. (6) Thank you for both the realism and the idealism of Jesus. (7) Thank you for the tender thoughtfulness running through every word of this verse.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin!*” Our Lord wants us to know that this

general principle has general application. All traps are set by someone. There are three basic models with an infinite number of variations. (1) The traps of the flesh. Men set these traps and bait them. These catch men and women through the desires of sex and food. Obesity and illicit sex are two of the largest problems in America — or among the “have” nations. (2) The traps of the eyes. Men set these traps and bait them with *things*. Bankruptcy and stealing are at an all time high in our land. (3) The traps of status are set by men. How many terribly frustrated hurt people do we have who have been caught by this bait. What a monstrous “*woe*” must be leveled at America!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Am I really ready to receive these verses with the meekness necessary? (1) May I see a “little child” in every forty - fifty year old convert and treat them accordingly. (2) Show me again the deadly danger of “*stumbling*” — stumbling into hell is what he means — do you year it oh my soul? (3) Could my Lord have described a more drastic action than the punishment here — do you accept it with the impact intended? (4) Oh, that I might feel the sorrow — the “*woe*” of my Lord concerning “*stumbling blocks*.” Help me.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

This is *such* a vital text — such a needy part of my life — speak to me: (1) “Cut off your hand rather than use it to hinder one new Christian.” (2) “There is no *life* in criticism and sarcasm.” (3) “You *can* use your eyes for me or I wouldn’t have given them to you.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Trinidad and Tobago — Population 1,252,000. Point for prayer: *The East Indians are the largest non-Christian community in the Carribean*, and present the greatest challenge. Traditional standards and strong East Indian links are loosening. Pray for a turning to the Lord Jesus. About 14% of all East Indians are now, at least nominally, Christian.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
 The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!
 When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
 Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

WEEK ONE

—Wednesday—

Satan has no arrows that can penetrate “the shield of faith” — it is because you are the fact behind my faith. Praise your name forever!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But you are a shield around me, O Lord, my Glorious One, who lifts up my head. To the Lord I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill” (Psa. 3:3,4). The symbol of a shield can refer to the large shield carried by the armor bearer. What a startling thought! You are my armor bearer! Or to a whole series of soldiers stationed in a wall of protection. Once again the figure so well fits the fact. Your angels are encamped around each of your saints even at this moment. How I like this little phrase *“my Glorious One, . . .”* Your protection and deliverance are not “by the skin of my teeth” — but in a powerful heavenly triumph. Praise your glorious name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am not minimizing the battle or the weakness of my defense. Indeed, indeed I cry in the center of the battle — I am beleaguered beyond belief — I must have help! I cry aloud. What an answer comes! From his eternal citadel on the high hill of glory he answers me — a troupe of ten thousand angels sweep to my defense. I can see the Lord of hosts leading this heavenly army with his bright sword drawn against the foe. How I praise you for this promise of complete defense. In personal hand to hand combat I have someone between me and the enemy — even yourself — oh, thank you! In the larger fight with the spiritual hosts of wickedness there is a wall of defense set up and ready for my call for help. How could I ever thank you?

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Somehow I have been deceived into believing that whatever victories are won are mine — (and they are

in a sense — but they are *for me* not *of me*). I become willing to engage the enemy personally — I never, never win! How I do want this clear picture of heavenly intervention to be indelibly pressed into my memory. It is *only* when I place you *between* me and the enemy that I can be delivered. The subtle fact that all of this *seems* to be my effort causes me often to ignore the trusting confidence I *must have* in your presence and help. Forgive me. I read again those familiar words: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God (even yourself) who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:12b,13).

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal,
King of our lives, by Thy grace we will be;
Under the standard exalted and royal,
Strong in Thy strength we will battle for Thee.
Peal out the watchword! silence it never!
Song of our spirits, rejoicing and free;
Peal out the watchword! loyal forever,
King of our lives, by Thy grace we will be.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴³“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ⁴⁵And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸where ‘their worm does not die,

and the fire is not put out.’

⁴⁹Everyone will be salted with fire.

⁵⁰“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other.” —Mark 9:43-50, NIV
Read also Matthew 18:7-9.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

These are hard words, who can hear them or receive them? *We can!* If we do not a terrible fate awaits us. Our Lord discusses “*the hand*” because it represents all we do. He talks about the foot because it represents everywhere we go. He mentions the eye because it represents all we examine or think. If we are going to cause others to sin it will be in one of these areas. If we are as severe with ourselves as our Lord recommends we will develop the capacity we can and will transfer to our example before others. Dear Lord, I do want to receive these words with meekness — they can save my whole life!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

What do I do that causes me to sin? i.e. what do I do that becomes an occasion for the evil one? How am I giving the devil an advantage? This would include most of all that I say. All I do and all I am is inseparably associated with what I say. How much more thoughtful must be my words! “Let every man (beginning with *this* one) be swift to hear and *slow* to speak.” I must take drastic action here. I will! Where do I go that easily leads me into an overbearing temptation? I know I cannot attend the average (??) movie theater without sinning. I must cut off such a place. I cannot go to some social functions — even those conducted by church members — without sinning, and leading others to sin. I amputate such places. Through the eye gate comes the greatest of temptations. I have the sharp sword poised!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the intensive personalness of these verses. (2) Thank you for the strong warning — repeated over and over. (3) Thank you for the open option — *we choose* what causes us to sin. (4) Thank you for the repeated promise of *life*. (5) Thank you that what someone else would think of as “a cripple” is more whole and strong than those who mock. (6) Thank you for the shocking words of Mark 9:48,49 — I read them again even now. (7) Dear Lord I want to be salted with your fire not Satan’s — thank you that I can choose.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at

peace with each other.” This passage has posed problems of understanding for a long time. The salt here is equated with “*fire*.” The simple principle of preserving meat is back of all these words. If we respond to the fire of severe self discipline and are willing to present our bodies a living sacrifice we will be preserved to eternal life. If on the other hand we reject and refuse to remove those things in our life that cause ourselves and others to sin the very refusal becomes a salt that will turn into eternal punishment — everlasting fire. If we lose sight of the purpose of discipline we have lost our saltiness and life has lost its meaning. Yea, we have lost our very selves.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

It is *good* to review — to repeat via Mark what you have already said to us via Matthew. I lift up these personal requests: (1) All I do — everywhere I go becomes open to you — and you are with me — in me — ahead of me — behind me — keep these comforting thoughts before me — if I was not saved by your grace, there would be no comfort in them. (2) Most of all help my use of “*the eye*” — or “*the mind*” — bring my thoughts into your captivity! (3) Stop me in my impetuosity — to act — to go — to speak. (4) I need the humility only you can give to receive discipline as you give it!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause here as aware that just here — just now something cataclysmic can happen — speak to me: (1) “To lose sight of my purpose in discipline is to burn yourself up.” (2) “Do you want the pain of discipline or the pain of hell?” (3) “I love you — THEREFORE I chasten you — you are no exception.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Tunisia — Population 7,156,000. Point for prayer: *In early centuries the Christian Church was strong.* Schism, heresy, foreign invasions and finally Islam brought about its demise. There are only about 50 indigenous evangelical believers today. Pray that a living, growing Church might become a reality again in this land.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

We praise Thee, O God,
For the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died and is now gone above.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory;
Hallelujah! Amen!
Hallelujah! Thine the glory;
Revive us again.

WEEK ONE

—Thursday—

Let us even now worship the One who gives complete deliverance. I accept such deliverance in the closet of prayer.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“From the Lord comes deliverance. May your blessings be on your people” (Psa. 3:8). How eternally and universally true is this promise. Deliverance from any problem or deliverance in the midst of the problem surely does not come from any other source. I want to express my praise for your deliverance in three of the basic needs of man: (1) Deliverance from guilt. Man is incurably guilt conscious. He can deny it or ignore it or argue about it, but only you can deliver him from it. Praise your name for the blood and righteousness of my Lord by which I am delivered from guilt! (2) Deliverance from uselessness. How meaningless and empty does all of life appear without you! How wonderfully good it is to know that investment in lives of men and women on your behalf is an investment that multiplies and lasts forever!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am simply *delighted* to praise you for deliverance! (3) Deliverance from fear. Life is indeed at the best very uncertain. There is *no* fear we can raise on our horizon but what you can remove by your word. Death is but a door to life. Suffering is a means of character development. Loss can be gain — All these words could be but empty cliches if we didn't have centuries of testimony behind them and your eternal word to promise them. I want to add my praise for one other deliverance. (4) Deliverance from the continuance in sin. I shall never be free from sin this side of your eternal presence, but I can be delivered from a record of failure. It is not of myself — but of your grace and power that such is true.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I am not reversing myself when I say that in each of the four above areas I need deliverance; in each of the above areas I sin. The dichotomy of your deliverance is that I always need it. (1) Yes, I *am* delivered from guilt — but I continue to *need* such deliverance for I continue to sin. I lean so heavily upon your grace — but I shout “glory” for your cleansing. (2) I do indeed feel a sense of value in all I do — at the same time I am involved in worse than useless pursuits — forgive me. (3) I can face life and all it offers unafraid — but there are times when I am lost by looking at the “near at hand” and forget to raise my eyes to the One from whom my deliverance comes. Help me! (4) I can be glad that I can see real growth in overcoming sin — but I continue to need your forgiveness for my unbelievable pride — cleanse me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word,
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁰“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels always see the face of my Father in heaven.

¹²“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for

the one that wandered off? ¹³And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."

—Matthew 18:10-14, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I am overwhelmed with the profusion of thought those verses bring before me! I *do* want to apply these words to *my* circumstance — to *my* life. Who are "the little ones" in my experience? It surely could be some of the students to whom I minister. Many of them are new converts and become therefore the very ones to whom you refer. By reason of age many students are "little ones" — i.e. much younger than myself. Why should I ever be tempted to "look down" on one of them? There are several circumstances to answer such a question. Dear Lord, I want to hear your words with my inmost being. You have angels assigned to their welfare — you have a personal investment and interest in them — can I then in any way look down on them? God forbid!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The parable of the one lost sheep was told for the benefit of the proud self-righteous Pharisees at a different time and place. The same parable is here applied to the apostles. Lest I imagine the pungent meaning of the parable only refers to the religious hypocrites — dear Lord, open my eyes and ears to see myself in these words! How much concern does God have over lost sheep? He will go to any length necessary to find the sheep — to save the sheep — to heal the hurt. He demonstrated this in the actions of himself through his Son. How guarded must be my conduct and words lest I cause one of the new converts to sin and be lost. There is no need of saying "he is responsible for his own actions" — *I too am responsible.*

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the constant reminder of the value you place on one human life. (2) Thank you for the clear acceptance of the existence and ministry of angels by my Lord. (3) Thank you that each of us have angels assigned to us (Heb. 1:14). (4) Thank you that angels are in constant contact with you as well as us. (5) Thank you that God knows and understands we are as dumb as sheep. (6) Thank you that God does not wait to place blame on the lostness of the sheep. (7) Thank you that Jesus plainly told us he would take priority interest in the lostness of man — can I do less?

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost." What a loving tender concept. When we consider the context of the first century culture out of which these words were spoken we are all the more amazed. Of course this really comes from the heart of God himself through the lips of his Son. To what a wonderful extent God went that no one should be lost — but multitudes are. The reason is because there are so many that do not share his concern. It would be easy to blame those who cause others to sin. It is my honest conviction after having spoken to many people in other parts of the world that these little ones are lost because we really do not care. God forgive us!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I do want to make these requests just as practical as the text itself: (1) If it were not possible to "despise" or "look down" — discount the sincerity or value of these new converts you would never have said these words — awaken my conscience! Speak to me! (2) If new converts have special messengers assigned to them, who are we to treat them in any way but very special — I want to do just that — help me. (3) How much did the Good Shepherd give to save the sheep? Is he an example for me? Ah, yes, yes — but guard my mouth as I say "yes" too easily!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

These verses seem especially designed to divide "the thoughts and interests" of my heart. Continue to reach my conscience: (1) "Do you *really* accept the fact that only one out of a hundred is really aware of his lost condition?" (2) "Where are the lost sheep you are seeking today?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Turkey — Population 51,420,000. Point for prayer: *Turkey is the largest unreached country in the world.* Ironically, Paul, the first great missionary to the Gentile world, came from Tarsus, and much of his early ministry was in what is now Turkey. Fifty million completely unevangelized people need to hear the gospel somehow and soon.

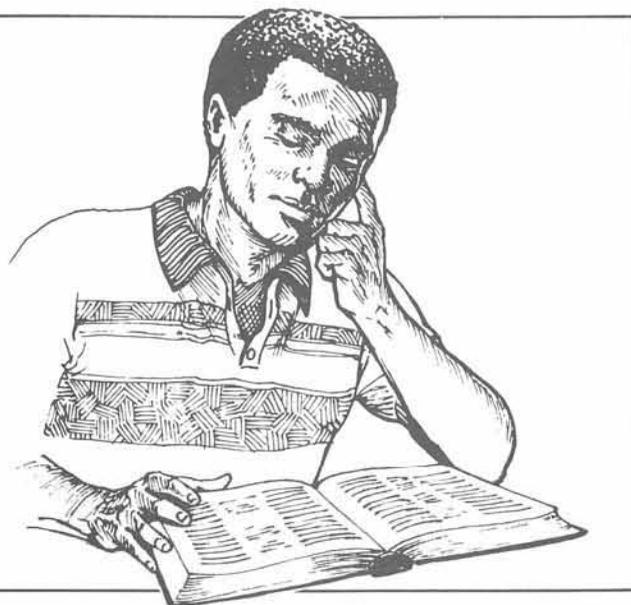
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia!

WEEK ONE

—Friday—

Relief — victory — comfort is on the way! You hear and answer prayer. I am glad to worship you! I do so right here — right now!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer” (Psa. 4:1). Such an all-encompassing verse! So many of your attributes are seen here. (1) You are interested in all of my needs. (2) You are able to hear and do something about what you hear. (3) What you do will be perfectly right. It is such a comfort to know that I worship Someone who never makes a mistake. I am speaking to Someone who sympathetically understands my need. (4) Relief is on its way. It may not be the relief for which I asked — but action is taken and just what I need is on the way! Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have once again spoken on behalf of all. What happens to me in this relationship happens to all. (5) It will be out of your mercy my request is granted. There is much comfort to the very depths of my spirit to know you hear and answer me. I can lift up my voice — or inscribe on paper these words and you hear them — you see them — you are much more alive than I am. My sensibilities are dulled by overuse. I fail to remember the most obvious of expressions. But you have no such hindrances (and one day, praise your name, I will not). Just for today I am full of wonder and awe that I can actually talk to the Creator of all who is my Father! “Be merciful to me and hear my prayer.”

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I do have at times severe distress. I seek relief. I yield up my inadequacies to you. I confess as freely as I know how all my sins. There is nothing I can or want

to hide from you. If I waited until I achieved a particular status or standing before you I would have given up on my worship to you long ago! At the same time I know you want me to mature — and I want to. Therefore I come to ask your forgiveness that I might begin this day with a fresh, clean, whole page. It is “relief” we seek most. What a joy it is to be able to begin all over each day — yea, several times during the day! How delightful it is to cast myself upon your mercy! Praise your name!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus, Rose of Sharon, bloom within my heart;
 Beauties of Thy truth and holiness impart,
 That where'er I go my life may shed abroad
 Fragrance of the knowledge of the love of God.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁸“Teacher,” said John, “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

³⁹“Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.” —Mark 9:38-41, NIV

⁴⁹“Master,” said John, “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us.”

⁵⁰“Do not stop him,” Jesus said, “for whoever is not against you is for you.” —Luke 9:49,50, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a practical text this is for me today. How easy

it is to set ourselves up as the criteria for judgment. Apparently John heard the little phrase of verse 37 “in my name” and remembered someone else who used these words “in the name of Jesus.” There have been attempts of identifying this man as one of the seventy. But it is difficult to say why he did not so identify himself — and if he had the apostles would not have tried to stop his exorcism. The simple fact of the matter is we do not know who this man was. Because they did not know him they were negative toward him. Dear Lord, deliver me from such an attitude.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Evidently demon possession was very prominent in the days of our Lord. People needed relief from demons more than almost any other malady, i.e. considering the record. This unnamed disciple had the right attitude and purpose in casting out demons, i.e. in contrast to the seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13-19). Jesus did not deny the miracle, indeed he affirmed it, nor did our Lord place a prohibition on such an action. How wonderfully understanding and kind my Lord was to use the little/big word “us” — i.e. “. . . whoever is not against us is for us.” It is a real comfort to me to know from these words that any kindnesses I have received, and many times have not appreciated fully, will not go unrewarded.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for John’s sincere concern for what would please and represent his Lord. (2) Thank you for John’s willingness to share with his Lord. (3) Thank you for the unusual power in “the name” or authority of Jesus. (4) Thank you that our enemy knows of the power of your Son. (5) Thank you for Jesus’ willingness to share in his fumbling disciples’ work as he used the pronoun “us” — not “me.” (6) Thank you for big rewards for such small service — so many of us have no more than this cup of water.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.” There is so much in this one verse. (1) “. . . a cup of cold water in my name. . . .” The drink was given by the authority or for the honor of Jesus. Because Jesus commanded love and set the example, compassion is shown to those in need. (2) “Because you belong to Christ. . . .” Is this the same thought as above? No, the first thought has to do with authority; the second with ownership. They are interrelated. Our God works — all good works are a result of whose we are. (3) There is not one good deed done that will not be remembered and rewarded. This

is such a source of comfort. This thought gives a balance to life nothing else can.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am living in the midst of those who set themselves up as the purveyors of “the truth”. “Agree with me or go to hell” seems to be the motto! How incredibly sad this is. Please answer these requests: (1) Just now open my eyes to your preeminence — You speak to everyone else in the same way you speak to me, i.e. through you word — am I the only sincere person on earth? (2) Are all other believers except me and those who agree with me against you? (3) Please, please — show me 500 cups of cold water given by men I do not even know.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

This is one sharp, poignant passage — I am listening — speak to me! (1) “Are you aware of the power of the evil one? — demons are NOT dead.” (2) “Why not let me be the judge? You are only a very fallible lawyer.” (3) “I love everyone — and everyone I love is limited in their understanding — how is your love?”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Turkey — Point for prayer: *Islamic fundamentalists* are applying strong pressure on the authorities to take a harder, and unconstitutional line against believers to hinder witnessing and Christian outreach. Pray that both the courts and state may uphold the laws protecting religious freedom.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Come, ye that love the Lord,
And let your joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne,
And thus surround the throne.
We’re marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We’re marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God.

Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heav’nly King,
But children of the heav’nly King,
May speak their joys abroad,
May speak their joys abroad.

WEEK ONE

—Saturday—

If I am not joyful it is not your fault. You have the capacity to bring joy into every situation. I bow before you in eager anticipation of what you will do.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound. I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety” (Psa. 4:7,8). I need to remind myself over and over just what connotation to place on the word “heart.” I know you are referring to the entire inner person. When I think your thoughts, will your will, I will feel your emotions and my conscience will approve of such a relationship. Dear Lord, I *must* cultivate such a capacity even as the field is cultivated for the grain and wine. I want to and I will. As one lies down after a good meal so rest and peace and renewed strength are a natural result of filling my heart with yourself.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to make personal practical application of these verses to my heart so even now I can lift my voice in praise. I turn to your word to engage my mind in the understanding of what you say: “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed” (I Peter 1:13). Since I believe every word I put my will into the thoughts expressed. I can be, I will be self-controlled — I will turn the control of myself over to you. I hold the hope here promised before everything else. I expect his return *today!* I also expect grace and not justice when he comes! I am excited! The more that I think and will to believe these words, the more emotionally involved I am. Praise your glorious name.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is a sad confession: when the fields lie fallow —

when the seed has never been planted. The granaries are not full; the fruit of the vine is not here. Joy is not present. There is only *one* person for it all. If I am not willing to give you the time and energy there is no way you can fill my heart with joy. In exact ratio to the time and energy I give to your word and yourself and your Son through the word, I have joy — or no joy. How sad to be poor when I could be so rich! Forgive me for my own impoverishment. Dear Lord, I realize that any other attitude is dangerous — my eternal safety is at stake. Help me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Earthly pleasures vainly call me;
I would be like Jesus;
Nothing worldly shall enthrall me;
I would be like Jesus.
Be like Jesus, this my song,
In the home and in the throng;
Be like Jesus, all day long!
I would be like Jesus.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁵“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. —Matthew 18:15-17, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

These words speak to all of us. If both the offender

and the offended were Christians there would never be a time when reconciliation was not possible. *Both* persons would be looking for it. The initiative for settling a dispute is with the offended. If you hurt go to the one who has caused the hurt. If you are the wronged then you are responsible to the one who wronged you. Dear Lord, I am reading this *for myself!* When I arrive in the presence of the offender I must be candid enough to show my brother just how he has offended me. This surely presupposes I have the right attitude and information. Dear Father, help me!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How often is the cause of division just because we did not care enough to go to our brother who had offended us! It goes without saying in this context that if we go without love we accomplish nothing. Dear Lord, I speak this into my own heart! What will the one or two witnesses do? Will they be able to look objectively upon this disagreement and help both of us to see it in a new light? Hopefully, prayerfully this would be true. One thing becomes increasingly clear: *you do not want disagreements unsettled among your followers.* It is also very obvious that guilt was clearly established somewhere in this whole encounter. If it was not established in the first meeting it was in the second or third. A refusal to be reconciled is the ultimate sin.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that our Lord clearly recognized the brothers would not be sinless. (2) Thank you that you asked us to discuss our problem with the one who caused it — not everyone else. (3) Thank you that the purpose of the discussion is to win back brotherly relationships. (4) Thank you for the possibility stated that he might not listen or heed what is said. (5) Thank you for two witnesses by which and through which every decision could be settled. (6) Thank you that the decision is made and told by the witnesses. (7) Thank you for this wonderful provision for maintaining the spirit of unity in the bond of peace.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. . . ." Our Lord envisioned the church as a family! The whole called out body would have an interest in and would understand the problems of each member. Why didn't Jesus say: "tell it to the elders"? Perhaps that is implicit in what he said. Or more likely: the words stand as they were given. Our Lord believed it is possible to become so full of love and concern for one another that one man's problem is every man's problem. Another wonderful fact is that

the church would accept the testimony and would carry through with the discipline. What an example for present day assemblies!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

If ever there was a time and place where I needed prayer it is here. I lift up these petitions to you: (1) It is indeed inevitable that offenses will come — keep me aware of my brotherly association — it is so easy to lose such a relationship. (2) I need the wisdom from above — "whole," "peacable," "gentle," "easy to be entreated." Dear Lord I ask in faith for such help from you. (3) Who shall I take as witnesses? Lead me to the very ones you want. (4) Our personal problems are not to be dragged before the courts of unbelievers — love from yourself in our hearts is the *only* solution. Help us dear Lord!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me about this most practical text: (1) "The congregation must agree that the specific charge is really wrong — a real sin." (2) "No protective cover for rebels must be left" (I Tim. 5:19-22). (3) "All problems do have a solution. Please believe me."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Turkey — Point for prayer: *The Christian Church* as a whole is in decline, largely because of heavy emigration, but the number converted out of Islam is rising. Most Christians are nominal, introspective and are not evangelizing. The majority live in Istanbul. There are only about 700 known evangelical believers in the country, most of these being non-Turkish. Pray for a renewing work of the Spirit in Orthodox Catholic and the small Protestant groups. Some outstanding Christian leaders have come from these groups.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God over all, and blest eternally.

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee
Casting down their golden crowns
around the crystal sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who wast, and art, and evermore shall be.

WEEK TWO

—Sunday—

What solid encouragement it is to know my cry is heard — my requests are answered — not always in a way to please me — after all you are the King. I am your subject.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. Morning by morning, O Lord, you hear my voice, morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation” (Psa. 5:2,3). It is more than good to come to you in praise and adoration. It would seem each morning is a cry for help. But before such a cry is one of wonder and joy for your very self: I gladly own you as my King and my God. It is true that I have found the morning season the very best part of the day to approach your throne of grace. I lay before you the failures and needs of my life. I want to imagine that all men could and should lay their requests before you and wait in expectation for your answer. Thank you for being a sympathetic God.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I simply seem to be unable to separate myself from others. I want to first of all praise you for your own dear Self — but I immediately become involved. Just here I do want to personally cry for help in expressing my love for you. I allow my own human weakness to hinder the expression of your love and joy. Please forgive me and help me in my desire. Dear Lord, I do purpose that “morning by morning” you will indeed hear my voice — i.e. in this written form. How deep down comforting it is to wait in expectation for your answers to my prayers. I have had so many obvious answers to prayer that these words take on life for me. Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I am so ashamed that I wait until the morning to lift my cry for help. You are the King and the One who

hears and answers during the whole day. Forgive me for my complaints and gripes such belies my trust in you. Such an attitude is a confession of my need. I lift up my heart in a cry for help, my King and my God. Blessed Father, I so sorely need a deeper degree of expectation in my requests to you. Most of all I want the capacity to *wait* in confident anticipation. I do not wait very well in any area of life. A degree of pride is behind such impatience — please forgive me! I am glad for your forgiveness and a fresh beginning.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Savior, Thy dying love
Thou gavest me;
Nor should I ought withhold,
Dear Lord, from Thee:
In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfill its vow,
Some off’ring bring Thee now,
Something for Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁸“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” —Matthew 18:18-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

This is one awesome text! I believe my Lord as the King of the Kingdom; as the head of his body the church here speaks in the most authoritative manner

possible. How I *do* want to hear him! It is to his twelve apostles these words are addressed — even as the same words (in thought) were addressed to Peter (16:18,19) earlier. At the same time there is a vital principle present for our learning. When we know what his apostles and prophets said and claim such words as your truth you will honor our faith. How I need to repeat what you have said through these men and claim the binding and loosing power! Indeed this is the privilege of the whole local assembly.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

What tremendous faith-stretching promises are made just here! I want to claim these words in my own life and work. There are certainly areas of my daily living upon which I need your restraints. I want to be very specific. There are also many places that need to be turned loose! The detonation cap on this explosive power is *your word!* When I have a clear “thus saith yourself” I can and will claim such a wonderful promise. There are so many ways I want Satan bound; there are so many places I want your power and blessing released. I am excited about making immediate application of this word to my life.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the strong assurance given to us in the words: “I tell you the truth.” (2) Thank you that our acceptance of your words is your acceptance of our action. (3) Thank you we can bind Satan’s activities to the promises you have made in your word — we are powerless here because we have not claimed this promise! (4) Thank you that I can be loosed from so many things that have formerly bound me! Praise the Lord. (5) Thank you for the power of agreement of two or three. What an incredible promise: “. . . it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” (6) Thank you that the integrity of my Lord makes this promise altogether credible. (7) Thank you for your special promise of presence with the assembly of even two or three gathered together under your authority.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with you.” How good it is to claim such a promise. The world of the Spirit is the real world. When we meet to pray or to study, or to plan a strategy for the Kingdom, the King is present. We meet under his authority and to honor him. We cannot know if we have his approval unless and until we open his word and read it. We can practice our sense of his presence — and we should. But if we are going to have a word from him on what we should do it will be found in the pages of his word. I sense your presence right now and I rejoice that this is true — but

I claim the promise that your word gives me all things that relate to this life and the life to come.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In the presence of this text I do so need your own help! (1) There are actions and attitudes *I want stopped!* I do not like them — they are harmful and irritating — show me the very persons I should share with in binding them. (2) There are areas and attitudes that have been shut up to any word from you — I ask for your release in these circumstances! (3) Are these prerogatives exclusively given to the apostles? Give me your own wisdom in answering this question. (4) I believe you are far more interested in answering than I am in asking.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Amid all the confusion and “ennui” or boredom please speak to me in this need: (1) “I am in your midst — open your eyes.” (2) “It is your consistency in desire — not performance — that pleases me.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Tuvalu (formerly Ellice Islands. Independent from Britain in 1978.) — Population 8,000. Christians make up 94.7% (Protestants 91.5%, only 4% of the population is Evangelical.) There are no missionaries of any group in Tuvalu.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

To God be the glory, great things He hath done;
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the lifegate that all may go in.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, thro’ Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To ev’ry believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
Will surely from Jesus a pardon receive.

WEEK TWO

—Monday—

Since we are your house, and you live in us we have far more reasons to praise you than King David. I want to do so just now.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies — make straight your way before me” (Psa. 5:7,8). In the days when your personal presence was in a building these words were appropriate. When we consider our bodies as your house we can yet say, “But I, by your your great mercy have become your house; in reverence will I bow down.” I should be even more overcome by the amazement of being your habitation in the Spirit than was Solomon in the precincts of your temple. What holy awe and wonder should fill our minds!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The qualities of yourself seen in these two verses are: (1) *Mercy* — yea “*great mercy.*” Indeed, indeed, how appropriate this is! To consider our bodies your dwelling place would require infinite mercy. But it is your promise and I bow in amazement before you. (2) *Majesty and holiness* — such were the prominent responses of those who worshipped in your temple in Jerusalem. I bow before you in the same attitude. You have not come to live in me by the Holy Spirit because I am holy — but to make me holy. You did not come because I *deserved* you, but because I *needed* you. Bless your holy name! (3) *You are my Leader* — when my heart has been preconditioned by the above responses I am ready to be led, I accept and claim your leadership.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How poorly I respond to the possibilities we have just shared. Considering my enemy I very much need your

presence and your direction for my living. Forgive me for not claiming or appropriating all you have for me. I am as willful as a goat and as stupid as a sheep. I know I have mixed the metaphors of your word; they are mixed in my nature. In both descriptions I need your help. I accept gladly the promise here that you will make my way (your way) very plain. I have found from much experience, some of it sad and some of it glad, that when I am willing you are able — not until and only when. Cut through my preoccupation with “things” and lead me into awareness of your presence!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

My Lord has garments so wondrous fine,
And myrrh their texture fills;
Its fragrance reached to this heart of mine,
With joy my being thrills.
Out of the ivory palaces,
Into a world of woe,
Only His great, eternal love
Made my Savior go.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²²Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” (Footnote: Or seventy times seven) — Matthew 18:21,22, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Peter’s question seems to say that he had not left the subject under discussion. If the approach to our brother for reconciliation were successful and our

brother hears us and repents, how often shall we do this? Did Peter have any particular brother in mind? We have all known those who seem to have a real penchant for sinning against us and repenting. How long shall we let this go on? The apostle is saying: "if the brother who offends us apparently doesn't learn anything out of the experience, how long shall we put up with it before we cut him off?" Dear Lord, I do hope I have represented the real circumstance of the text.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

My Lord, you know I have had students who seem to take a delight in being offensive or offended. I have also had fellow teachers who had such an attitude — nay, it seemed to be a veritable part of their personality. What shall I do with them? Of course I must go to them and "gain my brother" — I have done this. But how often shall I repeat it? From the purely human point of view Peter is to be congratulated for the number he proposed. But we are not involved in a human transaction. We are moving in "heavenly places" — there is no limit to your forgiveness and there must be no limit on mine! Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

These verses are so full of human interest — and abundantly full of heavenly interest. I lift up these expressions of gratitude: (1) Thank you for Peter's persistence — he wants to know — and we do too. He found out — have we? (2) How often will you forgive us? Just as often as we repent — does this mean a superficial repentance? If total change is expected from our repentance none of us have repented. Thank you for this blessed insight into your love — your grace — your mercy. (3) Thank you that I can know my desire to let you love me — and my desire to love as I am loved.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times." How little do we know what these few words have done to save the human race from self-destruction. The holding of grudges — the harboring of ill-will is perhaps the one worst problem in interpersonal relationships. We need to add here what our Lord assumed here and said later and that is that such forgiveness would be "from the heart." This is not so much to help the forgiven as the one who forgives. When we are tempted to think this is an unreasonable demand upon us we only need to turn our hearts to our heavenly Father who has forgiven us many more than seventy-seven times. We were glad to be forgiven — we need to be forgiven. We can simply put

ourselves in someone else's position and realize just how much someone else needs forgiveness — and how much we need to forgive them.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Peter's question has not left the scene! We are looking for an end to hostilities of one kind or another. This is most urgent on a personal level. I find help in making these requests: (1) Somehow will you please quiet my emotions as they relate to justice or "getting even." (2) I want the unconditional kind of love I see in the life of my Lord — i.e. for *all* men. (3) Just for today — enable me to appreciate the good I see in my fellow servants — NOT the irritating. (4) Show me how often I have been forgiven when I did NOT at all deserve it.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am open — I am ready — speak to my conscience: (1) "Love as you are loved." (2) "Forgive as you are forgiven." (3) "Serve as you are served." (4) "Let me be God."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Uganda — Population 14,700,000 Point for prayer: *Pray for the government.* The economic and oral devastation caused by 20 years of unrestrained murder, tribal hatreds, and corruption have left a legacy of deep bitterness. Only deep spiritual transformation can bring about an effective, lasting reconciliation and reconstruction.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O worship the King, all-glorious above,
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

WEEK TWO

—Tuesday—

You are not trying to catch me in my sin, but to help me in my need. Search me and know my purpose — receive my yielded heart.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, . . . my shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart. God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day” (Psa. 7:9a,10,11).

Dear Lord, to contemplate what is involved in reaching the hearts and minds of all men is beyond my understanding! And yet this is just what is here predicted of you. We are acquainted with the computer capacities, but to register all the thoughts of all men — to read their hearts' motivations is certainly beyond the human mind. We could not think less of you and attribute omniscience to you. All men owe their salvation to you, i.e. physically. How easy it could be to adjust the laws of this universe in such a manner that all men would be destroyed. Praise you for your daily mercies.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

All the laws you have set in motion in this physical world are immutable — i.e. they never change — they cannot be altered by man. In the invariable consequences of the laws in the world about is a lesson for us in the spiritual realm. As your mercy and love is expressed every day so is your wrath. We cannot pollute the water or the air and not suffer the consequences. How do we imagine we can escape your wrath in the higher realm of the spirit? Mixing our selfishness with your love and goodness does indeed produce pollution in human relationships. Praise your name I can hide myself behind your shield.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There surely is no problem in confessing my need of you. As you search my mind and heart what do you see? There is much of ignorance and willfulness. Please forgive me. I am glad to say there are some thoughts of yourself and your dear Son. Dear Lord, I do want to be “upright in heart.” I do want to be open and willing to confess my sin and my need. I

want to hide nothing from you — indeed, I know I cannot. All you have in me is a desire to do your will — and free confession that I love you and want to worship you. Please save me from myself! I am glad you express your wrath every day since I need forgiveness every day. You reach my conscience or you could not forgive me.

*What personal sins do you want to confess?
We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.*

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Have thine own way, Lord,
Have thine own way!
You are the Potter;
I am the clay.
Mold me and make me
After Thy will,
While I am waiting,
Yielded and still.

HIS WORD

²³“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶“The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸“But when the servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’

³⁰“But he refused. Instead he went off and had the man thrown in prison until he could pay the debt.

³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³²“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’

³⁴In anger his master turned him over to the jailors until he paid back all he owed.

³⁵“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” —*Matthew 18:23-35, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I would so like to represent this text in the light of heaven. I want to allow you to read it to me! I do want a kind and loving attitude toward all I meet. If I am sinned against, if I feel others “owe me” — dear Lord renew my mind with these blessed words. Jesus used such an exaggerated example that all of us can see the point. Here is a man who owed another man *several million* dollars. There would be *no* hope at all in paying the debt. Dear Lord, this is just the condition in which we find ourselves. We are in debt to you beyond anything we could ever return. It must *indeed* be out of your pity that we are forgiven. The whole load is lifted — the whole debt is cancelled. What joy must have at least momentarily filled that man’s heart! Have I so soon forgotten the debt forgiven? I am trying to take the places of *both* men. Help me!

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I fall on my knees before you. There is no need to beg for patience. I shall never be able to pay back my debt to you. But I know you want me to return my debt in forgiving others from the heart. I do so want to understand the depth of this debt. Yes, I have choked out a confession from those who were in some debt to me. But there was no payment in such a confession. How I want to learn that there is only found payment in your kind of forgiveness. To forgive others just as you have forgiven me for your son’s sake. This is true eternal payment!

My dear Lord, I am afraid! Do you mean these words: “*this is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart*”? I know you do, I repent, I bow before you. Forgive me that I might forgive others!

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the promise that one day there will be a settlement time for all God’s servants. (2) Thank you for the incredible forgiveness of an incredible debt. (3) Thank you that you have canceled the debt and “let me go” — free, forgiven, full of joy! (4) Keep my forgiveness up front in my consciousness that I might know how to forgive others. (5) Thank you that true forgiveness does have an influence on others — even as does obvious selfishness. (6) Thank you for the confidence that Someone is keeping ac-

counts. (7) Thank you that Jesus took the time to make so clear this lesson on forgiveness.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.*” Is God’s forgiveness conditional? So it would seem from this text. If we are not hurt by our brothers we really have nothing to forgive, and there is no problem. It is only when we are offended and our pride has been assaulted that we are faced with the kind of forgiveness here described. Our Great Employer — our loving heavenly Father has been hurt by our sin. He has freely, fully forgiven us. We owe a tremendous debt of love. Such love can best be paid in our response to those who are in debt to us. How I do want to keep the lines of love and communication up and alive with all those with whom I live.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How timely and full of help is this text — I lift up these requests out of it: (1) Keep my debt to you ever before me —but ahead of such repeat over and over again that I am *freely forgiven*. (2) *Heart forgiveness* — comes from you — that *free — open — forgiveness* is your gift to me — and for me to give to others — dear Lord, make such *real* to me. (3) Guilt, punishment, responsibility are all a part of your work with me — balance them dear Lord — I do so need your help.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause to hear your still small voice echoing out of these blessed words: (1) “Please remember it is my rule as the omnipotent, omniscient King we are discussing here.” (2) At the same time I love you more dearly and deeply than any earthly parent.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Uganda — Point for prayer: *The persecution of Christians* during Amin’s reign of terror was a dark time. Nominalism, formalism and failure to check tribalism in the churches prevented the Church from unitedly standing up for the right. The result was the destruction of many churches and institutions, the loss through death and exile of some of Uganda’s finest Christian leaders, and heavy loss of life among Christians.

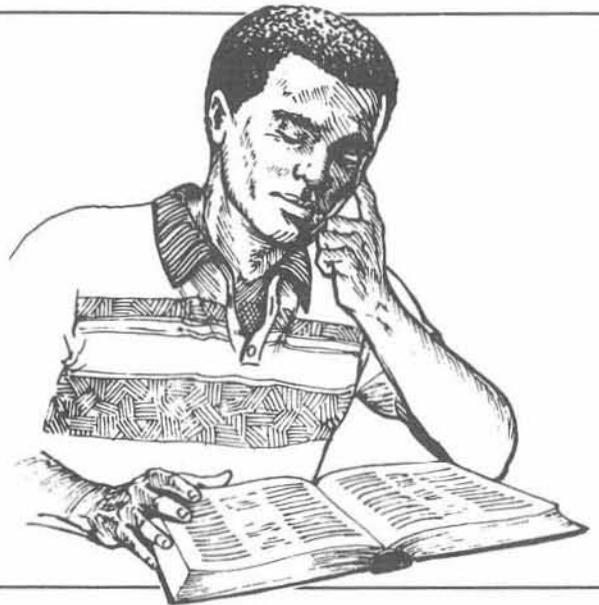
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies:
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This, our sacrifice of praise.

WEEK TWO

—Wednesday—

Your signature is seen so often in your creation I even forget to read it. I want to worship you as a child — weak but trusting — a wonder to my enemies.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger” (Psa. 8:1,2). “Your name” represents your self; your authority — your wisdom — your power. Indeed all the earth does speak so eloquently of your authority. Not one leaf grows on one tree except as every other leaf has grown on such a tree since Eden’s garden. The check and balance system found throughout the earth speaks constantly of your wisdom. To hold the bulk of the earth in its orbit requires power we cannot even imagine. The little sentence : “you have set your glory above the heavens” is indeed pregnant in meaning.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am attempting to lift such attributes of yourself from these beautiful words and respond to each of them as a reflection of yourself. What “glory” shall I find “above the heavens”? Above the heavens I would indeed be in your eternal presence and would see you even as you are! From such a perspective you can survey the whole of the galaxies and our little universe — I am humbled and silent before you. From such an exalted position I am suddenly introduced to the family circle! You have indeed chosen the humble to confound the wise. It is from the heart of a child true praise or strength can arise. We think again of Mary’s babe cradled in a manger. What an amazement this birth must have been to Satan and the hosts of demons!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is obvious to me that I shall always be in the posture of attempting unsuccessfully to understand and express praise for your majesty. My largest sin here is in the fact that I do not always even want to praise you. I have been caught up and overcome with such trivial matters. Dear Lord, forgive me! Thank you for renewing my mind in this area. Even now I want to silence Satan’s lies by reading the record of your majesty in the world around me — and your glory or character in the heavens above. I want the same loving interest in little children I find exemplified in your Son. I know from experience Satan can be silenced by praise and humility. Help me to enter fully into such an expression.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Earthly pleasures vainly call me;
I would be like Jesus;
Nothing worldly shall enthrall me;
I would be like Jesus.
Be like Jesus, this my song,
In the home and in the throng;
Be like Jesus, all day long!
I would be like Jesus.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁹When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. ²⁰Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” —Matthew 8:19,20, NIV

⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

58 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." —*Luke 9:57,58, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How personal and direct are these words of my Lord! It would seem Jesus is reading the heart motivations of this "teacher of the law." It was *your* law he was attempting to teach. Doubtless this teacher compared what he had read and taught with what he heard from your Son. There was a wonderful agreement between the two. This teacher now became a disciple and wanted to hear more and more. Jesus asks him if he has counted the cost of such a decision? "Are you willing to accept the uncertainties that accompany such a choice?" This teacher was doubtless accustomed to the niceties of a comfortable living. Does our Lord say anything in this text for us?

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Indeed he *does* speak to our hearts! Where does Jesus lead today? It isn't *where* he went that was important! It was *what he did*. Jesus was an itinerant teacher/preacher. He moved over the length and breadth of Canaan because he wanted to teach and reach as many people as he could in the short time that was his. If our Lord does not teach men through us we are not following him. The field has now become "*the world*." Are we ready to receive the limitations associated with the teaching of his word world wide? We are too much like the teacher of the text. He didn't want to leave the comforts and security of his home. As long as Jesus would stay in his block he would follow him wherever he went. Dear Lord am I talking about myself?

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the very real personal interest this teacher of the law had in our Lord and his teaching. (2) Thank you that Jesus made no accommodation to this man's interests. (3) Thank you Jesus put the cost "up front." (4) Thank you that the cost of spreading his word has not changed. (5) Thank you for the wonderful attractiveness of my Lord and his word. (6) Thank you that there were some who both counted the cost and followed him. (7) Thank you our Lord was willing to compare himself to a bird or a fox.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

" . . . the son of man has no place to lay his head."
How true this is today! He has no place in the large business conglomerates. My concern is that he has no home in the life of the average church member. Just

how much time does our dear Savior receive? How long do we spend talking with him each day? We might call upon him in an emergency — but is this real companionship? Can't we find an hour or two for extended conversation? How much time do we spend listening to him speak to us through his word? Is an hour of reading and meditating upon his word too much of an *imposition*? Jesus wants to make our bodies his home. Dear Lord, you have a home with me — welcome!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

This text reaches into the "thoughts and intents" of our hearts. I lift these requests up fully aware of the powerful potential: (1) Enlarge your potential in me — give specific detail to going and teaching. (2) You have been opening doors — and shutting others. Keep me willing — willingness is such a need and can only come from you. (3) Show me anew the meaning of your name — i.e. "Son of man." (4) Is comfort essential — my Lord says: "no" — what sayest thou oh my soul?

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am listening — not sometimes because I *want to* — but because I know I need to — speak to me: (1) "I am in your agreements. I am your powerful silent partner." (2) "You are my son — will I help you or hurt you?" (3) "I am *with* you — *in* you — *ahead* of you — *behind* you — *above* you. Trust me. I love you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Population: 278 million. Peoples: An extraordinary mosaic of peoples came under Russian domination over the past several centuries. There are approximately 154 ethnic groups. (Specific points for prayer over the next 5 days.)

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.

WEEK TWO

—Thursday—

I bow before your throne of grace to worship the very essence of kindness — even yourself. I hide myself in the depths of your love.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you” (Psa. 9:9,10). So often we have praised you as our refuge. Man feels that he is under attack — which he is — and so sorely needs a place of serenity and security. You are that place! Blessed be your name! We are not possessed by demons, but we are often under severe oppression. If I did not draw away every day to my refuge I would be defeated and overcome. It is from my stronghold I can find provision and light. I do indeed “know your name” and I place my trust in you.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I know many names for yourself and every one of them tells me over and over: “You, Lord, will never forsake those who seek you.” I do seek you as my Father. My father has gone to be with you. I do so sorely miss my earthly father. I am glad that every good quality I found in him (and they were many) I have found multiplied a thousandfold in yourself. The one quality of my father that characterized him most was kindness. All my life long I have followed your lovingkindness — and your lovingkindness has followed me all the days of my life. I have sought you as One for whom I could work with confident assurance you would never disappoint me. How wonderfully true it is that you have never forsaken those who seek you!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

What I find in you is always far less than what I know I could find if I were but to seek further and

more fully. I praise you for what I have found, but I ask your forgiveness for what I have not cared to see. What a tragedy to live so close to a magnificent view and never see it? To be poor when riches are buried in our backyard. Deepen my hunger and thirst after your righteousness. I surely do not want my expressions to sound like pious platitudes — as I read them over they seem to be such — forgive me. Dear Lord, you know my heart. I want to seek your very Self with all that is within me. Forgive me for anything less.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I know not why God’s wondrous grace
To me He hath made known,
Nor why unworthy, Christ in Love
Redeemed me for His own.
But “I know whom I have believed,
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I’ve committed
Unto Him against that day.”

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²¹Another man, one of his disciples, said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

²²But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.” —Matthew 8:21,22, NIV

⁵⁹He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But the man replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

—Luke 9:59,60, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The urgency of proclaiming the Kingdom of God

seems to speak to me again and again out of these verses. Surely it was a reasonable request: "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." If it were a mere matter of attending the memorial service of a father (as we do today) we could indeed think of it as a reasonable request. Such was *not* the case. The burial of the father in our Lord's day was the whole time after the father had retired from work — and could involve several years. Our Lord describes those who had but little interest in proclaiming the good news of the rule of yourself in the hearts of men as "the dead" who could bury the dead.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

There are two kinds of dead people here: (1) the physically dead; (2) the spiritually dead. The spiritually dead can take the time and thought necessary to bury the physically dead. In this circumstance it would include all the time necessary to care for the needs of an aging parent. We are sure our Lord would have no objection to the son returning from time to time to visit his father. The point of my Lord is that in priority of time and interest it is the Kingdom of God that gets first place. How many who have never heard of the good news really are reached by our proclamation? It seems to me that far too much of my time is spent talking to those who have heard until they can't hear. Help me dear Lord in this desire.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this clear word of our Lord's priorities. (2) Thank you for the candid honesty of the man who wanted to excuse himself — without this we would have no lesson. (3) Thank you for my Lord's ability to cut through the superficial to the real motives of men. (4) Thank you for this plain statement that some people will be dead to the appeal of the Kingdom. (5) Thank you for the urgency and importance of what is done in Kingdom proclamation. (6) Thank you for preserving these precious words over all those centuries so we could hear and heed them. (7) Thank you that Jesus wants us to meet all responsibilities — only in the right order.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Let the dead bury their own dead" — how did such persons become "dead"? There are those who give themselves to sensuality and become dead while they live. Dead to all that gives life and light and hope. The persons of whom our Lord spoke had given themselves to something or Someone who had cut them off from "the Kingdom of God" — or the rule of God in their lives. How sad would be the funeral of such dead burying their own dead! The time of waiting for death — i.e. the care given to such aged

people would also be sad beyond description. A visit to rest homes in our own community will let us know how totally hopeless are some people. What a place to preach the resurrection and the life!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

(1) Since I am now living in the "bury my father" period of time — i.e. when our children have such an interest in me, it becomes increasingly apparent that I should heed these verses. Lord, help me to do it! (2) Which kind of "dead" am I? Am I truly giving the spreading of your good news the priority it deserves? (3) What is it that cuts me off from your own dear self? Show me and separate me from it. (4) Send me to those who are "dead in their trespasses and sins" — they are the *only* ones who can be raised from death.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As you reached the hearts of these three men — reach my heart: (1) "Burying the dead does have social priority — but NOT of the kind of my interest." (2) "I came to treat the living not the dead — why have you come?" (3) "Some are determined to be dead — let them alone."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Point for prayer: *The Church in USSR has suffered more severe and sustained persecution than that of any nation in recent history. Yet there is much cause for praise: a) The survival and growth of the Church. The steady drop in total numbers has been compensated by a corresponding increase in spirituality and commitment. b) The bankruptcy of atheistic propaganda. The Marxist claim that the Church would wither away has not been fulfilled even with active efforts to destroy it. The proportion of believers steadily increases for many are converted as they grow older and become more disillusioned with atheism.*

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

WEEK TWO

—Friday—

*You are a rock that cannot be moved.
You are a house built on a solid foundation.
I tremble but my foundation does not!
I am glad to worship you!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them” (Psa. 11:3,4). When evil men oppress it is enough to know you observe them. The record of man’s existence upon this earth does not say that wickedness and evil triumph. When the foundations of life are being destroyed what can the righteous do? We can let everyone know there are foundations that cannot be destroyed. Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. We do not minimize the shock and loss of all that we hold precious personally or nationally. But through two thousand years since Bethlehem the Lord has been in his holy temple and he has ruled from his heavenly throne.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

We are living today in the most prosperous nation in human history. If God is for us — and how could we doubt all the evidence that he is? — who then will successfully be against us? If we have our primary concerns in the life to come we really have very little to worry about here. I want to lift up my whole heart in praise and thanksgiving for your goodness to me. It is enough for me to know you see and understand all that happens among the sons of men. In your infinite wisdom you placed me in America instead of India or Africa. How good you have been to me. I am amazed and deeply grateful!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I know, at least to some extent, how soon the foundations of life can be destroyed. The hopes and dreams

of a project or a lifetime can be dashed to the ground — or swept away in the flood of some physical or financial disaster. Dear Lord, I freely confess I do not know I would be prepared to praise you in the midst of it. Perhaps I could gather up the pieces and see beyond to your throne and your rule through it and above it all. I do so need your constant help. Forgive me for boasting in any way. After all the above expressions I must confess my only real security is in you — in your essential person. My hope is in you — and not even in what you can or cannot do — not in what you give or do not give — but in *yourself!* Praise your name forever!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more,
Feed me till I want no more.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶¹Still another said, “I will follow you Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.”

⁶²Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” —Luke 9:61,62, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How I do want to step back and let you read this text to me. At the same time I want to read this back to you as if I were able to give the intonations and color to the words when they first fell from the lips of your

Son. This *does* seem like a reasonable request. Following Jesus meant leaving family — job — friends — associations — *all*. This was only true when such hindered — in any way — our following our Lord. Evidently Jesus knew this man better than he knew himself (dear Lord, this is always true). There was such a deep attachment to the family he would be hindered in his following. How I do want to hear with my heart what you are saying to me here!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How have my attachments to my family interrupted or hindered my plowing operations in your field? Today this thought seems to be a “no-no.” The emphasis has turned from the plowing to the family — or perhaps we could say that men have tried to persuade us that involvement with our family is plowing. Dear Lord, I am the first to recognize a need for balance — it is a long way this side of young children and their care for me to make any observations. I am *so glad* you can see me back then as well as today — and tomorrow. I believe the care and love of my wife and children is a part of your work for me — a very very important part of it. I also believe my primary task has been and is: “to proclaim the kingdom of God.” By life and word I want to do this.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that men realized the primary response we are to give is to follow you every day. (2) Thank you that you are walking through every day so we *can* follow you. (3) Thank you for the dearness and nearness of our families. (4) Thank you that you can become even nearer and dearer. (5) Thank you that following you does break every tie that hinders me. (6) Thank you for the transfer of love — or the polarization of love. (7) Thank you Lord that I need not look back.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” This is just the very verse I need for this time in my life. I know there are two or three reasons for looking back: (1) To learn from what has happened. We are even now publishing a history book for that purpose. Such a backward look is not what our Saviour meant. (2) To look back in memory to relive the events that meant so much at the time they happened. How easy it is to cast a rosy mist of beauty over what at the time might not have been all that happy. (3) To look back with the thought that you made a mistake in your choice to follow him — or you have allowed your loyalty to be divided. Such is the sin of this text.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Family attachments have been very, very strong in my experience. Indeed, with our children it is stronger than ever. I lift up these requests for your own help for us: (1) Please give me a “*hatred*” for the opinions of men as compared with my *love* for your word for my life. (2) If there is any mistake made — and there have been many — it was never — never in loving you and spreading your word (write this upon my heart).

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am listening now — if ever I was! Speak to me! (1) “There *were* — and there *are* those who will not follow — expect it.” (2) “No one can follow if they do not hear.” (3) “I am concerned about *all* — if I can, *you can*.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Point for prayer: *Specific churches* need prayer: a) *The Orthodox Churches* survive under severe pressures. All spiritual leadership is severely repressed. Renewal has affected sections of the Orthodox Churches, but a moving of the Spirit is a great need. b) *The Roman Catholics* have suffered probably more than any other major ecclesiastical tradition. c) *The Lutheran Churches* are predominantly national churches in the two Baltic States.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

WEEK TWO

—Saturday—

I am so glad you — and you alone decide why some are weak and others are needy. You arise to help them. Can I do less? I bow before your love and mercy.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“*‘Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise,’ says the Lord. ‘I will protect them from those who malign them.’ And the words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times*” (Psa. 12:5,6). How precious are these words! You have a very large interest in the weak — you hear the groaning of the needy. Could this be true of your concern for all the men of the earth? To ask is to answer. How then shall such a concern be expressed? Is it not through your own children who share your concern? Just here I want to tell you how much these qualities of compassion mean to me. You have in ways best known to you protected your children from those who malign them — and in other ways seek to hurt them. Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to reaffirm my confidence in all you have said: the Psalmist’s estimate of the value and purity of your word is such an encouragement to me. Your words, as recorded in the documents of the Bible, are “*flawless*”. As to content they have *no* inaccuracies. When examined by seven branches of science: (1) History; (2) Archaeology; (3) Geology; (4) Psychology; (5) Philosophy; (6) Sociology; (7) Anthropology they are pure and without mistake. When put to the tests of men in the centuries of time they only become more valuable and speak more deeply to human need. Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is in my failure to meet the needs of the poor — to hear the groans of the oppressed — that I must con-

fess my sin! It does from time to time become a burden of incongruity: that I should live in the midst of plenty both physically and spiritually and others cry under the oppression of poverty. Dear Lord, I here and now *repent!* I change my *mind* — I *must* do something to meet the need of man. I can not do everything — but I can do *something*. I can share what I have. I can, and will find those who will give food to the starving. I can, and will provide your word to those who do not now have it.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus, keep me near the cross:
There a precious fountain,
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calv’ry’s mountain.
In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem, ⁵²and he sent messengers on ahead. They went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him, ⁵³but the people there did not welcome him, because he was headed for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” ⁵⁵But Jesus turned and rebuked them, ⁵⁶and they went to another village. —Luke 9:51-56, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I know to appreciate this text I must enter the spirit

of both my Lord's intentions and the circumstances surrounding the Feast of the Tabernacles. Your dear Son knew the time for his suffering death and resurrection had appeared on the horizon. Something happened to the face of Jesus. There was a message clearly communicated in all he did. He is now ready to publically announce his Messiahship. The feast at Jerusalem would be a time and place when such an announcement would be like a torch in dry tinder! The Samaritans knew from our Lord's demeanor and the disciples' words the purpose of his journey through their country. They had no dealings with the Jews and especially under such conditions. They did not like their country being a thoroughfare to what they considered false worship.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Why did Jesus twice over pass through Samaria instead of taking the usual route on the east of the Jordan? We could say in answer for the first visit it was to save those of the village of Sychar. In this second time through we could say it was to save his disciples from themselves. The disciples were impressed with the bearing of determination found in their Master. How poorly did they read his manner! The disciples thought he was Elijah on a mission of vengeance. As Elijah burned up the messengers of the apostate king so would Jesus deal with those who rejected him. How sad! Yet, how like my own selfish heart! I wish I knew what Jesus said — was it: "I came to save not to destroy"? He says this to me. I want to receive it.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the wonderful foreknowledge of my Lord. (2) Thank you for Jesus' unyielding determination to give himself away that we might be saved. (3) Thank you that my Lord always had those who could and did help him — I want to be one of them. (4) Thank you that I can today prepare the hearts of men to receive him. (5) Thank you that I need not react as the disciples when rejected by men. (6) Thank you for the vengeance that belongs to my heavenly Father. (7) Thank you my Lord always rebukes when and where it is needed.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they went to another village." From what did Jesus turn when he rebuked them? Are we right in thinking his face was set in one direction, i.e. toward Jerusalem, and it affected his whole pasture? Perhaps not. He must turn from his present activity to take the time necessary to instruct these hasty disciples. We remember a time later when John along with Peter came to Samaria for a far different purpose (Acts

8:14-17). In the coming of the Holy Spirit it would seem a whole new understanding became available to these "sons of thunder." Indeed John became known as the apostle of love. The same Holy Comforter lives in us!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Am I really and truly aware of the "kind of spirit" I am of? Perhaps these requests will change me — I want to be changed: (1) My Lord was full of love — his determination was simply a focus of this quality — may it be so with me. (2) The Samaritans were believers in the same God as the Jews — why the animosity? We religious folk can easily answer this question — dear Lord, forgive us. (3) Peter and John were changed — wonderfully changed — may it happen to me!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue speaking to the deepest needs of my heart! I am listening. (1) "Whom I love I rebuke — are you listening *now*?" (2) "Total determination can be yours — but you **MUST** know where you are going." (3) "How do men see me through you?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Point for prayer: Specific churches (continued): c) The registered AUCECB is a government-engineered union of Baptist, Brethren, Pentecostal and Mennonite churches that submitted to government restrictions, which, if rigidly enforced, make evangelical Christianity and effective outreach extremely difficult. Pray for the easing of restrictions, encouragement of believers, growth in grace of leaders and effectiveness in witnessing despite the limitations.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

WEEK THREE

—Sunday—

*If your love is never failing — and it is!
If your salvation is real — and it is!
Then I can sing — and be glad — and I
do!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But I will trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me” (Psa. 13:5,6). Your unfailing love is my bulwark never failing! It is indeed in your character that my faith is anchored. Your love — expressed throughout your whole word — has never failed to lift my spirit and give me renewed hope and strength. If the heart of the psalmist could rejoice in the salvation he enjoyed how much more do I have reason to rejoice? There is so much more purpose in rejoicing over the lamb of God than ten thousand animals slain upon an altar. Praise your name I am indeed blessed.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have saved verse six: “I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me” as an expression of my own joy in yourself! There is no way I can truly adequately say just how good you have been to me — but I will gladly lift up some specifics in adoration to yourself: (1) You have been so good to me in your choice of a wife for me. Should I be married for a hundred years I could never tell all the ways my dear wife has helped me. A “help mate” is not name enough for her. Aside from yourself you know I have no one who means more to me! (2) For the dear children — and now grandchildren you have sent to us. Each of them is precious — not without concern — even as we are to you — but a joy and strength to my heart. I do have a song of praise to sing to you.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It does seem appropriate that I should confess my sins before I sing your praise. My heart has not always re-

joiced in your salvation. There have been times when I was drawn away to other “things.” My muted praise was always because of my own pride and selfishness. Dear Lord, forgive me! How easy it is to misunderstand when all we can see is our own plans and interests. When will I be more “people oriented”? I do lack involvement in the lives of people. I have made a choice — long ago — to give my attention and energies to projects that I fondly hope will last beyond my little space of life — I need to remember that any one person will last throughout eternity. Lord, purify my motives. Forgive my selfishness!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, ³Jesus’ brothers said to him, “You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. ⁴No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” ⁵For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

⁶Therefore Jesus told them, “The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. ⁷The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I

testify that what it does is evil. **“You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come.”** **“Having said this, he stayed in Galilee. —John 7:2-9, NIV**

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How these words of his own brothers must have cut him to the heart! How is it they could see his obvious divine credentials and yet not believe in him? There seems to be at least two factors present that contribute to this attitude: (1) Jesus let his brothers know as he did all others that acceptance of him as the Messiah meant a total yielding of one's self to his Lordship, and they were not prepared to do this. (2) They were *“worldly minded.”* Jesus had drawn a clear line between himself and the sex-food-money orientation of the world about him — the world hated him for it. This his brothers had not done — indeed, they seem to be a part of the world.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is easy enough to be critical of the brothers of our Lord — but what of my own heart? Am I ready to turn my whole self over to my Lord even as a new born babe lies in the arms of its mother? Am I ready to admit that my stupid sheep-like attitude requires a shepherd who takes total charge of my life? It is one thing to see the obvious evidence of his deity, it is something else to submit to his Lordship. Does the world hate me? Am I close enough to the world to get any reaction at all? It is wonderfully tender to see how our Lord responds to his brothers. He neither indulges them nor excoriates them. He simply states the case as it is. How I do want him to look into my heart and *“tell it like it is”* — give me ears to hear!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the wonderful meaning of deliverance behind the Feast of Tabernacles. (2) Thank you for the very natural, normal family life in the home of Mary — and yet there was Someone who was wonderfully supernatural and not at all *normal*. (3) Thank you Jesus did not strike out at his brothers' sarcasm. (4) Thank you that I can see his miracles and receive their full import. (5) Thank you Jesus lived and died on time. (6) Thank you that it is really impossible to know Jesus — accept Jesus — hear Jesus and be neutral. (7) Thank you for the wonderful six months of teaching our Lord gave in Galilee — we are reading much of it in the gospels.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil.” *“The world cannot*

hate you” — of how many Christians would our Lord say this? His contingency for receiving opposition from the world is to testify against its evil deeds. I thought we were to change their nature not speak against their sins. We have just registered our opposition to a *“rock concert”* by a sensual representative of the world. We were told our opposition was useless because you must convert such persons and then their evil deeds will be changed. Is that the treatment Jesus gave the Pharisees? or the soliders or the Sadducees? Repentance is produced by godly sorrow for sin and such sorrow will never be produced without speaking against sin. One way or another men must find out they are lost before they will ever want to be saved.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There is so much to learn in this exchange between brothers — I lift up these requests for learning: (1) If Jesus could be patient with his brothers' estimate of his miracles I can be patient with those near to me that never seem to understand my relationship with you — help me to learn. (2) The sarcasm of his brothers was not responded to in kind — guard my mouth that I might so respond today. (3) Teach me how to evaluate the time for acting — and the time for inaction. (4) There *is* a hatred from the world — please insulate my reaction to such hatred!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am trying to be as open — as honest — and as vulnerable as my Lord — speak to me: (1) *“Your actions should always be before me first and then before others.”* (2) *“I am in control of time and times — trust me.”* (3) *“Staying in some places is more important than going.”*

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Point for prayer: *The Unregistered Baptists and Pentecostals* have grown prolifically and have suffered intensely because of their refusal to compromise. In some areas the persecution has been particularly severe. The majority of the present leadership is in prison or exile.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt,
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured,
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

WEEK THREE

—Monday—

You know me totally and love me without reservation. Give me the humility and courage to praise you as I want to.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God” (Psa. 14:2). It is enough for me to know you are an intelligent Being with a constant interest in the affairs of men. Indeed my own awareness is but a poor reflection of your own. We do not like to envision others looking *down* on us. But when it is the Creator of heaven and earth what other position would we give him? Even in such an expression you have no condescension in your consideration of man. David’s imagery is in relation to the physical universe. You do not look down on us in any negative sense. Praise your name.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

You are in a search for those who understand you. How like ourselves! This is the constant life-long pursuit to find someone somewhere who will really understand me. If we could ever meet such a person perhaps he could explain what he knows and we would both know. In your search it is a desire to find someone whom the enemy has not corrupted. There is the capacity in man to understand you or you would not be looking. Both of us are on our search — I am so glad we found each other! In reality you found us or we would be forever in some far field stumbling in the valley of death. Dear Lord, you have found me — I have found you. I want to seek you with my whole heart!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Why is it I prefer to “do it myself” — “find my own way” — “do my own thing”? Such expressions might overstate the case a little. But in each expression I see

myself. You have given me creative ability — and in it I take such great delight I forget it is a gift. How many, many projects have I planned and executed with hardly a thought of yourself? Stop me! Open my eyes! Forgive me. How many planning sessions have left you out? How many options have been turned over and accepted or rejected with hardly a prayer? I can excuse myself by saying I assumed you were there — or I simply took you for granted. Is that any way to treat the One who supplied all we have? Dear God, I hope you will forgive my awful sin of self-worship.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 Forgive our foolish ways;
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
 In purer lives Thy service find,
 In deeper rev’rence, praise.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁰However, after his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. ¹¹Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, “Where is that man?”

¹²Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, “He is a good man.” ¹³But others replied, “No, he deceives the people.” ¹³But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews. —John 7:10-13, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Just how did your Son travel from Galilee to Jerusalem undetected? Did he go again through Samaria and thus remain incognito? It would seem he would surely have been detected if he used the or-

dinary route on the east of the Jordan. What a stir was found in Jerusalem! The fame of your Son had taken hold of the whole religious community. In the midst of the thousands and thousands of worshippers Jesus could announce his Messiahship with reasonable safety; because most men glorified your name because of what he taught. It would seem everyone was intimidated by someone. Everyone, that is, except your Son!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How I do want these verses to find personal meaning for me. How I do want to watch for him today. Not to criticize him or to plot to kill him, but because I want him to direct the events of today. Can I see him in my association with others? I can if I am looking for him. I am afraid I am sometimes more like those who doubted that he was there at all. My dear Lord was neither a good man (only) nor did he deceive the people. Jesus let the rich young ruler know that he was either God and therefore *good* or not good at all for all men sin. Deception comes from evil purpose — my Lord's purpose was to be the personification of truth.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the plain admission of John that Jesus had "brothers" — this places him in a family relationship to which I can relate. (2) Thank you Jesus was and was not influenced by his brothers. (3) Thank you I need no longer ask, "Where is that man." (4) Thank you I can call him by name and honor and worship him for all that name means to me! (5) Thank you that I can call my Lord "good" and mean that he shares your nature of deity. (6) Thank you that I know who the deceiver is — I resist him. (7) Thank you I can live above intimidation.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews." This same attitude has taken over in many places. When the establishment is opposed to Christianity it takes all kinds of courage to speak out about him publicly. How is it so that here in America when our president is a Christian — and when by far the majority are not against him, we are yet hesitant and afraid to speak out? The simple fact of the matter is we have nothing we want to say publicly among strangers. Let's move into a religious situation. How is it that we even have a difficult time finding Bible school teachers? When will we meet at the church building and prepare to call on the lost? Neither religion — dead, dull and boring — nor apathy have left the scene. Praise God neither has our living Lord!

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am excited about the possibilities of these verses. I find in them some real answers to the needs of my life: (1) There are some things — some actions that are best kept secret — show me which ones. (2) Some do not seek my Lord for good reasons — their inquiry is negative and fruitless — how I need to know just who they are — help me. (3) Am I *really* — *personally* ready to call him *good* and mean it? (4) Deliver me from the fear of man — lead me into the fear of yourself! (5) There is daily manna in the wilderness, even as "the feast of booths" reminded these Jews — may I get my supply for today!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Reach my conscience dear Lord — keep me tender-hearted! (1) "Have you truly digested the meaning of these verses for your life? Look again!" (2) "You are my son — *and* a brother to Jesus — do you ever try to tell him what to do? — or when to do it?" (3) "Don't you think it is wise for me to hide some of my plans from you?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USSR — Point for prayer: *Young people and children* are singled out for abuse, mockery and harassment if they follow their parents in believing and refuse to join the Communist youth groups. It is illegal for parents to teach their own children about the Lord, or for churches to allow those under 18 to attend services.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath His wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.
God will take care of you,
Thro' evr'y day, O'er all the way;
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you.

Thro' days of toil when heart doth fail
God will take care of you;
When dangers fierce your path assail,
God will take care of you.

WEEK THREE

—Tuesday—

I am a guest in your house. You are a guest in my house. Your grace has made me blameless. I want to pause just now to worship you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, . . .” (Psa. 15:1-3a). The question of the psalmist David is my question. I am asking: “who can live relaxed and full of joy in your presence?” “Who may consider you a constant member of the family?” I know you do not live in some building on a hill. You live in my body — and are present here right now! I shall never be blameless in your evaluation of my conduct — except through the blood of your Son. In the presence of my contemporaries and those with whom I live I can live the kind of life described above.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The power of this verse is the incredible promise of a divine house guest. My house becomes your house — my home becomes your home. The reason for the conditions for your presence is to make you comfortable. If I were to truly attempt to be like your Son — whose walk among men was blameless — who did what was right in every circumstance — who spoke the truth from his heart — who never once slandered either his friends or his enemies. Dear Lord, all I can give is my commitment to this kind of conduct. My walk *can be* what you feel comfortable with. I *can* do what is right when a choice is before me. I *can* speak just the truth. Most of all I *want* you to feel at home in me.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How I *do* want you to move into every area of my

life as a permanent resident — but I want always to treat you as an honored guest. There is no problem in my confession of guilt and sin in the fact that I am so much less than “blameless” before you. I do not hide it — I do not evade it — it is my fault! I have been — and I am wrong — forgive me. I have lied about and slandered those with whom I live and work. Cleanse me — forgive me. It is because I am sorry about the hurt I have caused others — but it is much more because I want your presence in me and with me that I make this confession.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I need Thee ev’ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev’ry hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior:
I come to Thee!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁴Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple court and begin to teach. ¹⁵The Jews were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having studied?”

¹⁶Jesus answered, “My teaching is my own. It comes from him who sent me. ¹⁷If a man chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. ¹⁸He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. ¹⁹Has not Moses given you the law? Yet

not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?" —John 7:14-19, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

When men were caught up in the ceremony and excitement of the feast Jesus appeared in Jerusalem and moved among the crowds until he found a place in the temple courts. How I do want to open my ears and hear the One who taught as never a man did teach. My Lord was acquainted with the content of the Old Testament. He no doubt acquired this in the teaching offered in the synagogue of Nazareth. But the application and interpretation he gave to these ancient scriptures was simply amazing! Oh, how I want to hear what he said! Even the most bigoted narrow minded of the Jews admitted he spoke words with meaning and power they had never heard. As to what will happen to his words he speaks to me: "If any one chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I could not have one thing I want to do more than your will. I find your will in your word. But I know you are speaking of a very basic attitude — *an undivided willingness! A focus of desire.* How indeed I want to bring such an attitude to the teachings of my Lord — your Son. I expect according to his promise made here that I shall *experientially know.* To the extent I have done this I can claim that Jesus is ten times more real to me than ever before. Your words and his words (the same in source) burn and glow before me as indeed they are living and active. As a child places his total confidence in the words of his parents so I do with your words and those of your Son. I have the same secure confidence as that little child — praise your name forever!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for inconspicuousness of my Lord — what a lesson for me. (2) Thank you that we can really never hear the words of Jesus and be neutral. (3) Thank you for the superior authority and knowledge of my Lord. (4) Thank you for the old, plain claim to deity made here by Jesus. (5) Thank you that Jesus was conscious of who he was, who sent him and why he came. (6) Thank you we can every day choose to do your will — every day we can know inwardly the divine nature of his teaching. (7) Thank you I have tested and found his words to be true — in me — for me.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for

himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him" (John 7:18). What a wonderful statement of purpose as related to our service today! Honor is the criterion. Who is praised and remembered? How we do need to decrease; how he needs to increase in all we say and do. Dear Lord, I do want to work for your honor. What a beautiful description of our Lord: "a man of truth; there is nothing false about him." Truth equals reality — when Jesus taught all his words matched his life — all his life equaled his words. I want to work for him — for you. Forgive my willful stupidity. Send me dear Lord as your servant. Speak to me and through me.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How continually true it is that my Lord acts and reacts at just the right time! (1) Make me more and more willing to do your will as you make it known to me. (2) When your experiential knowledge is given me how shall I fully receive it? Help me dear Lord! (3) I want a very real "child-like" faith or trust in you — reinforce this desire. (4) I need not be seen — only you are worthy of such — help me here. (5) There is nothing unreal in the nature of Jesus — do you believe this?

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

How well do you speak to me in this text! I am listening — continue to do so: (1) "Remember what you said — and I said through you: every day you choose to do — or no to do my will." (2) "Honor for myself is your purpose for living." (3) "Reality is found in Jesus — in myself — in my word."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

United Arab Emirates — Population: 1,300,000.
Point for prayer: *The radical changes of the last two decades have made UAE citizens more cosmopolitan and open to new ideas. Yet the effects of Islamic fundamentalism have increased restrictions on communicating the gospel.*

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

WEEK THREE

—Wednesday—

*Apart from you I have no good thing.
In you and from you I am satisfied — I
have all things. Help me to express my
joy!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge. I said to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing’ ” (Psa. 16:1,2). Fear is such a terrible menace! Once we are persuaded that someone or something is a threat to our physical or emotional well-being we feel insecure and all of life is less than it could be. After we have taken all the precautions we can you are still the only real source of safety. I have no way of reconciling all of the present acts of violence with this promise. It is only in the light of eternity that the scales are balanced. I do hide myself in your promise of protection. I am glad to affirm with the psalmist: “You are my Lord, apart from you I have no good thing.” Any and all good things are from yourself.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Every good and perfect gift comes from you. Apart from you I have nothing. I do not at all want to even form the words: “*apart from you.*” There are many things men receive apart from you — but none of them are good. It is a real joy to identify yourself as the treasure of life. In you and of yourself we have all things and abound. The real meaning and purpose of all we have comes from you. How poorly have I expressed this quality of your nature. I look around me in this land of abundance and try at the same time to imagine the “third world” countries who have so little of even the necessities of life. Keep me full of appreciation and wonder at your goodness — may it daily lead me to repentance.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How I do want to hang on to this life. We never seem

ready to leave. But leave we will one day. The older I get — at least just now — the more I believe that I have something I want to say or do before I leave the scene — the older I am the more safety becomes an important factor. Dear Lord, I am confessing my own insecurity and what I see as the reason behind it. I have sinned in this area of life. I should look at life as a moment-by-moment experience; it isn’t what I might do or could do — it is what *I am* doing *now!* Am I safe now? Am I hidden in you today? Am I presently enjoying all your good things? Forgive my obvious sin of anxiety.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Glorious things of Thee are spoke,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken
Formed Thee for His own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake Thy sure repose?
With salvation’s walls surrounded,
Thou may’st smile at all Thy foes.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁰“You are demon-possessed,” the crowd answered. “Who is trying to kill you?”

²¹Jesus said to them, “I did one miracle, and you are astonished. ²²Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. ²³Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? ²⁴Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.” —John 7:20-24, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Jesus knew the hearts of the leaders; he exposed their motives: “*Why are you trying to kill me?*” For more than a year, ever since Jesus had made the man whole at the pool of Siloam, they had sought to kill him. Of course the crowds in the temple court could see no evidence of such intentions. There were no soldiers or cries of vengeance. It is interesting that the crowd equated demon possession with insanity. Our Lord is about to demonstrate with marvelous logic just how far wrong they are. It would seem this one miracle was remembered above all others — because it was done on the sabbath day and these men came out second best in the contest that ensued. How fragile and dangerous is the pride of men. A man can do a thousand good things and we remember the one thing we think he did wrong. God forgive us!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How easy it is to fall into the trap of legalism. There is not one opportunity to be thus captured — but many of them. We (beginning with me) are so prone to place the emphasis upon the external. Here are some of my problems: (1) *Class procedure*: how easy it is to get so involved with the grading system that I forget the purpose of the class. We are there to learn the word of God. Grading was made for the class and their learning — not the class for grading. (2) *Life relationships*: who is right or who is wrong in a thousand little decisions of life? How easy to stumble and fall into the trap of legalism. What difference does it make? The purpose of marriage is to teach us unselfishness and maturity. (3) *Finances*: does money use us or do we use money? Until we adopt our Lord’s attitude here we will be a captive to the love of money.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord never answered the crowd. (2) Thank you for the mind and motive reading ability of Jesus. (3) Thank you for the use of logic by my Lord. (4) Thank you that Jesus referred to a mutual authority for argument — he is teaching me so much here that relates to the principles of discussion. (5) Thank you for healing of the whole man offered by my Lord. (6) Thank you we are told to “judge” — but not merely by appearances. (7) Thank you that there is One who even now is rendering a “right judgment” of myself. I plead for mercy!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.*” Is Jesus contradicting what he said in the sermon on the mount? I.e., “*Judge not that you be*

not judged”? Of course he isn’t! In Matthew 7:1 he is discussing condemnation or censorious criticism. In this verse he is asking these men to make an evaluation based on all the evidence. His criticism here has to do with prejudices. The Pharisees refused to look at all the facts. These men were seeking to kill him because they had not looked beneath the surface of the law to its purpose or spirit. Praise your wonderful name — there is the ability even in these men to make a proper judgment — or Jesus would not have asked them to do it. How I do want to apply every word to myself.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Dear Lord, I need the inwardness of these words — I do not want to be just another one of the unheeding multitude — I lift up these requests for that purpose: (1) “How fragile and dangerous is the pride of men” — yea, and I am one of them! What do I remember about my Lord? (2) Dear Savior — be the Lord of my classes — the Lord of my home. (3) I am *not* free — totally free from the love of money — but I do want to be! (4) Some questions have no answers that men will accept — others deserve no answer — dear Lord, I need your own wisdom in deciding.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I continue to heed with my heart what you are saying in these blessed verses: (1) “You still are responsible for right judgments.” (2) “I would not ask you to judge if I did not want you to do it.” (3) “You will have an opportunity to use this principle this day.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

United Kingdom — Population: 56,600,000, of which England has 83.1%, Scotland 9.2%, Wales 5% and Northern Ireland 2.7%. Point for prayer: *The century-long* decline in church membership and attendances is slowing: there is an air of faith and expectancy that the long-awaited revival is round the corner. May it come!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Day by day and with each passing moment,
Strength I find to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment,
I’ve no cause for worry or for fear.
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what he deems best—
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

WEEK THREE

—Thursday—

Since 99% of my total existence will be in the world to come I want to get much better acquainted with your essential being. I praise you for this time with you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“And I — in righteousness I will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness” (Psa. 17:15). The only righteousness I will have — or anyone else will be that which you have given to me as a gift because of Calvary. It will be such an external joy to know that I am totally right — because of your grace and mercy. Such is what you promise to everyone. How I long for the release from this body and the wonder of your eternal presence! It is the uncertainty of the time, place and method of departure that bothers me today. I read here that such an experience will be like opening my eyes from a sound sleep — even as I did this very morning! What incredible satisfaction I will find with seeing your likeness — even your Son!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Most of the above praise is an expression of my own satisfaction and joy at the thought of awaking in your eternal likeness. I want to expand on such lovely thoughts. The satisfaction promised is such an incentive for life today! There are so many questions I cannot answer here, i.e. with total satisfaction. I am bothered — as you know dear Lord — with the incredible number of people who have come and gone from the surface of this planet. Where are they? Since each of them and all of them are eternal beings they must be presently conscious in torment or comfort. I am so glad I will be totally satisfied with the explanation that will be immediately present when I awake in your likeness. Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Whereas I *do* think about the life to come it has not

become the preoccupation it ought to be. If this life is but a vapor — a tale told in the night — a fleeting moment in the light of eternity — should not much more of my thought and planning be for heaven? I believe you have created me — and all men — with the capacity of enjoying a brand new world — a bright new heaven. But only now — and briefly at other times do I arouse my thoughts on this grand subject. Shock me into an awareness of eternity! Open the eyes of my understanding to the wide expanse of the spirit-world! Most of all forgive me for being so dull and blind. I read of the One who is “the express image of your substance” — even your Son — how I long — yearn to see him!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
Thro’ eternal ages let His praises ring;
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I’m standing on the promises of God.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁵At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, “Isn’t this the man they are trying to kill?”

²⁶Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities concluded that he is the Christ? ²⁷But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from.”

²⁸Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple court, cried out, “Yes, you know me, and you know where I am

from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, ²⁹but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." —*John 7:25-29, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

There are three groups of people present: (1) The pilgrims from a distance who did not know of the events in the miraculous ministry of our Lord. These people had not known of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews. (2) The Jews — i.e., the rulers who were indeed plotting to kill him. (3) The Jerusalemites, i.e., those persons who lived in Judea and were now attending the feast at Jerusalem. They were all acquainted with the hatred and intrigue involved in the plot for his life. Such persons are amazed the trap has not already sprung. The words they spoke broke the heart of our Lord — i.e. "Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ?" Oh, that it were true!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How much did they know — and *how little* did they know! There was no way of denying the obvious supernaturalness of his whole presence. To look at his context is to see God. To watch his miracles is to see the power of God. To listen to his teaching is to hear the wisdom of God. And yet they were willing to believe the traditions of these teachers. It was only in the commentary comment on the scriptures that such a thought as his mysterious appearance or disappearance was found. How sad that they would use these words! "We know when the Christ comes no one will know where he is from." When his star appeared even Herod found out from where the Christ would come. Give me the wisdom from above.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you Jesus was a teacher — oh how I want to learn from him. (2) Thank you for the ironic sharp words of my Lord: "Yes, you know me?" Dear Lord, I do. (3) Thank you I can answer "yes, yes" to this pungent question: "Do you know where I am from?" — yea from God! (4) Thank you that I can read these words as if I had never seen them before: "I am not here on my own." (5) Thank you for the opening of reality in these words: ". . . but he who sent me is true." (6) Thank you for the sharp separation of those who know and those who do not. (7) Thank you I can know *because I want to*.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

" . . . but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." How could we find a clearer statement of

our Lord's deity? Jesus *knew* God in the intimate relationship of not only Father and Son, but because he was One with the Father. He knew and shared the purpose of the Father and therefore he came to this earth in the form of a man. How shall I ever fully appreciate all this one verse means? If I should live a thousand life times and express myself in praise every day I should never be able to use enough superlatives! I do want to raise my heart in my words in wonder and praise for the love and mercy I see in my Father's sending and my Lord's coming!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How is it that so often those who should know the most know the least? No one — I mean NO ONE could be neutral with Jesus! I want to renew my relationship with him: (1) *We must* — and will *kill him or worship him* — may I die that he may live. (2) I know he is the Christ! I am convinced — help me to share this knowledge! (3) I look up into the lovely canopy of the space you have created — you have come from the "third heaven" — the exalted ruler and creator of all — teach me — speak to me dear Lord! I am listening. (4) You see all in total reality — i.e. everything in perfect balance — perfect agreement — I rest in your knowledge *not* mine. Deepen this rest!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to speak to me: (1) "My Son knew me as I knew him — equal knowledge — and in purpose. What does this say to you?" (2) "Christmas happens every morning." (3) "'Joy to the world' is the message I taught the angels to sing."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

United Kingdom — Point for prayer: *Traumatic social change*, increasing violence and the breakdown of moral standards before the tide of secular humanism has shocked many to realize that something has gone seriously wrong. Pray that millions may yield to him!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

Beneath the shadow of Thy throne
Still may we dwell secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

WEEK THREE

—Friday—

As much as I do love you it is but a poor reflection of your love for me. Just now I want to increase the strength of my love for you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold" (Psa. 18:1,2). It is so good to come before you in adoration and praise. I want to say from the depths of my whole heart, *"I love you, O Lord, . . ."* Not just for deliverance but because of yourself! You are indeed my strength — on a Tuesday morning after such a strenuous weekend of teaching and preaching and traveling I can put real meaning into the fact that you are indeed my strength. You are the one immovable factor in my life — *"my rock."* Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

As I lift my heart to you in praise I first want to include all men in my adoration — just here I want to be as personal as I can. You are not only the One in whom I can hide — find escape — protection — security — but out of such a fortress comes a wonderful Deliverer! How I want to use the descriptions of John on Patmos as he saw your Son riding forth as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In the millions and millions of books sold today the one large attraction is *escape!* Men find a refuge today in sex — in money — in food — even in hard rock music or drugs. Man is created by you to seek refuge. Our rock, our refuge — our hiding place is in yourself!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is easy to remember how often I have sought an escape or protection in something else than yourself. How much poorer I am for the attempt! How stupid of me. If I were not deceived I would never have done

it. The strength of my salvation is in you. You are not only my salvation, you are the strength of it. If you had not sought me in the person of your Son I would never have been saved. I purpose to every day — day after day, after day to impress upon my heart my need of you and your Son — in every area of my life. I promise to run day by day into my stronghold, even yourself, and stay there!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev'ry hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior:
I come to Thee!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁰At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come.

³¹Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, *"When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"*

³²The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

³³Jesus said, *"I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me. ³⁴You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."*

³⁵The Jews said to one another, *"Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks,*

and teach the Greeks? ³⁶What did he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come?'" —*John 7:30-36, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The more I read and meditate on these beautiful verses the more I appreciate your dear Son and your wonderful self! Why didn't the authorities arrest Jesus and throw him in jail? Why do not events of history occur sooner or later than they do? It is *not* idle to ask such a question. It is because *you* have decided such an event *will not* happen at this time or *will* happen at another time. From man's viewpoint someone will call this fatalism — from your perspective it is but the working out of your plan — thank you! What an encouragement that some in the crowd read aright the signs set up by your Son and bought his product — even his Messiahship.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Even though the crowd believed it was a superficial belief. In only a few months they would cry "crucify him." The crowds on the shores of Galilee who ate the loaves and fish also believed — but they were soon returning home to their old life rather than following your Son — signs by themselves say very little — like the billboard on the highway they only carry a picture of the real thing! Action must be taken. Talk in the temple courts about a present Messiah can not go unchallenged. The Pharisees and the chief priests — who were Sadducees — could agree on one thing: they must stop Jesus of Nazareth.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the wonderful message my Lord left in the short time he was with us. (2) Thank you for the clear statement that he was sent from heaven. (3) Thank you for the constant repeated promise that Jesus would return to heaven and his Father. (4) Thank you for the understanding my Lord had (and does now have) of the hearts of all men. (5) Thank you that Jesus shut the door of heaven for some people — or did they shut it themselves? (6) Thank you for the candid honesty of John as he tells us of the disbelief of these Jews. (7) Thank you that my Lord left such an example of his methods of teaching.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me." What a true yet complete statement of your mission to our planet. What a short, short time it was! We all would like to have

shared the silent years in the carpenter's shop. Indeed we would want a complete account of your childhood and teenage years. What of the events from twenty to thirty? How precious do the three years of service become! Somehow we are told by such a short sojourn that life here is very important — but not at all the real world. How I do long for the world to come! I want to be with the One who so loved our world that he sent his only begotten Son to save us.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I want to relive these verses through my own experience — I lift up these requests with this thought in mind: (1) I rest my hours — days — and years in your hand — keep me aware of your direction — at rest in the *fact* of your leading. (2) I want to review and re-read the accounts of your son's miracles — how refreshing! Thank you — renew this experience as I need it. (3) May I contribute to the unrest of those who reject your Son — that they might be saved. (4) I am so glad I too am on my way back to the ONE who has sent me — give me the confidence I see in Jesus.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Surely just now you will reach my conscience: (1) "Some men are not happy until they are confused — this is Satan's work — do not be surprised." (2) "Your time is short even if you live another 20 years — use it for *me*: I gave it all to you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

United Kingdom — Point for prayer: *There is a new confidence among evangelical believers.* Decline is predominantly in non-evangelical congregations. Liberal theological institutions are nearly empty, and evangelical ones full to overflowing. An increasing minority of ministers in the Anglican Church and Church of Scotland are committed Evangelicals.

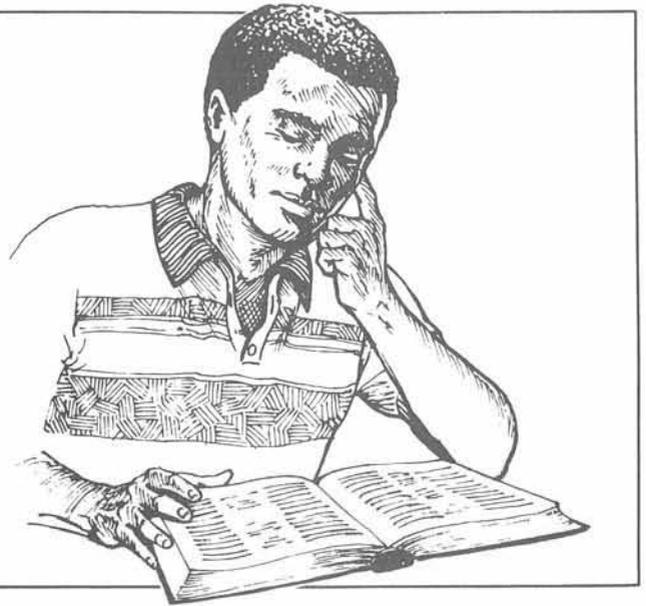
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

The Lord's my Shepherd,
I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green;
He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

WEEK THREE

—Saturday—

The verb “call” as related to yourself is a continuing active verb. I must keep on calling to be heard. Only with this attitude can I handle your answer. I continue my call to you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies. . . . In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears” (Psa. 18:3,6). A marvelous privilege is mine each day. To lift my heart to you in praise for your very self! In these two beautiful verses are the following attributes of yourself: (1) You hear me when I call. (2) You understand all languages better than those who speak them. (3) You are so very worthy of praise. (4) You appreciate our adoration — i.e. you are pleased with our feeble efforts. (5) You see my danger and respond to my call for help. (6) You have various ways of saving me from my enemies. (7) You know my enemy better than I do.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What is said here by this servant can be said by all your servants. (1) You see and know and understand so well my distress. Indeed the motives and reasons for such distress are all read by you. (2) You will not, and do not reprove me for calling upon you. You surely have many reasons to reject my call — but you do not. (3) I do not define the help you will send to me. You know much better than I do what help to send. (4) You live in a world removed — and yet involved with this one. It can be described as “a temple.” (5) My individual need and request is heard and answered by you. In all these ways I praise you!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

In all these same ways I can and do confess my sin before you: (1) I do not even want to call — I doubt that you hear — or care. Terrible! — but true —

forgive me. (2) There have been so many needs I struggled with alone and you heard no words directed to you. (3) I have praised others and myself when you are the reason for praise. (4) I have endured and suffered the dangers of Satan and complained instead of calling to you for help. (5) I have devised my own ways instead of asking you. (6) I ignored the enemy and was beaten. (7) I focus on the distress and forget the One who knows better than I my need. (8) I only call upon you for emergencies — forgive me! Forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me,
Confused at the grace that so fully He proffers me;
I tremble to know that for me He was crucified—
That for me, a sinner, He suffered,

He bled, and died.

Oh, it is wonderful that He should care for me,
Enough to die for me!

Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁷On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” ³⁹By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. — *John 7:37-39, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Father, I shall never be able to enter fully into

the meaning of these precious words. Just when and where — and why did your Son cry with a loud voice? Was it as the water was drawn from the pool of Siloam to be carried to the altar in a golden pitcher? The words of your prophet Isaiah seem altogether appropriate: “*With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation*” (Isa. 12:3). Was it as the priests stooped down to take this water that Jesus cried with a loud voice all could hear? Since all men thirst and the invitation is to all men we all want to drink. Our drinking is our believing. Bless the Lord, oh my soul!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Since our thirst is continual the drinking must also be continual. The tragic mistake I have made is assuming that one drink would last a lifetime. I must keep on drinking. He is the great Spring and from him flow the rivers of living water. John identifies the power of the flow of this water — even the blessed Holy Spirit! Indeed he came to glorify my Lord. The waters of salvation are within me. I have drunk of the water he has given me and it has become a stream of water. But this relationship *must be* sustained. It is good to see here the clear indication that the Holy Spirit was to be given after my Lord’s ascension at your right hand. Indeed the first act upon his return to his glory (John 17:1-5) was to send the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:32,33).

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this great feast and its meaning. (2) Thank you Jesus wanted everyone to hear these beautiful words — so he spoke in a loud voice. (3) Thank you the invitation is for everyone. (4) Thank you we must be thirsty before we will come. (5) Thank you the conditions for drinking are to believe. (6) Thank you for the unqualified promise of streams of living water within me. (7) Thank you for the examples in the Acts account of such persons who received the Holy Spirit.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Up to that time the Holy Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.*” Our Lord prayed: “*Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. . . . And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began*” (John 17:1,5). Peter preached on Pentecost: “*Exalted to the right hand of God (or glorified), he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear*” (Acts 2:33). How reassuring to know the Comforter has come. Welcome Holy Spirit to residence in my body! I know you will

express yourself through my heart, i.e. my mind, will, emotions and conscience. Since you are just like Jesus in nature I want to be filled with you.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

If ever I could pray it is in the face of these numerous verses — I gladly lift up these requests: (1) Make drinking — and believing parallel in my heart! (2) Since my thirst is continual my *drinking* (an action) must be continual — oh, give this meaning to my believing! (3) Jesus said *he was the well* NOT the scriptures — but not without the scriptures — lead me to him! (4) The power of the flow is the Holy Spirit — Lord, I believe — help the reality of my belief! (5) “*Spring up oh well within my soul — spring up oh well and make me whole!*” (6) The Comforter has come — and he hasn’t come — not until such words are personal. I want this to happen!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

This has been one blessed time — how *glad* I am to open yet again my heart — speak to me: (1) “*My whole purpose is fulfilled when I: walk with you — eat with you and sleep with you.*” (2) “*Please, please think deeply about what I have just said to you.*”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Population: 238,900,000. Point for prayer: *The vitality, diversity and size of Christian organizations and activities* defy a detailed description. Many generalizations have to be made! How much we need to pray for this nation and its leaders. The resources of the USA are of such vital significance for the world and its evangelization.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

WEEK FOUR

—Sunday—

In the battle of life you have made some wonderful provisions and promises. In the closet of worship I can — and do — claim every one!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop or can run through a barricade; with my God I can scale a wall” (Psa. 18:28,29). The imagery of a battle is very strong in this psalm. In the midst of the darkness of the battlefield you keep the flickering lamp burning. Indeed you do! I am right now on the field of battle. It is only your dear self that can keep my heart aflame with hope and peace. There have been so many dark situations — I had one but yesterday — that you have turned into light. Praise your name! How many barricades have been broken through because of your strength? More than I can count or know!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Dear Lord, my intentions (as you know better than I) are to represent who you are to all men — potentially and actually. I do believe all these wonderful relationships can be mine *right now!* There are some very high walls for me to scale. I look up at them — I ask for your strength and agility. What wonderful promises! I want to look behind the promises to the One who makes them. (1) You can and do keep my love and joy and peace burning brightly in the lamp of my heart — therefore you are *love and joy and peace*. (2) You illumine the darkness of my understanding therefore you are the total source of light and knowledge. (3) You break down barriers therefore you are absolute energy. (4) You can enable me to scale the highest wall therefore you see on both sides of that wall and can lift me up and over. Glory to your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, the light in my lamp has surely been about blown out *many* times. It takes oil to sustain the fire. I have been so neglectful of the fuel supply — i.e. your wonderful word and communion with you. But, as you know I do have a strong desire to have oil in my lamp. It is only as I sit in darkness before you and open my heart in praise that I can and do see a great light. How many barricades have turned me aside as if they were an impenetrable wall. You can see right through them! You can see on both sides of them. You can lead me through or over them. Bless your name. Forgive the many times when I have forgotten these wonderful promises!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought
Since Jesus came into my heart!
I have light in my soul for which long I had sought,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
Since Jesus came into my heart,
Since Jesus came into my heart,
Floods of joy o'er my soul
like the sea billows roll,
Since Jesus came into my heart.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁰On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”

⁴¹Others said, “He is the Christ.

Still others asked, “How can the Christ come from Galilee? ⁴²Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?” ⁴³Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. ⁴⁴Some wanted to seize him,

but no one laid a hand on him. —John 7:40-44, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The timing of Jesus' words had much to do with the response of the people. I am trying to project myself back into the circumstances of these words. The whole ceremony was full of solemnity and meaning. To hear a loud voice in the midst of the pouring of the water on the altar from the golden pitcher with these words: "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink" would be a shock indeed! But then to turn and see the man who said them. His presence of serenity and authority — the perfect appropriateness of his words — their deep meaning. All of this and more sparked an emotional outburst from the crowd of: "Surely this man is the Prophet." Others said, "He is the Christ"!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I have attempted, quite unsuccessfully, to see and hear as the worshipers did on that "great day of the feast." At least the crowds knew the scriptures even if they did not know your Son. How tragically true this is of so many of us. Until I have integrated your word with and in your Son I really do not know anything — at least as I ought to know it. If I will only open my inner ear to hear him I will be as impressed as the temple guards. Yea, more so — because I know more about him than they did. How wonderfully good it is that I can spend much time with him — I can stay at his feet until I see and hear Jesus only!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that no one could be really neutral once they saw and heard your Son. (2) Thank you that he was indeed "the Prophet" of whom Moses spoke. (3) Thank you he was the anointed of yourself. (4) Thank you he came from Galilee — and he didn't come from Galilee. (5) Thank you he was of the royal lineage of David's seed as to the outward man. (6) Thank you that he was (and is) your Son and yourself on the inside. (7) Thank you that no one in heaven or hell can lay a hand on him and live.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him." There was something awesome in the presence of Jesus. It is in John's gospel we especially receive this impression. Our Lord knew who he was and where and why he was going! Even when men hated him they were afraid to say so. When men had the authority and the men to do the job they were afraid to arrest him. There was something wonderfully intimidating about Jesus. No one records a halo or

some supernatural aura about him. It was in his eyes — in his personality — it was God present in human form. It was only after men fell physically prostrate before him that Jesus presented himself to them as their prisoner. How is it we do not fall often before him in wonder and praise?

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

We are back now to the ordinary — or subordinary — it is here I need to pray even more effectively. (1) I have some balance in a knowledge of your Son and the scriptures — but I want MUCH MORE. (2) Open my inner ear to hear his voice crying, "If any man (this means me) thirst let him come to me and drink." — I must camp by the well. (3) The Prophet is speaking to me — of whom Moses said — "everyone who does not hearken to that prophet shall be utterly destroyed" — dear Lord I hear you! (4) I bow before my King — your King — the King of heaven.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

While I am thus prostrate before you what do you say to me? (1) "As you see, I *can* and *do* work through ignorant, imperfect people." (2) "I *know* who I am — my future — do you? You can — you should." (3) "Look to me — I am looking at you — into you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Point for prayer: *There is much for which to praise God* in this great country. A religious awakening has been gaining momentum since the mid-1970's. Young people are in the forefront. A strong reaction is developing against drug abuse, pornography, permissive legislation, abortion and crime.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

When morning gilds the skies
My heart awaking cries,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Alike at work and prayer
To Jesus I repair:
May Jesus Christ be praised.

In heav'n's eternal bliss
The sweetest strain is this,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Let earth and sea and sky
From depth to height reply,
May Jesus Christ be praised!

WEEK FOUR

—Monday—

What great concern you do have for each one of us! I want to return your concern just here and now. You merit all the reverence I can give. Help me to improve in my worship!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever” (Psa. 19:8,9). Such beautiful characteristics of yourself are seen in these words! You want man to be confident and assured of his way therefore you give him your precepts. Since all your words perfectly match the circumstances of life we have a solid joy in applying them. You want to illumine man’s mind — therefore you give us your commandments to open up vistas of thought we could never otherwise have. Praise your name — you are so full of concern for all of us.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

There never will be a time when my awe or reverence for you has lost its meaning, i.e. from *your* perspective. I could often be carried away to lesser things — but your awesomeness never changes. I understand the word “pure” to mean whole or complete and therefore eternal — there is no need for reevaluation of yourself — you will always be the One almighty God! If I respond in reverence before you — or if I do not, you are yet the same. How wonderful is this thought about you! I want to honor you in the depths of my heart. Thank you for joy and light and reverence.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

If your precepts are so right how is it I have not at least memorized every one of them? What ones I have memorized (and also applied to my life) have given great, great joy to my mind — will — and conscience. Why haven’t I committed the rest to memory? There is

no need of excusing myself — I am wrong and the loser in this — forgive me. Two or three verses per day would easily have given me in the past 40 years all your precepts in at least my mind. If I want the eyes of my heart enlightened how is it I have not opened your word as one opens food when he is hungry? It is because I have not been that interested — forgive me. If there is a great all-powerful eternal God who will judge the living and the dead how is it I am not often before him in prayer? The incongruity of what we believe and what we do is amazing! Forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Come, Thou almighty King,
Help us Thy name to sing.
Help us to praise!
Father all-glorious,
O’er all victorious,
Come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁵Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him in?”

⁴⁶“No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards declared.

⁴⁷“You mean he has deceived you also?” the Pharisees retorted. ⁴⁸“Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees put his trust in him? ⁴⁹No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law — there is a curse on them.”

⁵⁰Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, ⁵¹“Does our law

condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"

⁵²They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee." —John 7:45-52, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

This is one amazing text. How I do want to even now carry it to you in prayer. Open up my mind that I might think your thoughts after you. The temple guards had been sent earlier to arrest my Lord. They were sent by the chief priests (who were Sadducees) and the Pharisees. These men could unite in their opposition to Jesus. How awesome is the sin of jealousy or envy. Guard my heart against this sin. Dear Lord, I like them might fall into it and call it something else. I am so glad for the temple guards' honesty. I do expect to meet at least one of them when I am translated into your presence. These men really listened and learned. How I want to do the same.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How could these Pharisees be so blind? Ah, it is not difficult! When other things demand our attention — when we have our living in an area not approved by our Lord, we can easily shut our ears to what he says. At the same time there must have been something special about these men. Representatives of their group followed our Lord throughout his ministry, and yet they did not hear, they did not see. What was very special about these men was their audacity in assuming authority they did not have. Since the rulers of their number did not believe Jesus was right, Jesus was not right. Never mind a personal evaluation. Dear Lord, deliver me!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that John's gospel teaches me — and all men — to form my own decision about your Son. (2) Thank you for Nicodemus for his honesty. (3) Thank you for the courage and love of Nicodemus. (4) Thank you for the temple guards who were also fair in their evaluation of Jesus. (5) Thank you we can see in the Pharisees and Sadducees just how far prejudice can carry us. (6) Thank you that I can listen again every day to the man who spake as never another man spoke. (7) Thank you that I know who deceives.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Look into it and you will find that a prophet (or the Prophet) does not come out of Galilee." Didn't these men know Jesus was born in Bethlehem? If they did they are the deceivers. It is quite possible this is true.

If *the* Prophet was to be the Liberator of the Jews from Roman bondage (as these men thought) then he would include Galilee in his conquest. The tragic fact is that these men were so divided among themselves and so full of their own interests that they would never agree on a Messiah regardless of his geographic origin. Do they sound anything like our religious leaders of today? Do they sound like some men in charge of any local congregations of my acquaintance? Do they sound like the contradictory and faithless ideas that sometimes fill my head?

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Just now my need for lifting my heart to you in petitions is upon me — I ask for your answers in these requests: (1) Give me the willingness to listen and listen again to what my Lord says to my conscience. (2) All of the constant contact with the Pharisees — it is there for a purpose — what are you teaching me here? (3) Perhaps you are saying it is possible to be blind and deaf and not know it — is this what you are saying? (4) I want to be your Nicodemus for today — show me how.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your ministry to my conscience: (1) "Do not assume you know anything as you ought to know it — I alone have that prerogative." (2) "Are you *really* ready to face the real issues — or do you sidestep?" (3) "It is better to let me be true if all men are liars."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Point for prayer: The potential perils of the resurgence of evangelicalism are matters to turn into prayer. a) *Popularity* can lower spiritual standards. b) *Political power* should be exercised with sensitivity. It would be tragic to taint the purity of the gospel with political scandal. c) *Christian leaders* with high moral principles are needed.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Fairest Lord Jesus! Ruler of all nature!
O Thou of God and man the Son!
Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blomm'g garb of spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

WEEK FOUR

—Tuesday—

I do not want to sin — but I do. Who indeed can discern his errors? I am glad for this time of cleansing and refreshment. I enter in with joy!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression” (Psa. 19:12,13). Introspection as related to the reasons for sin is a fruitless effort. If we really want to stop sinning it is an inspection of your heart that gives us deliverance. Blessed be your name forever! The motivation for sin is so interlaced with the circumstances of life that it is easy to excuse ourselves. We all can rationalize our sin out of existence — but it really never leaves. How I with all men pray David’s prayer: “Keep your servant . . . from willful sins.” It is a strong help to know that personal worship answers this prayer. To establish an intimacy with you each day is to ultimately keep me from willful sin.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to review the qualities of yourself I see in these verses: (1) Dear Lord, only you can show me the motive behind my sin. And if you chose to keep the motives concealed your total cleansing forgiveness will make such an explanation unnecessary. (2) You see all and know all and forgive all — how wonderful! (3) You have a personal investment and interest in all your servants — but just here in this one unworthy servant. (4) You can rule over me — or sin will rule over me. There is no way I can rule my life — I am no match for Satan or yourself — but I CAN CHOOSE who will rule over me. Having made the choice I will accept the rulership. I want you as my Lord!

CONFESSION OF SIN

There have been times when at least the potential of “great transgression” i.e. abandonment to sin has been present. It was because of hidden faults that

became willful sins. Dear Lord, I do not want to take even the first step. Right here and right now I want to open up every hidden room of my heart and ask for the cleansing of the light of your word — the forgiveness of the blood of your Son. I know if I keep the doors open to all rooms you will keep me from willful sin. For the times when I have been stupidly secretive forgive me. I know what it feels like to have sin rule over me — I want none of it! I am glad to yield my will to you!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Have Thine own way, Lord,
Have Thine own way!
Search me and try me, Master, today!
Whiter than snow, Lord,
Wash me just now,
As in Thy presence humbly I bow.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁵³Then they all left, each to his own home.

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²At dawn he appeared again in the temple court, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and ⁴said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” ⁶They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “If any one of you is without sin, let him begin stoning her.”

⁸Again he stooped and wrote on the ground.

⁹At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

¹¹"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin." —*John 7:53-8:11, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I have read and reread every word to yourself and for my own heart. (I am not at all unaware of the discussion concerning the omission of these verses.) I want to learn from these wonderful words.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

When the temple police failed to bring back the prisoner the council broke up and went home. Where did my Lord sleep that night? Was it on the hard ground of Gethsemane's garden? Or did he find a bed in the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus? Perhaps he prayed all night. It was early in the morning when he came again into the temple. Is this the day after the feast or is this a "flash-back" on the part of the writer? Or this becomes the first incident in "the last day of the feast"? Soon there is a commotion not far from where our Lord has seated himself. The scribes and Pharisees are leading (or driving) a woman into his presence. We would not attempt to describe her appearance since the writer does not do so, but she is embarrassed beyond words. It would seem her case was entirely hopeless. But not with our Lord!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that the case is so clear cut since we are all just that guilty and in need of forgiveness. (2) Thank you that the man was not present (or was he?) so there would be no argument. (3) Thank you that the woman was placed in the very presence of Jesus — it is there we can find our help. (4) Thank you that we do not know what our Lord wrote on the ground — since each of us can have him write whatever most helps us. (5) Thank you for the insistence of these hypocrites — this is just the attitude we all have from time to time. (If some reader is offended, please know I am writing this in the presence of my Lord for myself.) (6) Thank you for Deuteronomy 17:7 which says: "The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him (her) to death, and afterward the hand of the people." What a sharp two-edged sword did my Lord thrust into their heart! (7) Thank you my Lord can forgive sin without giving us the least excuse for continuing in it.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... Woman, where are they? Did no man condemn thee? And she answered, no man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way; from henceforth sin no more." There are several helpful facts revealed in this incident: (1) The scribes and Pharisees were far more interested in trapping Jesus than exacting justice in regard to the woman. (2) These men were sensitive to the law — when they recognized Jesus had used their own law against them they accepted it. (3) Our Lord never ignored the woman's guilt — it was the condemnation he set aside in favor of forgiveness. (4) Jesus produced the strongest motive for overcoming sin — love and mercy.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Perhaps these verses speak to one of the largest — most felt needs of my heart. I lift up these requests out of my need: (1) My Lord had no home — is this also true today? My heart is worse than the stable in which you were born — but you are welcome here! And what a change is wrought! (2) How is it that we have at least in USA such an oversensitive interest in sex sins? It is because such relates to our essential being. Dear Lord — write upon my heart! (3) Teach me yet once again that NO ONE at ANY TIME will ever trap my Lord in his words! (4) I need the stones — not to throw them — deliver me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Truly, truly you have my attention — speak to my deepest need: (1) "Where are your accusers? I do not accuse you — why should you accuse yourself?" (2) "Not continuing in sin is not only a possibility — it is my will for your liberty!" (3) "I love you — I have many like you — I love all of you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Point for prayer: *The black community* numbers 27,263,000. Many live in the centers of the great cities. Unemployment, poverty, frustration, broken homes and one-parent families are tragically common.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
How he left His home in glory
For the cross of Calvary.

Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.

WEEK FOUR

—Wednesday—

How good and pleasant it is to worship you! Open my heart to your Word and yourself. Thank you for the opportunity to praise you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer” (Psa. 19:14). This verse is very familiar to me — and to many others. How shall we lift up praise to you from it? That we are speaking animals is a true source of praise. Of course I use the word “animals” only in relation to our bodies. But you have given to us alone of all your creation the ability to speak. We above all are created as spirit beings in your image. Out of the meditation of our heart come the words of our mouth. How I praise you it is possible to contemplate your greatness and goodness and almost involuntarily speak of these qualities.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am deeply impressed that it is possible to please you. Your pleasure in our thoughts and words is not at all of the condescending variety we find among ourselves. Your pleasure in us is like yourself — pure and whole. Wonder of wonders! Praise your name! In order to meditate something about yourself must catch my interest and hold it. Surely there are many such areas of interest. I could make a *Bible Dictionary* or *Encyclopedia* my constant companion and have enough resources for many days. The three attributes of yourself in this verse are: (1) *Lord* — I am in the constant process of learning the full meaning of this name. (2) *Rock* — solid — massive — a source of shade. (3) *Redeemer* — I am so glad you paid the ransom price for me — and all men.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Why is it the words of my mouth are many times

totally unacceptable to you? It is because of my *wrong* meditation. When I am caught up in the maelstrom of this world the words of my mouth reflect such a condition. A choice *can be* made along the way that I *will not* place myself in such a position again. It is too bad everyday is not Sunday — it *can be!* We *can* choose to read a book of devotion or inspiration instead of looking at TV — we *can* lift our hearts in songs of praise. We *can* study your word every day just for our heart’s meditation. I am talking about myself and my own needs. Forgive me and help me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

All the way my Savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy,
Who through life has been my Guide?
Heav’nly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well;
For I know, whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹²When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

¹³The Pharisees challenged him, “Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid.”

¹⁴Jesus answered, “Even if I testify in my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from and where I am going. ¹⁵You judge by

human standards; I pass judgment on no one. ¹⁶But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father who sent me. ¹⁷In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. ¹⁸I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the one who sent me — the Father.”

¹⁹Then they asked him, “Where is your father?” “you do not know me or my Father,” Jesus replied. “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” ²⁰He spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his time had not yet come. —John 8:12-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I do want to sit at Jesus’ feet and receive with meekness his words that are able to save my whole life. Perhaps the lighting of the immense candelabras in the temple at this Feast of the Tabernacles related to our Lord’s description of himself. He is *the light* to lead the whole world out of the darkness and wilderness into which they like sheep had wandered. Our Lord as *the light* becomes also *the life*. Such grandiose claims would not go unchallenged. How sad it was that some men would not or could not listen or see. Jesus was an ambassador from another country — his witness therefore represented the king of that country who was God.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Lest I become like the Pharisees I want to open my eyes — my heart to him. Since these men did not know Jesus was here from another world they did not identify his words as representing the authority of the *One* who had sent him. Dear Lord, I do! My Lord didn’t come to judge but to save — however, whenever he did judge it was (and is) always right. Indeed his very words formed the basis of his authority. What an awesome claim: “I stand with the Father who sent me.” Were these men as dense in their understanding as they appear — or were they just ignoring our Lord’s claim as the Messiah? In either case I do not want to be like them.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the wonderful Light of my world. (2) Thank you I need never, never walk in darkness — he is the light for all of life all the time. (3) Thank you I can accept as wholly valid the testimony of heaven’s ambassador. (4) Thank you I know where I came from and where I am going. (5) Thank you my Lord’s primary purpose was to save — not to judge. (6) Thank you for the plain claim to equality with God made here by Jesus. (7) Thank that I can know you through knowing your Son.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“He spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put.”

This seems to be a favorite spot for our Lord’s appearance in the temple. He was here when the widow gave her memorable gift. We are told the treasury actually consisted of only thirteen receptacles fastened to the wall of the council chamber. Inside this room the members of the Sanhedrin met. It was barely possible that these men could have heard the voice of our Lord as he taught in the temple. There are two things that identify our devotion: our prayers and our money. Our thirst for our Lord, our involvement in his work is shown in our praying and our giving. We think of the words of the angel who appeared to Cornelius: “Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a remembrance before God” (Acts 10:4).

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have been so significantly helped in these words — and yet there are areas where I still need help — I lift these up to you: (1) Dear Lord, keep me always aware that I have already found THE light — the ONLY light — and that it is worse than futile to seek light anywhere but in Jesus my Lord. (2) All the light (or understanding) of life comes from Jesus — he is THE life as well as THE LIGHT — how can I tell others about this glorious truth? (3) Only Jesus can tell us where we came from and where we are going — thank you, thank you!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause to hear again what you will say to my spirit: (1) “I am both just and a justifier of those who have faith in what my Son did for them.” (2) “No word of mine will fail of fulfillment.” (3) “Please, please get more and more acquainted with my Son — to know him is to know me.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Point for prayer: *The native Americans* have suffered intensely in their encounter with European immigrants. Prejudice and insensitivity have been their lot to this day. Pray for: a) *Effective and vital churches*. Real in-depth impact has been meager. b) *Bible translation* which has regained importance as local languages are revived.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Praise Him! praise Him! Jesus our blessed Redeemer!
Sing, O Earth, His wonderful love proclaim!
Hail Him! hail Him! highest archangels in glory;
Strength and honor give to His holy name!
Like a shepherd, Jesus will guard His children;
In His arms He carries them all day long:
Praise Him! praise Him!
tell of His excellent greatness;
Praise Him! praise Him! ever in joyful song!

WEEK FOUR

—Thursday—

You know the desires of my heart — you know every plan of mine — I want to fulfill the desires of your heart and the fulfillment of your plans! I enter this time of worship for this purpose.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. We will shout for joy when you are victorious and will lift up our banners in the name of our God. May the Lord grant all your requests” (Psa. 20:4,5). In this psalm David expresses for others what he wants for himself — and what he has found in his own experience. I do want to look behind these words to the One to whom they are addressed: (1) You knew what requests we have upon our hearts before we make them. But it is only in giving voice to such requests that we have them. You have bound yourself by your own law that we must ask in order to receive. (2) All our plans are of interest to you. What comfort I take in this promise!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

It is a curious fact that the promise of victory is for you and not for us. What accommodation must always be made when our desires become your plans. And yet this is just what happens. It is impossible for us to perfectly reflect the desires of your heart — even in our best moments — how far from your plans are the ones we propose! And yet when our desires are fulfilled and our plans come to fruition it is *your* victory and we gladly lift the banners high in honor to your name. No good thing will you withhold from those who walk uprightly — but no good thing comes except as a gift unearned.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How full of our own ways do we become! How easy it is to leave you out of our desires. How much do you share in our planning? I do know in you I live and move and have my being — I know that as I

work out you work in — i.e. that you are at work in me and through me all the time, but unless I share with you the desires of my heart all my plans will fail. Such has happened too many times. I do not want it to happen again. I do not want this to be a fond hope, but a deep conviction. Help me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I need Thee ev’ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev’ry hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior:
I come to Thee!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²¹Once more Jesus said to them, “I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come.”

²²This made the Jews ask, “Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, ‘Where I go, you cannot come?’”

²³But he continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

²⁴I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”

²⁵“Who are you, anyway?” they asked.

“Just what I have been claiming all along,” Jesus replied. ²⁶“I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world.”

²⁷They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. ²⁸So Jesus said, “When you have

lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. ²⁹The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” ³⁰Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him. —*John 8:21-30, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How infinitely patient our Lord was with these blind and stubborn Jews! I want to as much as possible absorb the real meaning John had in heart when he wrote these words. “*Once more*”: he wants to tell of his mission — indeed he *longs* to reach the hearts of his hearers. The plainness — even bluntness of his words run as a sword in our hearts: “. . . *you will die in your sin.*” This is tantamount to saying “you will go to hell.” And then if that were not enough he says: “*Where I go you cannot come*”, i.e. I am returning to heaven and you will not come there. Dear Lord, give us ears to hear these words!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The scribes had reserved the deepest recess of hell for those who committed suicide. (We are glad our Lord didn't stop to answer such a suggestion.) The sharp contrasts are all the more startling when seen in their context: (1) I am going to heaven, you are going to hell. (2) I am from heaven, you are from hell. (3) You are of this world and I am from another world. (4) Accept me as the Messiah and be saved — reject me and be lost. Oh my Lord, I do want to receive you as my King and Master. Not in sentimental pious words — but in deed and in truth.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that he made himself known by his death and resurrection. (2) Thank you he so often referred to himself as “the Son of man.” (3) Thank you for the confidence I can have that all my Lord spoke you also speak — a joint authority. (4) Thank you for the example of the indwelling presence of yourself in and with your Son. (5) Thank you for the One who *always* and *in everything* always pleased you. (6) Thank you for some who put their faith in him (however superficial it was). (7) Thank you that my faith comes from his words today.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.*” Practicing your presence is one of my goals in life. Here I am instructed by your Son just how to accomplish this grand goal. Jesus was aware at all times that his Father was with him. Since you are a spirit being such

can be true of all your children. I should add that you have the capacity of omnipresence. There is a contingency in this verse: “. . . *for* I always do what pleases him.” The consciousness of your presence is a result of *doing*. It was in acting and through acting your presence was claimed. My Lord said “*go and lo I am with you.*” Your presence is not promised in contemplation but in doing what pleases you.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am ready — or I believe I am ready to allow you to divide the thoughts and the intents of my heart — I lift up these petitions for that purpose: To believe we are created as immortal beings — i.e. we share your nature which is eternal spirit — then to contemplate a conscious eternity of joy and service — of peace and a total fulfilling purpose is beyond my wildest imagination — BUT to die unforgiven and spend eternity in everlasting punishment! And to know these words in John 8:21-30 are spoken to very conservative religious men — dear Lord, I believe, help my doubts. I am *so glad* Jesus is the judge!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As in few other days you are surely speaking to my conscience here! Keep it up! (1) “Are you of *this world* or the world to come?” (2) “Your Lord's death on the cross and his being raised from the dead are the times and places where you can best *know me* — look at them again.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

US Virgin Islands — Population: 123,000. Point for prayer: *Tourism and the inflow of wealth have played havoc with the moral and social fabric of society.* Crime is widespread. Pray for the evangelization of tourists, those involved in the crime “industry,” the many aliens and the local islanders themselves.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

The great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer:
O hear the voice of Jesus.
Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, blessed Jesus.

WEEK FOUR

—Friday—

You are King over all — and over all men. I enter this time of worship to personally appropriate your rule in my life. This is my desire and request!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“O Lord, the king rejoices in your strength. How great is his joy in the victories you give! You have granted him the desire of his heart and have not withheld the request of his lips” (Psa. 21:1,2). Of course this is the expression of David as he ascends the throne of Israel. It has beautiful Messianic overtones. However, it is in its relationship to all men as potential kings and priests that I want to rejoice. All men should be increasingly aware that all their strength is like water. It is only in you — and in you alone we have any strength. David could recount victory after victory and praise you for every one of them. How many were the moral conquests of my Lord? I am sure that your Son honored you for every victory.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

In my own experience, how is it? It seems to me most significant that David used the singular word: *“desire”* and *“request.”* He wanted you to grant him the *one desire* and the *one request*. Perhaps it was to be given the throne over all your people. All else would follow if this one desire was his. My one desire — my one request is that you rule from the throne of my heart and all other desires and requests will be mine. Just now, as in every day of my life there are special desires and requests I want to see fulfilled. If only I can and will give you the throne of my heart these and all others will be mine! Praise your name.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I do need to read the second verse before the first. When you have taken control — when you are given the throne then I can rejoice in your strength — when

you are king in my life how great is my joy and the victories you give! The antithesis is also true. How utterly weak I am when you are not king. How many are the defeats when you do not rule. I am in the constant process of asking you to rule in my life. It would be so good if there were just one time and place where you became king over all — all the time. There was such a time when I realized such must be — but you have asked me to reign with you and this is a real struggle. Help me — forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

King of my life I crown Thee now—
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.
Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony,
Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³¹To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

³³They answered him, *“We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”*

³⁴Jesus replied, *“I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.*

³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”
—John 8:31-36, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I like the translation that says: *"Abide in my word."* *"Hold to my teaching"* does not seem to be as strong as *"abide in my word."* In either translation my Lord is asking for obedience to what he has said. I long for the freedom here promised! I want to experientially know all the truth your Son has given us. Such is surely one of the reasons I appear every day in this time of worship. It is only when we assume we have the truth and are practicing it that we are entrapped in the bondage of these men. The Jews never even heard our Lord. They *totally* ignored his reference to what he had taught.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I hear my Saviour say again to me: *"I tell you the truth, everyone who sins (keeps on sinning) is a slave to sin."* What sins were enslaving these religious men? A better question is: "what sin or sins are enslaving *this* religious man?" My Lord in a hidden manner is telling me how to become a child of heaven. Let your Son set me free and I too can belong to your family. I do long to abide with you forever in a land free from sin. Right now I want to be given the liberty and calmness and joy that comes when my heart is yielded to him! How eternally important it is that I understand and accept all he said.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you I can know who is a true disciple. (2) Thank you that I have the truth in what you have said. (3) Thank you that it *is* possible to know the truth. (4) Thank you for the wonderful liberty of your Son. (5) Thank you I can break the bondage of sin. (6) Thank you for the promise of an eternally permanent place in your house. (7) Thank you for the continuing action of setting me free.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Free indeed! What liberty there is in doing just what you want and wanting just what you do. In several areas of life Jesus sets us free: (1) Freedom from habits of the flesh. Only my Lord can break the bondage of the lust of the flesh. He asks us to give our bodies to him as a sacrifice and a temple. (2) Freedom from the bondage of lying — both to ourselves and others. This can be a desperate enslavement. When we are totally honest with our Lord we cannot be false to anyone else. (3) Freedom from fear and guilt. There are so many people right this moment in bondage to fear. His perfect love casts out all my fear. Free indeed!

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I lift up one request from each of these six verses: (1) If my Lord had to deal so stringently with persons who *believed* him what would he say to some of us? (2) Dear Lord, would memorizing your word help me to *"abide"* in it? (3) *Truth* I understand is *"that which equals reality"* — genuine identity would be a close synonym. Give me such! (4) Deliver me from religious bigotry — *my religious bigotry!* (5) Sin is mistaken identity — we buy Satan's spurious definition — protect me dear Lord. (6) Set me free *indeed* — *indeed set me free!*

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Thank you for such freedom giving thoughts! Continue to speak such liberty into my heart! (1) "The worst possible deception is self deception." (2) "I brook *no* excuses for lack of obedience." (3) "I forgive *all* who truly repent."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Uruguay — Population: 3,036,000. Point for prayer: *The secular spirit* has made Uruguay Latin America's least Catholic country. Over one third of the people claim to be non-religious or atheist. Apathy to the gospel message has been widespread and the response slow. Pray for a change that will bring true liberty.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love;
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth;
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

WEEK FOUR

—Saturday—

I have the rare privilege of being welcomed by your Son in this chamber — this royal chamber of worship. Humble my heart.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You welcomed him with rich blessings and placed a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked you for life, and you gave it to him — length of days, for ever and ever” (Psa. 21:3,4). How easy it is to see your relationship with your Son in these words. It was true first of all for the humble shepherd king. How honored above all men did David feel! When we relate these words to the glory restored to your Son when he returned to be crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords we must lift our hearts in praise and wonder. He reigns forever at your right hand. Adoration is too weak a word to express our worship before you.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

You have indeed welcomed me (and all your children) with rich blessings and placed a crown upon our heads. We are asked to “reign with you” in heavenly places. We are your *royal* priesthood. Glory to your name forever! We have indeed asked you for life — a life we do not have apart from you. To be saved from eternal death to eternal life is more than our poor minds can grasp. I am embarrassed in wonder! I know not how to express my joy and praise. I am so anxious to enter the other dimension of this honor you have given us. I feel selfish even contemplating it. I know it is only because of the One to whom all credit and praise belongs — even your dear Son and my Lord!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There have been so many times when I forgot that you (because of Calvary) *welcomed* me into your presence. It was my own selfishness that shut my ears

and closed my eyes. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound! If abasement before you would help I am more than ready to fall before you. It would seem all my relationships with you are out of your grace and are a *gift* to me. I need not confess my sin to give you information — you already know more about my failures than I do. I confess them to you because you asked me to — and most of all because I so sorely need the therapy of cleansing. I ask for life and you gave it to me — forever and forever! Praise to your grace!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper rev'rence, praise.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁷“I know you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. ³⁸I am telling you what I have seen in my Father’s presence, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

³⁹“Abraham is our father,” they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do the things Abraham did. ⁴⁰As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.” —John 8:37-40, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What does your Son mean by saying: “. . . because you have no room for my word”? Men have

translated the phrase: "has no place in you"; "my message does not find a home within your hearts"; "you will not accept my teaching"; "you cannot bear my words"; "my word finds no place in you"; "nothing I say has penetrated into you"; "my teaching makes no headway with you." It is so eternally important that I review each one of these translations and receive your meaning into my subconsciousness. I relish the beautiful words of Jesus: "I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you heard from your father."

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

My Lord plainly placed actions as a criterion of sonship. If you are really my Father then I will do what you tell me. Disobedient children are one thing — but illegitimate children are quite another! The stubborn determination of these men indicated just who was their father. It is good to be stubbornly (?) determined to do your will. Abraham laid down a pattern of sonship — he responded to your call to leave all and follow your leading. He was willing to give his nephew first choice of land. He was ready to offer his only child to you. But it is my Lord who offers the perfect pattern of sonship. How I do want to follow him!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that I can be a true spiritual son of Abraham by faith. (2) Thank you that I can open up my heart and ask your word to have free course through me. (3) Thank you that I can read the word of your Son and know they are the words of yourself! (4) Thank you that I can be warned there is another Father present in the spirit-world. (5) Thank you that my sonship can be known by my actions. (6) Thank you that consistent actions and not one time actions are the criteria. (7) Thank you that only you can read the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did." What did Abraham do that became an example for all time? (1) When God spoke he moved. He left the Ur of the Chaldees and stepped out on faith to go to a land God would show him. God had spoken to these Jews time and again through his Son — they remained unmoved. (2) Abraham demonstrated unselfish love for his nephew Lot. When a land choice was necessary Abraham gave Lot first choice. These Jews were so full of their own self interest that they did not give our Lord the chance or place he deserved. (3) Abraham obeyed God in the sacrifice of his only son.

The Jews were not willing to make any sacrifice to fulfill the will of God in their lives.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

These verses have a depth that does not at all appear upon first reading — I lift up these requests in an attempt to let your word have "free course" in my heart: (1) Faith is taking you at your word — i.e. obedience is true faith. I want that kind of faith. (2) I seek the personal application of your word in the choices that shall face me today. (3) Unselfishness in the "small things" of life is so needed — I ask you for it. (4) If some impossible demand is made on me today — how will I respond? Help me.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

There are various ways Satan seeks to destroy my Lord — tell me about them: (1) "Ignorance is the largest one — *knowing* preceeds all other actions." (2) "Apathy — refusal to move — this is more subtle — but just as real." (3) "Believing a lie — is *such* a popular deception."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides) — Population: 138,000. Points for prayer: (1) Vanuatu's motto is "In God we stand." Pray that the leaders of this complex little nation may be an example in doing so. There are Christians in the government. (2) The Protestant church is numerically strong. Mainly Anglicans in the north, Presbyterians in the center and south.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

'Tis midnight, and on Olive's brow
The star is dimmed that lately shone;
'Tis midnight; in the garden, now
The suff'ring Savior prays alone.

'Tis midnight, and from all removed,
The Savior wrestles lone with fears;
E'en that disciple whom He loved
Heeds not his Master's grief and tears.

WEEK FIVE

—Sunday—

No one — not even the angels in your presence could evaluate the victories of your Son. Just now I enter to at least learn more through worship than I knew before.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Through the victories you gave, his glory is great; you bestowed on him splendor and majesty. Surely you have granted him eternal blessings and made him glad with the joy of your presence” (Psa. 21:5,6).

How I do want to understand these verses so I can praise you adequately. I must apply this first to David, then to your Son, and finally to myself. We should not minimize the victories you gave David nor the glory, splendor and majesty you bestowed upon him. But they cannot compare with the triumphs of your Son! How exalted in essential being is my Lord. As I read every word of these verses and think of Jesus I shout for joy and wonder! How great is yourself as seen in the person of your Son.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I too am your son — not you only begotten son — but nonetheless a son begotten from above. Through the victories of grace you have given me (and all other sons and daughters) my character is seen in entirely new light. I am worth *so much* as evaluated by the price you paid for me. What dignity and beauty you give to man in his understanding of your infinite care for his every need. Most of all you have given me eternal blessings and have made me glad with the joy of your presence. How full of meaning is that little phrase: *“the joy of your presence.”* Your presence is intended for joy. If I do not experience joy it is because I am not responding as I should to your presence.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There is so much in these verses that is objective — i.e. it belongs to yourself: (1) The victories are

given from you. (2) Whatever splendor or majesty I have come from you. (3) The eternal blessings and gladness comes from the joy of your presence. At the same time there is a very strong subjective response on my part to all you are and give. It is in this that I confess my miserable failure! How dull of hearing — how blind I have been. I believe you are constantly leading me in new triumphs of grace — but I do not hear or see. How sad beyond words! Each blessing is intended to say to me: “I love you” — each goodness showed leads me to see afresh your mercy and constrains me to give my body to be your dwelling place in the Spirit. How very very important we must be to you for you to lavish such care upon us. Forgive my lackluster response. Oh, forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how he could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.
How marvelous! how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! how wonderful!
Is my Savior’s love for me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴¹“You are doing the things your own father does.”
“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested.
“The only Father we have is God himself.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.

⁴³Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴You belong to your

father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! ⁴⁶Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? ⁴⁷He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God." — *John 8:41-47, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How easy it is to read these words as if they were written only for and about people in the days of our Lord. I see myself and a multitude of others in them. No one could accuse me of spiritual adultery and not be challenged. Could I say this if Jesus so challenged me? If I have God for my Father (and I do) then I will keep his word — i.e. the words of my Lord — for this demonstrates the reality of my love for him. I say this for all professed believers in our Lord. Is his language perfectly clear to all of us? If actions indicate hearing and heeding then we must be deaf. I speak for the Christian community on behalf of evangelism. We do not like the option of failure to have God for our Father.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

When we fail to carry out God's will we do not remain neutral. How easy it is to lie. Dear Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. In some areas I act — but in others I do not. If all were teachers where were the taught? How shall they teach without tools? In both of these areas I have been working "to these many years" i.e. I have been teaching and publishing material for other teachers to use. Does this free me from the responsibility of winning the lost? *It does not!* I accept the great commission as above all and for all. Our Lord challenged those who most strongly opposed him to prove him guilty of sin. It is just as viable to prove him to be the very truth itself. How good to place confidence in One who has never failed.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you I can count myself as a true son of Abraham by faith. (2) Thank you that I can and do love you my Lord, and I want to more and more keep your commandments. (3) Thank you that you so loved me and all the world that you sent your Son to save us. (4) Thank you that Jesus was willing to come to save us. (5) Thank you that your language is very clear to me. (6) Thank you that your Son was often alerting us concerning Satan. (7) Thank you for these strong words: "He who belongs to God hears what God says."

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" There must have been indeed a stunned silence after these words from our Lord. What John is saying is there were no inconsistencies in his lifestyle — no words without deeds — no thoughts of good without fulfillment. How wonderful to find Someone who could make such a claim! I want to answer his question: "No, dear Lord, I have found you to be even as your name: 'THE TRUTH.'" In every situation you are the ultimate answer — nay, the immediate answer. There were men in his day, and there are men today who object strongly to his words. Of course there are those who reject and refuse — there are those who rationalize and justify. No one in two thousand years has found one word or action of my Lord that did not perfectly match reality.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I shall not find a sharper exchange between my Lord and these religious leaders of his day — I lift these requests as I relate these words to my heart: (1) Did my dear Lord wince when they said "we were not born of fornication"? Perhaps not — maybe he did — he knew their thoughts — I do not — give me just a portion of his grace! (2) I fail so tragically in understanding the full meaning of *loving you* — help me dear Lord! (3) You "sent" Jesus — he was your apostle of love and salvation — you expect us to respond in kind — I want to — break me loose!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your ministry to my conscience: (1) "I have often said that having ears does not mean you hear — how is it with you today?" (2) "Please notice that I have equated what you do with your parentage. Do you believe me?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Venezuela — Population: 17,300,000. Point for prayer: *Praise God for the open door for the gospel*, 30 years of stable government and the steady growth of evangelical witness. The country is ready for a spiritual harvest.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Alas! and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a one as I?

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day.

WEEK FIVE

—Monday—

I do so need your deliverance! My sword is broken — dogs — wild dogs have encompassed me. A roaring lion is before me — a wild ox is rushing toward me. I expect victory through worship!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But you, O Lord, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me. Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs. Rescue me from the mouth of the lion; save me from the horns of the wild oxen” (Psa. 22:19-21). I appropriate these words of David as a testimony of how I have often felt in this journey of life. There are surely here overtones of the attitude men had toward your Son and his attitude toward you. I do want to sense your presence far more often than I do. If you seem “far off” I know who has moved. It is when I pause in the midst of the battle and look up and call on your name that I am brought again into an awareness of your presence.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have spoken on behalf of all men in the above words — i.e. the experience there described is somewhat typical. It is interesting that the designation *Strength* is capitalized. You are my *STRENGTH*. There is *no* moral fulfillment without you. I even now call upon you for the inward renewal I need for this day. If there is any sense of peace or strength I know it comes from you. There are various ways Satan has in attempting to separate me from you. As the sword separates the spirit from the body so Satan attempts to separate me from you. “Deliver me, O my Strength.”

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I have indeed found men to be very much like dogs. There is “the call of the wild” within me to join the pack. But I have found another power in me — “*the call of the free.*” I have found in you the fulfillment

of all my deepest desires — a lasting solid fulfillment. Dogs have no morals — but I am NOT a dog — I am not an animal. I am created in *your* image not that of a beast. Life is indeed too precious to be lost in animal appetites.

There are indeed men and circumstances who appear before me as lions — others like wild oxen. What I need more than anything else is a new awakening of your power and presence — your grace and forgiveness — of your personal interest in my struggle. Thank you for your answer.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?
We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour’s love.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁸The Jews answered him, “Aren’t we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?”

⁴⁹“I am not possessed by a demon,” said Jesus, “but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹I tell you the truth, if a man keeps my word, he will never see death.”

⁵²At this the Jews exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if a man keeps your word, he will never taste death. ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets.

Who do you think you are?"

⁵⁴Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word.

⁵⁶Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

⁵⁷You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!" — *John 8:48-57, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My Lord is going to make two claims in the face of intense opposition: (1) He is claiming to represent and honor yourself. (2) He is claiming pre-existence — or eternal existence. As a result of such claims he meets refusal and all manner of unfounded accusations.

Dear Lord I am glad to read back to you each word of your Son and my Lord and to affirm his claims in my heart.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How good to approach these words with a desire to hear my Lord speak and to receive what he says into myself: (1) "I honor my Father. . . ." (2) "I am not seeking glory for myself." (3) ". . . if a man keeps my word, he will never see death." (4) "My Father . . . is the one who glorifies me." (5) "I know him . . . I do know him and keep his word." (6) "Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." (7) ". . . before Abraham was born, I am." How small I feel as I review again the words of my Lord as he relates to you. I want to follow him — but before I do (or can) I must worship him. Even now I fall before him in wonder.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the clear reminder of the spirit-world — the eternal issues of life are decided here. (2) Thank you that Jesus honored you — now I know how to honor you. (3) Thank you I am warned that it is possible to be deceived and honor myself — deliver me! (4) Thank you for the wonderful promise that I will never see separation from you — death will be a door into your eternal presence. (5) Thank you I now know how you will bring honor to us — even as you did with your Son — i.e. in principle. (6) Thank you that I have your word to keep for this day. (7) Thank you for the pre-existence of my Lord — what an amazing thought!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of see-

ing my day; he saw it and was glad." How intriguing it is to consider just what is involved in this thought. The hope of the coming One must have burned far brighter than we can in this day imagine. The list of the men of faith in Hebrews the eleventh chapter all "died in faith" i.e. with the calm assurance that what you promised you would perform. Moses counted the reproaches of your Son of greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Was Abraham given some revelation of the events of Bethlehem, Calvary and the open tomb? We are told: "he saw it (my day) and was glad." Beyond my understanding, I simply accept the words of my Lord.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

If I never read another text this would be enough! Truly, truly you are reaching my deepest needs. I lift up these requests out of my need: (1) I have been such a long time in "theology" I now imagine it is possible to please you with my blase attitude — forgive me — awaken me! (2) There *are* demons yet operating in this world — guard me — deliver me! (3) I want to keep your word so I will not "see death." Open my understanding! (4) Oh my God, I do — I do so want to *know* you! In the most meaningful manner possible I want to *know* you! *Enable me!*

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I feel I am a little more knowledgeable than these Jews — but I need your words for my heart — I am listening: "Before Abraham was born — before you were born — *I AM* — what does this really mean to you?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Venezuela — Point for prayer: *The political stability* of the nation is threatened by the combined effects of the decline in value of oil exports, inflation, the Central American confrontations and the narcotics traffic that has so affected neighboring Colombia. Pray for all in authority, and for wise handling of the growing economic crisis.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

WEEK FIVE

—Tuesday—

As your sheep we so much need guidance — we need to be fed — we need your protection. All these we find in our worship.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

(Whereas I have praised you last year as I read these beautiful words — I yet want to do it again.) “*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing*” (Psa. 23:1). My provision is in you. If anyone could be a candidate for the fulfillment of these words it would be the two hundred million people who live in America. If there ever was a people so full of needs it is Americans! Every one of them is a result of not accepting you as their shepherd. It is no compliment to be called a sheep: (1) Sheep are dirty — they do not bathe and therefore often stink. (2) Sheep are near-sighted — i.e. have very poor vision. (3) Sheep are stubborn — they must be led. (4) Sheep are stupid — they follow blindly what the leader does. In all these ways we see our need of you.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

If I am going to be clean you will lead me to the water for a bath. If I am going to see it will be through your eyes. If I am going to go in the right way I *must* have you as my shepherd. If I am going to understand at all it will be through your mind. In the reversal of these qualities I can see your fulness. I am clean, I can see, I walk in the good path, my mind is enlightened. Indeed in you I have all things and abound. Praise your name! I suppose the largest blessing I have is *the desire* to have you as my shepherd. I could say that considering the options I would be foolish not to choose you — but it is not that simple. I am so glad beyond words to say that I discover no resistance in my heart to yielding totally to you as my shepherd. How deeply glad I am that it is so!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There are other qualities of my sheep-like nature that call for confession: (1) Sheep are terribly gregarious creatures, i.e. they feel very comfortable in a crowd. How easy it is to drift with the sheep-like flock of this world. It is always easier to say nothing than to speak up for my Lord. It is always easier to “let it go” than to disagree and be recognized as someone different. Forgive me dear shepherd. (2) Sheep can so easily become lost — since I can see only what is near at hand I need your constant guidance to even know where I am. Forgive me when I take upon myself to go my own way. (3) Sheep have no defense — they neither have sharp teeth nor the use of their feet to protect themselves. How vulnerable I am! Since I know this forgive my stubbornness in not seeking your help in protection.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Savior, like a shepherd lead us;
 Much we need Thy tend’rest care;
 In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
 For our use Thy folds prepare:
 Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus,
 Thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
 Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus,
 Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

9 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. ⁴As long as it is day, we

must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no man can work. ⁵While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." — *John 9:1-5, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I am so very glad these day-by-day accounts are recorded here by John. It could have happened very shortly after my Lord's encounter with the Jews. I like to imagine the circumstances of a bright cool morning in late October or early November. As my Lord and the disciples ascended the steps of the temple they saw seated on the side of the open door this poor blind man, whom no doubt they had seen as many times before. As a question that oft plagued them they asked Jesus: "Since all infirmities are a result of sin, who sinned here; this man or his parents?" Since the man was blind from birth how could he be made responsible? The disciples could have been repeating a theological postulation of their day — or were they just very imprecise in their use of words? I praise you for the words of my Lord.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Since the birth of sin in my heart I have been blind. How I praise you that Jesus passed my way and I see! How easily does my Lord handle the most difficult of questions! Can I dare to say: that in some way all the infirmities of this life *can be* a means of displaying your work? Surely we have known those who offer to all of us a display of your work in the heart and life of the paralyzed or blind or deaf. The term "work" as here used seems to refer to the supernatural nature of my Lord. Jesus had but a limited time to let people know of his deity. This blind man became one more such spokesman. Dear Lord, I am delighted to offer myself as one more means of displaying your work in the Person of your Son. I am blind and need sight!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the interest the disciples took in the blind man. (2) Thank you for the confidence the disciples had in Jesus as a teacher. (3) Thank you that we need not always associate sin with sickness or infirmity. (4) Thank you that in all lives in many ways you can display your work. (5) Thank you that my Lord spoke of the brevity of life — just *one day* — in it we must *work* i.e. display his deity. (6) Thank you that one day we will lay down to rest from our labors. (7) Thank you for the wonderful light of my world — and all the world.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." How eternally and practically is this true!

However little he was appreciated or known he was the light to those who knew him and heard him. He can be and is in our world through his word — his Spirit and his body. I do wonder when we will believe Jesus is the *only* light we have for this dark place? A much better question is: "when will I accept him as the whole light I have for my own life or world?" When I begin to accept his light for all my dark places and others do the same it won't be long until our whole world is illumined by his presence. Dear Lord, how I want this to be more than a pretty thought!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

It is my high joy to lift up these requests and claim your interest in my need: (1) *Jesus is passing by just now!* Do I see him or am I like thousands of his day who were too occupied with their own interests to see him? Perhaps I'll need to wait until I am "*stone blind*" before I see him! Help me dear Lord! (2) Am I as philosophical and detached as his disciples seem to be? Can I look on suffering humanity and postulate a theological question? Truly, truly my eyes need to be opened! (3) Display (like a billboard) your works in me! In any way *you* choose.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I *do* want to be more open to your attitudes than these disciples — speak to my conscience: (1) "I am still *very* conscious of your time limitations — are you?" (2) "Which is it now — night or day? If it is day you *work!*" (3) "Who is the light of your world?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Vietnam — Population: 60,500,000. Point for prayer: *The Communist occupation of South Vietnam* ended the war, but brought great hardship to the population. About one million were "resettled" in "New Economic Zones" (virgin jungle), many to die of starvation. Pray that the suffering people may find solace in trusting the Saviour.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O sacred head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down;
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown;
How art Thou pale with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn;
How doeth that visage languish,
Which once was bright as morn!

WEEK FIVE

—Wednesday—

We so often do not know when we should rest. You have rest for my whole life. I seek such rest in this closet of worship.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul” (Psa. 23:2,3a). In this time of worship I hold up before you one or more of the attributes of yourself for which I can praise you. In this beautiful verse there are several qualities: (1) You know when I need rest and refreshment. Even when I resist and do not want to lie down you insist upon it — I thank you for such an interest in my deepest needs. (2) The sometimes forced rest is always in an area of nourishment — i.e. I believe you have something to give me that will be a source of strength. (3) It is beside the quiet waters that my life is renewed and restored. Praise your name for such a wondrous blessing!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What I have said above does indeed relate to me — but to all your sheep. Just here I want to praise you for the intimate involvement you have in my day by day activities: (1) I wonder just how you will put me down? You have many ways of stopping me — of interrupting my schedule. In any of them — in all of them help me to look up to the hand of my shepherd. (2) Keep my eyes up and focussed on you. I *know* there are “green pastures” in every experience of chastening. There is “peaceable fruit” — give me the patience to wait for it. (3) Calm my restive spirit! How I do want the sweet calm that comes when looking on “quiet waters.” Thank you my life can be constantly restored!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

No problem here! I am so guilty of the feverish pace. It surely would take the Lord himself to slow me

down. Ah, such boasting is a terrible sin. He can use the smallest incidents to stop me and put me down, looking up. At the same time I do need to confess my dependence upon your daily mercies. I shall never know till I awake in your eternal presence how you arrange the daily routine of my life so I escape injury. I could attribute it to my good driving — but I know better drivers than myself who have accidents. Forgive me for forgetting. You are always just behind the scenes preparing a bed or a thoroughfare. Forgive me for enjoying the quiet waters and green pastures with little thought for the One who prepared them.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus
 Since I found in Him a friend so strong and true;
 I would tell you how He changed my life
 completely —
 He did something that no other friend could do.
 No one ever cared for me like Jesus,
 There’s no other friend so kind as He;
 No one else could take the sin and darkness
 from me —
 O how much He cared for me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. ⁷“Go,” he told him, “wash in the pool of Siloam” (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

⁸His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some claimed that he was. Others said, “No, he only looks like him.”

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

¹⁰"How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded.

¹¹He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

¹²"Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said. — *John 9:6-12, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a beautiful story this is! Why did your Son use mud to open the eyes of this blind man? I'm sure the answer is that this particular man needed such treatment. How very personal was all of our Lord's contact with this one. Touching seems to be a real part of your helping. You have touched me in chastening as well as blessings — and I thank you for both. Why ask him to make the long trip across town to wash in the pool of Siloam? It was a long walk and the man was blind. It was a real test of the reality of his faith. The healing was conditional. It depended upon his obedience. What a poignant phrase is this: "*So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.*"

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is always a joy and a rare privilege to relate your word to my own heart. "*Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?*" Do others see a difference in me? I.e. since you opened my eyes? I would like to believe a discernable difference can be seen in several stages of our Christian growth. It is those who live nearest to us who can tell the difference — but it is only our personal testimony that gives reality to the claim. I am thinking of several places in my life where the eyes of my understanding need to be opened — and only you can do it! I want to obey whatever is needed to deliver me from this darkness! How good to know you are willing and able.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the personal touch of Jesus in every life. (2) Thank you my Lord is always drawing me out to see the genuineness of my trust in him. (3) Thank you I can "come home" to tell of my healing. (4) Thank you I am no longer a blind beggar — I am now an enlightened servant. (5) Thank you we can all give our own clear testimony as to how we see. (6) Thank you for "the bath of regeneration" (Titus 3:5). (7) Thank you that it is enough to associate all we are and have with Jesus.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"*So I went and washed, and then I could see.*" How these words could describe the experience of all who

have obeyed our Lord. "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins" (Acts 22:16). So said Ananias to Saul. The inward cleansing is *so* important. When once we receive his word and are washed in his blood we can never, never be the same. It is the eyes of our understanding that must be opened. The eyes of our heart see as never before! I want to truly attempt to experience with the blind man what it meant to have his eyes opened. How welcome was the view! Everything had a new look to him. The old blindness had been washed away and all things became new! Praise his name!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Gladly, gladly do I ask of you — here are my needs just here: (1) "*Dust to dust*" — "*mud to mud*" — such words seem so metaphorically true for me — I await your anointing. (2) I need almost hourly to be washed — "wash me and I shall be whiter than snow" — "bless the Lord, oh, my soul"! (3) It would be good to know what my neighbors say of me — or would it? It depends on the reality of my cleansing — do I truly trust your ability — or am I resting in mine? (4) I can see — I can see — it is enough — praise your name forever!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your cleansing — I pause to receive it: (1) "Please remember the works of myself are to be seen in what happened to you — NOT your works." (2) "What happened to you — NOT what you said will be remembered the longest." (3) "There *are no* impossible cases in my work."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Vietnam — Points for prayer: (1) *All open missionary work ceased in 1975.* Pray that the years of sowing the Word may now bring forth abundant fruit. (2) *The Catholic Church* has long had a big influence. Restrictions and persecution have reduced the number of congregations and priests, but not the number of Catholics.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

When my love to Christ grows weak,
When for deeper faith I seek,
Then in thought I go to Thee,
Garden of Gethsemane!

WEEK FIVE

—Thursday—

It is your nature to lead — it is my nature to resist. I meet you here that I might learn to lean on your direction.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Psa. 23:3b). How comforting to know you are saying this for each and every one of your sheep. There are no sheep who do not have your guidance. The sheep know and do not know the shepherd is guiding them. He leads them into the green pastures and beside the still waters — but the sheep find their own meal and do their own drinking. Such eating and drinking is not without the watchful eye of the shepherd — but it is the action of the sheep. If we are not in the way of righteousness we are not being led by the shepherd. The reason he offers us such guidance is because of his nature. “His name” stands for himself. It is the very nature of yourself to so direct the paths of your sheep.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How full of praise I must be when I remember you are offering me constant direction because you are just that kind of a Person. I am greatly encouraged just here! Praise your name! I do believe you will place me before the entrance to the right path on every matter of decision. In every trial there will be before me “the way of escape” — and in every time of decision there will be the opportunity to choose the path that is right. How glad I am this is true. I have found your guidance in so many areas of life. In most of your guidance I have discovered it in retrospect — being the near-sighted sheep that I am. This does not hinder me from saying with the psalmist, “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” Praise him forever!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God?

CONFESSION OF SIN

When I am not willing to be led he sometimes makes

me willing. But most of the time he lets me wander until I discover how lost I am without him. If I am confused and hesitant it is because I have lost my absolute trust in his character. There is no way he is going to change his interest in our life. We can stand out in the middle of a green pasture and complain about no food if we want to. We can walk by the still waters and yet be thirsty — but it is not his fault! Forgive me dear Lord! Lift up my eyes — open my ears — give me the wisdom to accept and understand your guidance.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go,
Anywhere He leads me in this world below;
Anywhere without Him dearest joys would fade;
Anywhere with Jesus I am not afraid.
Anywhere, anywhere!
Fear I cannot know;
Anywhere with Jesus
I can safely go.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁴A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.”

²⁵He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. I do know one thing: I was blind but now I see!”

²⁶Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

²⁷He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?”

²⁸Then they hurled insults at him and said, “You are

this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

³⁰The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will.

³²Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

³⁴To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out. —*John 9:24-34, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Here is a man who will not be intimidated! Here is a man with the "good and honest heart" of which our Lord spoke in the parable of the fields. He was willing to place his experience in relation to Jesus right up against their estimate of him. This man had the very best possible evidence: "One thing I *know*, I was blind but now I see"! This good man was not afraid to expose the bigotry and hypocrisy of these men. It is a wonder that he was not struck on his mouth for such a statement as "Do you want to be his disciples too?"

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How clearly does this man speak to me! How easy it is to lose contact with the wonder of the supernatural. Jesus is still in the business of opening blind eyes! There are blind men on the highway of life who are glad to tell the story of how he opened their eyes and they became his disciples! Are we ready to offer some psychological explanation — or to discount their conversion as not lasting? Unfortunately some of the blind men we deal with do not have the courage and boldness of this one. We have caused little ones to stumble — I believe you are measuring some of us for a millstone!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this man who will not be intimidated. (2) Thank you that each of us can say what this man said — "I was blind, but now I see." (3) Thank you these men were actually defenseless. (4) Thank you that you are teaching me that Jesus will not be ignored. He either opened the man's eyes or he didn't. (5) Thank you that you do not hear the prayers of open sinners — i.e. those who consciously opposed your will. (6) Thank you that God does hear sinners like Cornelius (Acts 10:17). (7) Thank you you hear this sinner's prayer.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"If this man were not from God he could do nothing." At least nothing like what he is doing. How we do admire the candid attitude of this former blind man. It will be so good to meet him when we are all transformed into the next dimension. Indeed, the works of our Lord do testify for him. Since the beginning of time there has never been a man like him! The Jewish Messiah is also "God incarnate." We believe our Lord wants everyone to get close enough to him to arrive at this conclusion. I am glad to offer my testimony along with this "seeing one" that he is indeed come from God. His works speak eloquently of his deity!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

For this brave man I thank you! He surely does remind me of my own need for renewal — I lift up these requests to you: (1) How easy it is to pass *a priori* judgment on all who disagree with us. Deliver me from this deception. (2) Deliver me also from discounting subjective experiences — this man is a good example. (3) When will I be satisfied with the facts of your presence? Your salvation? Your blessed Holy Spirit? Calm my spirit. (4) Whose disciple am I? A disciple *does* what his teacher commands — a disciple follows his teacher's example — help me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I want the "encounter type" relationship with you. I bow before you — speak to my inward man: "The words of this humble beggar can speak for me: 'Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.' Do you know what I am saying to you?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Wallis and Futuna Islands (French Territory) — Population: 13,000. Point for prayer: There are no known evangelical believers on these isolated islands. No definite effort has been made by Protestants to establish a presence there.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock
Within a weary land,
A home within the wilderness,
A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noon-tide heat
And the burden of the day.

WEEK FIVE

—Friday—

Is this a day for death or life? No matter — you can manage both. Death is a well lighted thoroughfare! Impress this upon my heart!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death (or the darkest valley), I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me” (Psa. 23:4). This is such a familiar verse, but it has never lost its meaning. It is interesting that death is represented as a walk. David, as a sheep, is being led by the Great Shepherd in a walk through the valley of the shadow of death. (The valley of death will indeed be the darkest valley.) There is no evil in death, the Great Shepherd has removed it! I say all this here because such can be the experience of every man — praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to relate this beautiful verse to myself in your presence. What comfort can I get from your rod and your staff? I am so glad to say my wonderful shepherd has driven out all the evil forces that use death to scare people like me. Death is a lighted thoroughfare into the world and life to come. I find the following comforts in the valley of death: (1) The comfort of confident hope — sure and steadfast entering within the veil! (2) The comfort of deliverance from the cares of this life — I’ll be glad to drop these this side of the valley. (3) The comfort of the full satisfaction for every insoluble problem I have found in this life. I look forward to walking *through!*

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How often I have been caught up in the “cares of this life” and have forgotten that this is but the smallest part of the whole. I act as if there were no valley. But, ah, there is! Just around the next bend in the road. Just behind that closed door. Just in the next

room. The valley of the shadow is always near. Forgive me for forgetting! Most of all forgive me for becoming so involved in what is near that I forget the dimensions of what is found just on the other side of my last heart beat! How I do hope you will ask me to *walk* through the valley and not crawl into your presence. Forgive me of stupid pride if such is in the above expression.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

There’s a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar,
For the Father waits over the way
To prepare us a dwelling place there.
In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore;
In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁵Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶“Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”

³⁷Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact he is the one speaking with you.”

³⁸Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

³⁹Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will turn out to be blind.”

⁴⁰Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?”

⁴¹Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be

guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.” —*John 9:35-41, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Indeed, indeed, I do want to read this word back to you that I might see it in a new light! Someone reported to our Lord what happened to the blind man. We can hear them repeating all the details of the story John has just given to us. Perhaps it was John himself who told our Lord. The good shepherd immediately went on a search for this lamb. The word “found” suggests that Jesus found him after a search. Dear Lord, I do not want to read more into these words than are here found. Jesus had *such* a good way of teaching people! He made the man think — he drew out a conclusion based on thought. In the word translated “said” as used by Jesus is the suggestion that he was speaking in a loud voice. It was such an important statement Jesus wanted the man to always remember it — as indeed he and all generations since have done!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The name “*Son of Man*” is a most obvious reference to the Messiah — to deity. The blind man was a Jew — he had *some* knowledge of the Messiah — he knew about his coming — but he didn’t know who or where he was. He was asking for personal identity of the Messiah. Jesus gave it to him in a most impressive manner. He responded as I want to — yea I do. He fell at my Lord’s feet and worshiped him. Lord, I am one blind man — open my eyes! Without your healing I am blind in every circumstance, and in every situation. Just for today: open my eyes that I may see!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus takes in those whom others throw out. (2) Thank you Jesus is even today searching for all us sheep who lose our way. (3) Thank you he has found us — oh, joy of joys! (4) Thank you Jesus speaks to me in such a convincing way of his deity. (5) Thank you I can worship you over and over again — indeed throughout eternity I shall worship you. (6) Thank you that I can be blind to all else but him! (7) Thank you that I can see none else but him!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.*” Oh, Lord, make me blind, that I might see. Such a startling statement! Our Lord spoke here so sharply to the Pharisees. He is saying something about his own omniscience: he is saying anyone who disagrees with him is blind. He says: “I have the total

source of information on what God says and does. If you listen to me your eyes will be opened. If you say you know something and fail to listen to me you are blind.” Dear Lord, I am more than glad to acknowledge you as the absolute source of knowledge. Praise your omniscience!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I read each word of these verses — they speak to my deep need — I lift up these requests before you: (1) I do want to be a friend to those others reject — I need your own compassion to accomplish this — help me. (2) How can I more fully worship you? Open my understanding of the fullness of your deity. (3) I do want your wisdom in understanding these words: “. . . *that those who see may become blind.*” (4) As you searched for and found the blind man who had been healed I ask I might see in this example how I should search and find those who know you and yet need assurance.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

It is a delight to bow before you and in meekness receive what you say to me: “You must *learn all you know* — you are *not* an animal — they act by instinct — you learn and choose — *please* remember this all-important fact.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

North Yemen — Population: 6,100,000. Point for prayer: *For 1,300 years the land was tightly closed to the gospel.* The government invited Christian agencies to initiate health and educational projects in 1964. At one time a number of agencies were involved, but conditions have become more restrictive and only a few remain.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.
How marvelous! how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! how wonderful!
Is my Savior’s love for me!

WEEK FIVE

—Saturday—

I do not know the enemies that surround me — but you do! Show me how to trust you more completely. Heal my wounds!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows” (Psa. 23:5). In the midst of the wilderness of Judea David led his sheep into an abundant pasture. In spite of the wolves, lions or bears that surrounded the sheep they ate in safety because of the shepherd. The protection and provision of the sheep was very real to David. How even more real was the case of the Great Shepherd. Dear Lord, what you were to David, you want to be for all men. When the sheep were hurt the shepherd would pour on oil to heal the wound. How significant that the sheep was wounded on the head! The care of the sheep is so full and abundant as to be like the provision of a special guest at a feast.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have thought so often that we live in the midst of the Spirit world — what marvelous care you have given to all your defenseless sheep! In the environment of intense hostility you have prepared a feast. I am *not* going to turn aside from your abundance to eat animal food.

How glad I am, beyond words, to accept your care in my life. You know all that is needed in the hidden areas of my heart and head. I am delighted to bow before you as the Great Shepherd to receive whatever care I need. At times I do not even know I am wounded — you are watching and know my needs so much better than I do. How I do praise you for such provision.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Gentle Shepherd, how often have I found myself eating hog husks? Why eat such terrible food when

you have prepared such a sumptuous table in this wilderness? It is the stupidity and willfulness of this sheep — forgive me! If the oil is not applied to the hurt the wound could fester and I could die from it. It is not at all the eternal death in hell (although it could eventuate in such) but in a separation from you — i.e. in some area of my life. Dear Lord, I do not want such! I want your healing balm for every hurt, known or unknown.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Savior, Thy dying love
Thou gavest me;
Nor should I aught withhold,
Dear Lord, from Thee:
In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfill its vow,
Some off’ring bring Thee now,
Something for Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

10 “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ²The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ³The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. —John 10:1-6, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is a real joy to read this word in your presence and identify myself as a careful listener to my Lord. Jesus often emphasized the importance of what he said, or was about to say — open my ears to hear him! You have a very large herd of sheep — made up of many flocks. I take this to refer today to all your sheep in the international church — and to the many shepherds you have to help these sheep follow the one true shepherd. As our Lord spoke to the false shepherds in the persons of the Pharisees so I hear him speak today: “. . . *the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate* (and our Lord is that gate) . . . *is a thief and a robber.*” Open my ears, I do want to listen!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How easy it is to *imagine* I am not that thief or robber. These men wanted into the pen — if the pen is heaven (ultimately and potentially) then such men do have an interest in heaven. If for *any* reason someone wants to go to heaven and does not enter through our Lord he is by Jesus' definition “*a thief and a robber.*” In contrast is the true shepherds of the sheep (we believe they are the elders of the local flocks). God is watching for such shepherds — the door to heaven is always open for the true shepherds. Such shepherds know the names and needs of their sheep — they are called by name as they enter the gate and after they are in the enclosure.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord was unafraid to “beard the lion in his den” — i.e. to speak directly to the Pharisees about their lack and need. (2) Thank you for the international sheep pen called heaven — here on earth “the body of Christ.” (3) Thank you for our wonderful gate or door to the fold. (4) Thank you for God the watchman who opens the gate — even the veil of his flesh. (5) Thank you that I even now hear his voice and follow him. (6) Thank you that Jesus our good shepherd wants to lead us out into the world before we are all led into the eternal fold of heaven. (7) Thank you that I can distinguish between a false and the true shepherd.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.*” How well the devil does accuse and deceive people! He needs to do very little work once he has their heads full of plans and programs in which you have no part. When the focus of attention is broken it is impossible to concentrate. The figure of speech Jesus used was not complicated or difficult to follow but these men were not

listening. How well do they represent men today! How much we miss of the eternal and beautiful because we were caught up in our own little world of interests. We are so glad someone understood and kept a record of what Jesus said — his name was John, the writer of this gospel.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a vast change of subjects! Or is it? Sheep can and do listen or do not — are blind to the obvious — and most of all need “*the Son of Man*” who is their shepherd. As one of these I lift up these requests: (1) As a shepherd — i.e. some people follow me — I want *every day* — in *at least every major decision* to “enter in by the *one door.*” (2) I am either a thief and a robber or the shepherd of the sheep — this does not leave much room for an option — write these words upon my heart!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I have more sin if I say “*I see*” when I am really not willing to follow. Reach my conscience: (1) “Who as a sheep hears your voice? Are you ready to lead them — feed them — protect them?” (2) “How far ahead are you in your example to the sheep?”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

North Yemen — Point for prayer: *The nation's stability and social structure are threatened* by external attack, internal feuding, and the widespread use of the narcotic qat. Pray for spiritual liberation, as yet very few Yemenis have ever heard the gospel.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

WEEK SIX

—Sunday—

Prepare my heart just here to live with you forever! Teach me how to let you live in me!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psa. 23:6). Such a precious verse! How well does this one verse describe yourself! Here are just a few expressions of praise: (1) You see man and care about him. (2) You are active in preparing good things for all men. (3) You want to be the shepherd of every man alive upon this earth. (4) The promise is very clear that goodness and love will be the inevitable consequence of accepting you as our shepherd. (5) There is an eternal house in which we can live with you. All such beautiful thoughts are only beautiful thoughts for those who do not want you as a shepherd.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Surely I want your goodness — but I recognize I shall never find it by reaching out for it — it will *follow* me. Goodness and love are the fruit of the Spirit. I want to be filled with yourself in the Person of the Holy Spirit and then such qualities will follow as light follows night. If my body is not here the house of the Lord I can have no real promise of living in your eternal house after this life. Dear Lord, make my house your house! Open my eyes that I may see goodness and love as you do. I might not even know such qualities were mine if I did not look at them through your eyes. How I do praise you with my whole heart for this confident promise of heaven!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is so easy to be caught up in the rush of the daily chores that goodness and love are forgotten — or never considered. We fasten on the tasks of the mo-

ment and forget the hour; we work out a day and forget the week; we hurry through the week and forget the month; months go by and before we know it a year has come and gone. We look back and are startled that so many years have seemingly disappeared — and all of life has slipped away — eternity is upon us. Dear Lord, I want to live in your house today so I will feel comfortable in heaven. Forgive me, and keep the eyes of my heart open!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Be not awear, for labor will cease
Some glad morning;
Turmoil will change into infinite peace,
Some bright morning.
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
When the sun is shining in th’eternal sky;
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
We shall see the Lord of Harvest,
By and by.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” —John 10:7-10, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is indeed a positive *joy* to read these living words in

your presence! I understand that in the country pens for the sheep the shepherds could not afford a wooden gate so a shepherd would himself lie down across the entrance into the enclosure and thus he would be the gate to the fold. Before any sheep came in or went out he must pass the shepherd. My dear Lord is that gate! All that came before were thieves and robbers. I believe this is a thinly veiled description of the Pharisees and the rulers of the Jews who claimed to be shepherds of God's people. Somehow the common people had the spiritual perception that enabled them to reject such false shepherds — and also to recognize the true shepherd.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

What a powerful promise: “. . . *whoever enters through me will be saved* (or kept safe).” For each day I want you to be the gate into such safety. In that day I claim your protection and salvation. It would be indeed a comforting thought if we could obtain your promise of deliverance from all foes for a whole day — you must be the door for every moment — not only for the day. To continue the promise Jesus says to me: “He (I) will come in and go out, and find pasture.” In just the little ordinary “going in and coming out” my Lord promised his sheep would find “green pastures” and “still waters.” Dear Lord I have found it so!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the warning concerning *the thief*: “to steal and kill and destroy.” (2) Thank you for the promise of *abundant* life — I have found it true! (3) Thank you my Lord is my gate to salvation here and hereafter. (4) Thank you that I can be prepared to identify the thieves and robbers. (5) Thank you for tuning my ears to your voice. (6) Thank you my Lord twice over said to me “I am the gate.” (7) Thank you for “life to the full” right here and right now.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” The life our Lord gives is like all his creation — or gifts, lavish or super-abundant. How full is the life he gives: (1) In just the years lived — if we obey his laws of self-control we can die “old and full of years.” (2) Our life together as husband and wife becomes so much more full and satisfying for everyone when our lives are directed by him. (3) In our employee-employer relationship our job becomes a service to him and becomes so much more meaningful. (4) Most of all in our relationship with you we have life and not letter. What a joyous fellowship when we come to you in a knowledge of the present loving Saviour.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There are several relationships here described — I need them all — I lift up these requests in obtaining them: (1) You are *the door* the *only door* — the good shepherd — and the *only good* shepherd. Your exclusiveness is a flat contradiction to man's independence — dear Lord, I want to accept such words with no reservations or rationalizations — help me to do so. (2) Salvation is mine here and now — plenty of food for my heart — plenty of water for my thirst — increase my capacity to accept this thought.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

It is not easy to *every day* tune into your voice speaking to my conscience — there are many days when I would just as soon you didn't bother me. Forgive me — speak to me *now* — *here* — *today*: (1) “Do you want to be saved or lost?” (2) “Do you want to *live* or just exist?” (3) “Trust me — I know who I am and where I am going.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

South Yemen — Population: 2,116,000. Point for prayer: *All mission work in the country was terminated in 1972* with the nationalization of all mission and church property. For years a few missionaries suffered and witnessed in this land but with very little fruit. Pray that the land may again be opened for the gospel.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

King of my life I crown Thee now—
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.
Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony,
Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary

Show me the tomb where Thou was laid,
Tenderly mourned and wept;
Angels in robes of light arrayed,
Guarded Thee whilst Thou slept.

WEEK SIX

—Monday—

I am overwhelmed by your creative genius. Open my eyes to the world about me. Prepare me to do this in this worship time!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“For the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters” (Psa. 24:1,2). Your total sovereignty is seen most clearly in these verses. How glad I am to accept your ownership of this entire earth — and all other planets and stars. They are yours by right of creation. The inventory of your possessions includes all the animate and inanimate upon the earth. When viewed from outer space the earth is very blue in color — it is because “he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.” Most of your creation on this earth is water.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have tried to lift up the qualities of your sovereignty and omnipotence. How shall I relate to all these verses say to me? I could bow before you in silent wonder. As I look at the trees just outside our door I want to remember they belong to you. As I view the stretch of the landscape I know it all belongs to you. With every man I meet I want to recall this verse — they all belong to you — they are animated by the spirit you sent into their bodies — when they die they will return into your eternal presence — in heaven or hell. How many thousand different kinds of fish did you create to live in the seas?

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I am overwhelmed with your creative genius. I live far too often as if this world were indeed the product of a process with no meaning instead of the creation of an all-powerful personal heavenly Father. If I will simply turn any leaf over I can see stamped on the underside the name: *God*. As I look up into the sky I

can see embossed on every cloud “*the creation of your Father*.” I can see this if I have eyes to see. Forgive me for my blindness. How much more can I enjoy this world when I look for the purpose of the designer in it. Let me look again at the tremendous variety in just the insect world and remember you did it to captivate our interest and thought. After all you could have created a monotonous world of sameness.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth,
and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God over all, and blest eternally.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. —John 10:11-13, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord, you and *only* you are the *good* Shepherd! You and *only* you are the true SHEPHERD. I believe the emphasis is upon the words “I” and “good.” You and *only* you could lay down your life (soul) for the sheep. Although other shepherds would be willing to do this (Rom. 9:1-3) yet their sacrifice would not save the sheep. Could we even in ten thousand years express adequately what it means for you to love us as you do! You own us twice over — by creation and re-

demption. It was the life of the Shepherd for the life of the sheep. The "hired hand" as used in this context must refer to the Pharisees who acted in the very way here described.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

My blessed Lord is giving all elders an example. In a sense the preacher is included — Paul said to certain shepherds: "In all things I have left you an example" (Acts 20:35). How ready am I even this day to give my life to save other people? I have seen many wolves in my day — of various sizes and kinds. What is my reaction when I see a real threat to the life of the sheep? The obvious alternate is to stay and protect the sheep in any way I can — even to the expending of all my energy for them. How many flocks have been scattered and lost because we were not prepared to face the wolves? Paul was and did. I can and I will!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for my Lord's clear identification of himself as the good Shepherd. (2) Thank you for the meaning of the term "good" i.e. perfect. (3) Thank you that he can be and is *my* Shepherd. (4) Thank you for saving this one lost sheep. (5) Thank you for the incredible price it cost you for all of us and each of us. (6) Thank you for the plain identity of the "hired-hand" type shepherd. (7) Thank you that my good Shepherd fought and killed the wolf for me.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it."

How many sheep have been scattered since the day my Lord spoke these words? We could also ask: "how many sheep have been saved and have entered into eternal life?" Neither the wolf nor the good shepherd are dead. Both could be dead in the life-experience of any sheep. It is our response to the call of the Shepherd — or of the wolf — that makes their actions real to us. They are indeed alive apart from us — and to neglect our Lord and his word is to ask for the attack of the wolf.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Would not we be able to determine whether you are our Shepherd by where we are — what we eat and in our sense of security? I ask for your help just here:

(1) Show me again the agonies of Golgotha — the price the good Shepherd paid for me. (2) Open my eyes to see just how much hassle the Shepherd took from those who should have been his friends to protect his flock. (3) Am I one of the "hirelings"? I am

if I am not like your Son in my care for others — help me dear Lord!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Somehow these most familiar words take on new meaning — speak them into my heart: (1) "Running away from a problem identifies your true nature; *take heed!*" (2) "Please renew your concern — take your example from me NOT others."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Yugoslavia — Population: 23,100,000. Point for prayer: *The country is passing through a period of great stress.* The economy is in a bad state, and the complex one-party federal leadership is finding it hard to solve the regional inequalities, severe inflation and high unemployment. Pray for the present situation to heighten the spiritual awareness of the people.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory dies,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to His blood.

WEEK SIX

—Tuesday—

Just now we ascend your holy hill. We lift up holy hands to you in adoration. We believe we are accepted in your Son. Help us!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God his Savior” (Psa. 24:3-5). David is asking who may worship you? In answering the question he describes your person and gives us attributes for which we can praise you. He says first of all that there is a place where this worship happens. In our time it is our own body. You live in us through the Holy Spirit. David also says you can forgive our sins and thus give us clean hands and a pure heart! How very much we need these promises!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Dear Lord, I praise you for being such an exclusive God. You want no other gods before you. You deserve this exalted place — there are no other gods — except those we make in our blindness and selfishness. I do want to lift up my hands and heart to you just now as my God — my Lord. My hands are clean and my heart is pure because of your love expressed in the death of your Son. I see behind the phrase “. . . or swear by what is false” the ONE who is true! I want to promise faithfulness to you — not because I have to — but because I *want* to. The blessing I receive from you is obtained in the very action of obeying you. How altogether worthy of adoration and praise you are!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I look again at the qualities of yourself behind these words: (1) One worthy of worship. (2) You have a *place* of worship. (3) You are holy as should be the

place where you live and we worship. (4) You clean people up and make them pure — through forgiveness. (5) You will not brook competitions — of any kind. (6) You are truth. (7) You promise blessing and vindication. In each of these areas I am a sinner: (1) My worship is so poorly expressed. (2) I am a most unholy place for your dwelling. (3) I do so need to be made clean and pure. (4) I have become your competition. (5) I lie — even to myself. (6) I do even now claim out of the most sincere repentance and confession I can give the blessing of vindication before you! What a wonder of liberation is forgiveness!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
Draw me, my Savior, so precious Thou art;
Fold, O fold me close to Thy breast,
Shelter me safe in that haven of rest,
Shelter me safe in that haven of rest.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁴“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me — ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that are not of this flock. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life — only to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” ¹⁹At these words the Jews were again divided. ²⁰Many of them said, “He is demon-possessed and raving

mad. Why listen to him?"

²¹But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. How can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" — *John 10:14-21, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Could there be a more meaningful verse than verse fourteen? I could rest upon these words for all eternity! My dear Lord is the good Shepherd of whom David wrote so long ago (Psalm 23:1-6). All of the qualities described by David I find fulfilled in Jesus. He knows me, and every other sheep, better than I know myself. How deep down and far out does he *know* me! I want to more and more know you. The relationship of the Son and yourself is a pattern for me!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is startling to read of this comparison: we are to know the Good Shepherd in the same way (surely not in the same relationship) he knows you. My Lord is saying experiential knowledge is essential. Jesus really wants us to appreciate two things: (1) He is the Good Shepherd. (2) He lays down his life for us. He repeats such statements. Dear Lord, I shall never, never be able to hear them enough! I am one of those "other sheep". He has brought me to himself! Dear Lord, I *do* hear your voice — I am glad to mingle and mix with all the sheep you have in your great international pen. My Lord defines his relationship with you — but it is most difficult for me to truly assimilate. Is he saying your love for him is drawn out in more intense expression because of his choice to lay down his life?

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the omnipotence of your Son — *no man — no one* — had the authority to take his life. (2) Thank you for the self-giving love of my Lord — what an example! (3) Thank you that Jesus could as easily "take up" his life as he could lay it down. (4) Thank you that Jesus was willing to submit his equality while on earth. (5) Thank you for the anger and joy as an adequate response to my Lord's words. (6) Thank you all racial barriers have been removed in the death of my Lord. (7) Thank you my Lord has one international flock.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"At these words the Jews were again divided." How typical of some religious leaders! But then Jesus divides the closest of friends and relatives. He himself said he came to send a sword into the earth. At least these religious leaders were ready to attribute Jesus' power and wisdom to the spirit-world. We wonder

how much of this physical world is *not* influenced by the powers in the unseen world? The miracles of Jesus were so open, so public, so obvious, there was no way anyone could deny them — i.e. short of lying. Dear Lord, I want the wholeness that only acceptance of your Lordship can give. I want this for everyone.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I do feel "at home" in these verses — they minister to my whole person. I lift up these requests out of them: (1) I do *not* know myself — such knowledge is not in man — I know *you* — and only you know me. I want to present my body — its energies and abilities to you — help me. (2) My Lord was so conscious of his Deity — his oneness with you — *and* of his mission with its consequences — keep these ever ever before me! (3) I understand to *some* extent just what is involved with "one flock — one shepherd" — ah, but there is *so* much more to know — help me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I have committed myself to the prayer my Lord prayed for his scattered sheep. Speak to my heart: (1) "I do have other sheep — would you like to know them?" (2) "They *shall* become one flock. I did not say they *might* become one flock." (3) "I will bring them into one flock — not you — but me."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Yugoslavia — Point for prayer: *There has been considerable liberty for Christians since the '60s.* Pray for continued and greater freedom for the gospel. Few Yugoslavs have ever heard a clear presentation of the good news in Jesus. It would be tragic if Christians do not use to the full present liberty to reach out to the unconverted; there is a definite increase in hunger after God.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Christ, the Lord, is ris'n today, Hallelujah!
Sons of men and angels say, Hallelujah!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Hallelujah!
Sing, ye heav'ns; thou earth, reply, Hallelujah!

Love's redeeming work is done, Hallelujah!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Hallelujah!
Lo! our sun's eclipse is o'er, Hallelujah!
Lo! He sets in blood no more, Hallelujah!

WEEK SIX

—Wednesday—

We enter the palace of hope — the house of praise — restore our souls. Give us your triumph!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one whose hope is in you will be put to shame . . .” (Psa. 25:1-3a). You have an interest in all men and all in man. David said he lifted up his whole self to you in praise and trust. Praise your name, such is the interest you have in all men that any of us can so trust in you. To be “put to shame” suggests embarrassment before people. I am so glad you are concerned about society and such relationships.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Since we are eternally conscious beings there is no way our enemies can triumph over us. Death becomes the ultimate victory! However, it was for the here and now that David prayed. What a glorious promise: *“No one whose hope is in you will be put to shame.”* What hope do you give us? Ah, to ask such a question is to throw open the wide door of your record of participation in man’s life from Eden’s garden to the present. The record of your word speaks eloquently that there is no hope from any other source. I do want to lift up my whole life to you — because it is with it you are at work. Praise your name.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, I do want to offer you the trust of resignation — I lift up my life as a lump of clay for you to create for this day a vessel to carry your life to the lives of others. It is in my trust in myself — and my hope in my own interests that I have been “put to shame” — or disappointed. I disappoint myself — let alone you. Forgive me. Somehow the whole willing-

ness to lift my whole self up to you as a living sacrifice is lacking — help me and forgive me. I have confidence in your character — I trust *you* — but I cannot trust myself. I see more clearly than ever that my trust must be outward and not inward.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of Life;
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of Life.
Words of life and beauty,
Teach me faith and duty;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of Life;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of Life.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ²He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.” —Luke 10:1-4, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

We remember another such mission earlier in the ministry of our Lord. At that time he sent twelve out into the villages of Galilee (Matthew 10:1-42; Mark 6:1-13; Luke 9:1-9). In this campaign Jesus sends these men into Judea. These are obviously two efforts

with the same purpose. I receive the words "after this" to refer to the incidents we have just considered at the feast of the Tabernacles. My Lord is about to enter Judea on one last evangelistic crusade. (Perhaps I have overstated the circumstance.) How I would like to believe there is a beautiful pattern in these words for my evangelistic efforts!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

There is *so much* for me to learn in praise, intercession and thanksgiving in these verses: (1) If I enter a city or village to speak for you and you have no plans to enter that place — I had just as well stayed home. (2) My Lord sent the 70 (72?) in search of workers — but asked that prayer be used to find them. What a lesson for recruitment! (3) If the harvest was plentiful then, it is much more plentiful now. (4) Jesus promised rejection and persecution — men would be men ready to tear at them like wolves. (5) He promised them protection and provision. What *wonderful* encouragement for me!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus is still in the appointing business — he knows *so much* better than we do who should be sent. (2) Thank you that Jesus expects us to use our common sense in our work. (3) Thank you that we all are just the harbingers of his coming to any place of *his service*. (4) Thank you for the estimate of plentifulness for the harvest then and now. (5) Thank you that the "Lord of the harvest" has more invested than we do in the harvest. (6) Thank you for the plain promise that if we ask we shall receive in finding workers for his harvest. (7) Thank you that you have opened my eyes to see this section as a program for recruitment of workers not only a harvest of the lost.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road." There seems to be a great urgency in the instructions given here. The hospitality of the Jewish people would answer the need for a purse or extra clothes. The popularity of Jesus and the desire for the Messiah and the Kingdom of God is the backdrop for such words. I do wonder just what the seventy said as they went into a village? They were able to confirm their words with signs or miracles — but what did they say? It would hardly be enough to repeat over and over again "the kingdom of heaven is near." The Holy Spirit perhaps gave their message as he gave them miracles to credential it.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There *is indeed* a pattern here — I lift up these requests in an effort to find it! (1) Show me the companion you have appointed to accompany me in seeking the lost. (2) I am in prayer right now for the village — city — country into which I should go. (3) Write these words with a pen of iron on my heart: "the harvest is indeed plentiful." (4) There are still wolves ready to devour your servants — but NOT if we do not bother them — but neither shall we find the lost — help us to go where they are — both the wolves and the lost!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I wait just here to feel — sense — understand your *thrust* — out into the harvest field: (1) "I *know* who should be sent and just where — but if you do not 'go' there is no promise of my 'lo I am with you.'" (2) "I send you as *harbingers* not the sum source of all religious information."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zaire — Population: 33,100,000. Points for praise: (1) *The massive turning to Christ*. The number of Christians has grown from 1.4% of the population in 1900 to 91% today. (2) *The costly service of missionaries*. Many lives have been laid down for Christ through sickness in the earlier years, and martyrdoms in the bloody aftermath of independence.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Low in the grave He lay — Jesus, my Savior!
 Waiting the coming day — Jesus, my Lord!
 Up from the grave He arose
 With a might triumph o'er His foes;
 He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
 And He lives for ever with His saints to reign:
 He arose! He arose!
 Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Vainly they watch His bed — Jesus my Savior!
 Vainly they seal the dead — Jesus, my Lord!
 Up from the grave He arose
 With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
 He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
 And He lives for ever with His saints to reign:
 He arose! He arose!
 Hallelujah! Christ arose!

WEEK SIX

—Thursday—

We lay ourselves before you that you may teach us in our spirits. What a time of refreshing this can be!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long” (Psa. 25:4,5). This is a wonderful source of encouragement, as it is also a well spring of praise! That you would want to show me your ways, that you would desire to teach me of your paths is a great source of strength to my heart. Yea to the hearts of all men. What a prayer this is! In our reading of your word we have the promise of guidance! You can be and are our teacher. Gladly do we say “amen” to all David says in his acknowledgement of yourself as our hope all the day long.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am glad to be taught by you. As the Great Source of all knowledge you have several teachers to give instruction to this disciple: (1) Suffering of any kind gets my attention right away. My response to chastening does indeed teach me — my response to your word in the circumstance will indicate if it is my way or your way that is taught. (2) Your goodness — although not so obvious does show me your paths, does show me your ways (to reverse the thoughts). How I respond to abundance is controlled by my reception of your word prior to my enjoyment of your goodness. In all of this I praise you for caring so much.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Indeed, my hope is in you or I have no hope, How I do want to learn how better to respond to all you have said that your guidance might bring me closer and closer to all you want it to be. I believe if I were

much more open to the meaning of what you say in your word I would be shown your ways in areas I have not even thought about. Forgive me for my closed heart! If I were just more wide-eyed in my desire to be taught I would learn again and again from what you have said. Forgive my insensitivity. “You are my God and my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long” this day and every day. Cleanse me — use me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.
Leaning, leaning,
Safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

5“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ 6If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. 7Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.” —Luke 10:5-7, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Here are the very words of your Son concerning preparation in the homes of people for the coming of the Messiah, i.e. the King. Should we make less or different preparations today? I think not. How good to read that we are to find someone who will give us a sympathetic interest. The greeting of “peace to this

house” means that we wish your best for every house — but if the occupants do not return the greeting and express it in hospitality then we should look for one who will. You cannot teach those who do not want to be taught. It would seem Jesus is saying some center of operations is to be established. The seventy (and the twelve) were to expect to be given enough to eat and drink.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

In the principles here taught I am learning much — thank you! If little inconveniences arise — or slight misunderstandings occur do not move — bear with such problems. The evangelizing of the neighborhood is more important than these problems. Besides: you will not be home long enough to aggravate the difficulty. How much I can gain from these words! My Lord also taught we should not be fastidious in our choice of food: “eating and drinking whatever they give you.” Did our Lord find such a problem among the seventy? Even among the twelve? How did he overcome it? By instruction and example! Dear Lord, I hear — open my ears! I see — open my eyes!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for our Lord’s clear word that house to house visitation was *his* idea. (2) Thank you that we are NOT responsible for the negative reactions of those on whom we call. (3) Thank you for the promise of those who will welcome at least the first hearing of the good news. (4) Thank you for the word that: “the worker deserves his wages.” (5) Thank you that Jesus, “the Lord of heaven” set the example in humble dependence upon others. (6) Thank you for the plan to evangelize the whole city, town or village. (7) Thank you there is more reason now to tell of the King and his kingdom than when Jesus sent out the seventy.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Do not move around from house to house.” Are not these strange words from God incarnate in human flesh? Why would he be concerned — or concern himself with such a little detail as hospitality in the house of a stranger? It is because he *was interested* in how the host would respond to the message of the Kingdom. He did not want the coming of the King to be hindered by the coming of his servants. The One who had so much in accommodations chose to be born in a stable. He who could have created a king’s palace to top all king’s palaces chose to live in the despised town of Nazareth. Ah, what thoughtful care my Lord taught me by his example.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a joy to find instructions for evangelistic calling. I lift up these words that I might apply these divine instructions to my life: (1) Who is it who wants to be taught today? If we never knock on their door — or ring their phone we shall never know — break our bondage of apathy! (2) I need your own humility and grace to put up with little inconveniences. *Indeed* I do — help me. (3) Smash my stupid selfishness in what I like to eat when it can hinder sharing the bread come down from heaven.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

It is one long time this side of that day when my Lord first sent out his evangelistic callers — but he yet speaks to me: (1) “Please, please break away from the traditions of independence found in the USA.” (2) “Reach out — I did — I do.” (3) “Take the persecution — you share my suffering in doing so.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zaire — Point for prayer: *The Church of Christ in Zaire (ECZ)* came into being through both government edict and pressure from unscrupulous church leaders. There have been positive benefits; the divisiveness of tribalism has been diminished, for one. However, the negatives must be prayerfully counteracted.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name!

Let angels prostrate fall!
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel’s race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all;
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all.

WEEK SIX

—Friday—

As we pause in your sacred presence we know you will instruct us in the way prepared for each one of us. We gladly worship you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Who, then, is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him. He will spend his days in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land. The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them” (Psa. 25:12-14).

In these three verses I find such deep reasons for praise: (1) You are altogether worthy of my reverence or awe. I do fear you in the sense of punishment — even when I have been deserving of punishment I feared the application of it. I refer to your chastening here — I claim your Son’s payment for my eternal punishment. (2) I do want to maintain such reverence primarily because of your very nature — but also to claim the promise — the blessed promise that you will instruct *me* in the way chosen for *me*.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am not unaware that these words were written millenia ago by David concerning his experience with you. But I am also aware they contain eternal principles that apply as much to me as to him. I praise you that this very day you will instruct me in the way chosen by you just for me! Dear Lord, I want to have my ears attuned and my eyes open. In the common course of the day my blessed Lord will teach me as we go. I apply the promise of prosperity to the same kind of prosperity my Lord enjoyed. David was physically prosperous — and his descendants did indeed inherit the tiny land of Palestine — and what did it bring them by way of happiness? I count whatever word you want to confide in me of greater treasure than Egypt.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I do long for a “meek and quiet spirit” — I want to walk and think and be humble before you. But I am a proud person! Of what? Of being proud! Dear God what a sin! I have a real problem in separating the quality of sufficiency you have given me from the total dependence I have related to yourself. The answer is in becoming like a child who is both autonomous and dependent. Thank you! I believe you have confided in me and have made your two-way agreement known to me. Forgive me for my amazing selfishness. For the ability to assume positions and possessions that are not mine at all — they belong to you — forgive, forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Far and near the fields are teeming
With the waves of ripened grain;
Far and near their gold is gleaming
O’er the sunny slope and plain.
Lord of harvest, send forth reapers!
Hear us, Lord, to Thee we cry;
Send them now the sheaves to gather,
Ere the harvest time pass by.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

8“When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. **9**Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’ **10**But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, **11**‘Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.’ **12**I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.” —Luke 10:8-12, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My Lord asked his disciples to suit their tastes to those of their hosts. Does he ask less of me? "Eat what is set before you" — there are millions of people who have nothing set before them. "Eat what is set before you" — you did not earn it — it is a gift — receive it with gratitude — adapt your tastes to your host's.

How casually did Jesus tell these men to "heal the sick" — such healing was a small part of the whole. The point of the visit was to make a grand announcement: "*the kingdom of God is near you.*" In what a supernatural atmosphere was all this tour conducted! Jesus intended to arouse the interest of all the people of the town.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How wonderfully good it would be to be one of the seventy as they made their way up a road that led through Chorazin or Bethsaida. These men were to sense the attitude of the whole village. I wonder how this was done? Were there official representatives who gave such an impression? To obtain such strong reactions there must have been those who strongly rejected our Lord's claim to Messiahship. More than that — these persons were able to influence others until the whole town refused our Lord.

Dear Lord, I do want to adopt *your* attitude toward those who reject you. I want to remember this was *not* the first opportunity these people had to accept him. Where there is strong faith there is also strong disbelief. Both men are exercising the capacity you gave them.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for your constant provision — help me with thanksgiving to eat what is set before me. (2) Thank you for the warm welcome I have received in hundreds of homes. (3) Thank you for the wonderful supernatural credentials your disciples had who were establishing the deity of my Lord. (4) Thank you for the present kingdom of yourself of which I am a citizen. (5) Thank you for my eternal inheritance reserved in the eternal kingdom. (6) Thank you for the clear explanation of the right response to continual rejection. (7) Thank you that there will be a judgment based on the opportunities we have had — at least such will be a part of the eternal evaluation.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town." There will be a judgment! There will be an evaluation of responsibility! It is one incredible thought that all men of all nations —

yea, all men of the largest cities will be called to give an account. It is even more mind-boggling that whole cities and towns will be judged as municipalities. There is one, and only one, liberating thought: the Christian will not be judged! We are judged in him as relating to our sins. There will indeed be an evaluation of our works but not of our sins. After all who could stand before the bar of absolute justice?

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I lift up these petitions very confident of your answer: (1) Give me this day my daily bread — AND help me to be genuinely grateful! (2) Bring to my remembrance all the blessed hospitality I have enjoyed in the homes of many people. (3) I do want my daily conduct to be the credentials of the genuineness of my message. If I can't live it who can? Help me! (4) You are ruling from the throne of my heart — keep me well aware of this fact!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your ministry in my heart-needs: (1) "I rule so briefly here — so incompletely — there is a whole new eternal world and eternal life to come." (2) "Judgment is based on opportunity — please, please remember this."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zambia — Population: 6,800,000. Point for prayer: Praise God for the impact of the gospel in Zambia in recent years. a) Many have come to personal faith from nominal or sectarian Christianity. b) Increased evangelization in urban areas of the copperbelt towns and Lusaka. c) Outreach to rural areas once devoid of clear gospel witness.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark, how the heav'nly anthem drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.

WEEK SIX

—Saturday—

*Meet our loneliness with yourself.
Break the bonds of our own making.
We cast ourselves upon your love and
mercy!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only he will release my feet from the snare. Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted” (Psa. 25:15,16). How good it is to look into the face of my dear Lord — as found in the record of his life — for I know I am also looking at you! I find, as all men can, comfort and peace and forgiveness. Praise your name! I am also looking to Someone who can and will help me in releasing my feet from the snare. Dear Lord, you surely are the *only One* who can deliver us from the traps into which we have fallen. We have, by the complex overlapping of our sins, bound ourselves in a snare that no man can release. Praise for your wonderful power of cutting the bonds and making us free!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I praise you for four qualities in these two verses: (1) For your love and mercy as seen in the face of Jesus — because of this I *want* to look to you. (2) You alone understand my enemy — *and* you can spring his trap — you can and do and will release me! You are even now planning ways and means for giving me liberty from every snare! Praise your name. (3) You created me for yourself. My loneliness is but a response to your love for me. I shall never feel secure or fulfilled until I lose myself in your love (i.e. in meditation and prayer). (4) You are most of all and all the time “*gracious*” to me. Without your constant unearned favor I would have no hope.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I do not always look forward to this expression of time with you. I would some days as soon forget or

ignore my sin. But it is ever before me. Only a little thought sends me running back to you! I am indeed responsible for the bondage in which I find myself. And yet not I but sin that dwelleth in me. Since the psalmist has said you will turn to me — and I have found such a blessed promise repeated over and over again in the New Covenant I take great courage in claiming such a word! In your forgiveness is liberty. I need a calm and quiet spirit or disposition. Much of my entrapment arises from my own impatience. Forgive me — I want to learn from the One who was always working but was never in a hurry.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There's pow'r in the blood, pow'r in the blood;
Would you o'er evil a victory win?
There's wonderful pow'r in the blood.
There is pow'r, pow'r,
Wonder-working pow'r in the blood of the Lamb;
There is pow'r, pow'r,
Wonder-working pow'r in the precious blood of the Lamb.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹³“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

¹⁴But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

¹⁶“He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.” —Luke 10:13-16, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

This is the second time our Lord pronounced condemnations on these cities. (See Matt. 11:20-24.) Dear Lord, I want to learn as he expected the seventy to learn, just what you want me to by making this second statement of condemnation. This does become a warning to me — and to them that as he was rejected in Galilee he will be rejected in my day and in Judea for the seventy. Most of all this is a real encouragement to me and them that my Lord is aware of all hypocrisy and shame. Jesus *will be vindicated!* I am so glad to turn over to you all judgment and vengeance.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Speak to me in the words directed to these three cities: (1) *Chorazin*: Just a mile or two from my Lord's home at Capernaum. So many people could easily walk from this place and listen and learn from him. How well does this characterize so many of us in our comfortable cities in America. We want the bread and the fish — we gladly accept the physical healings or any other monetary gain from our Lord — but don't bother me with repentance and faith and virtue! (2) *Bethsaida*: "The house of fishing." How busy was everyone here! *Too busy!* The cares of this life were a very large part of the lives of Bethsaida — the deceitfulness of riches choked out his word — is it different today? (3) *Capernaum*: How many mighty works and words were found here? Capernaum can represent the meeting houses where we worship. Dear Lord give me eyes and ears that hear and see.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you you care enough to reprove us. (2) Thank you we need not be as these cities. (3) Thank you for the privilege of repentance and true sorrow for sin. (4) Thank you that we can learn from what he did and said in Capernaum. (5) Thank you for the fulfillment of his words in the destruction and disappearance of these cities. (6) Thank you that you can and do speak to men through us today. (7) Thank you that we can turn all rejections over to you for evaluation.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." Jesus was conscious of his total authority long before he arose from the dead. How wonderful today to claim the meaning of this verse for our lives! When we teach and preach his word we can believe that those who hear us hear yourself — and our Lord. What an eternally serious matter it is to say: "he who

rejects you rejects me." At the same time there is comfort in the fact that men reject Someone far more important than ourselves. Companionship with the eternal God and the Lord of Lords elevates our work in acceptance or rejection to a plane we could never have any other way.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There *will be* a judgment — men *are* accountable — there is *ONE* who can answer *all* the questions. Keep this ever before me. I lift up these requests in this context: (1) If your Son thought such words were important enough to speak them twice what is my evaluation? Open my eyes! (2) Jesus *will be vindicated* — keep this ever before my consciousness. (3) Proximity *does* mean responsibility — Chorazin is an example of this. (4) Busyness will lead us to hell if we are not careful! Dear Lord, write these words on my heart!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Truly you *do* have my attention here! Speak to me: (1) "Whom I love I chasten — I *do* know the way. I *do* know what helps and what hinders — *listen to me!*" (2) "I have left this record so you would NOT be like them." (3) "You have the record of fulfillment as well as prediction — will you heed it?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zimbabwe — Population: 8,600,000. Point for prayer: *The spiritual transformation* that has occurred in Zimbabwe is miraculous. The Holy Spirit is at work! Despite the devastation and hurt of the war of independence, there has been an unprecedented openness to the Word of God. Many involved in the fighting have come to Christ.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Lead on, O King Eternal,
The day of march has come;
Henceforth in fields of conquest
Thy tents shall be our home;
Through days of preparation
Thy grace has made us strong,
And now, O King Eternal,
We lift our battle song.

WEEK SEVEN

—Sunday—

It is wonderfully encouraging to find the way of reality and to walk in it. Just now we renew our commitment to you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth” (Psa. 26:2,3). This is a sobering request — but it was made out of the sincerity of David’s heart. The ability attributed to you in this request reveals your character. You have a standard for man or there would be no way to test him. You know the thoughts and intents of our hearts or you could not try us. You can read the words I speak before I speak them — you read my mind as the thoughts form within. What encouragement to know you are love and truth! All your examination is done with the motive of love — do help us.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I praise you for the privilege of walking in your truth. The direction you give to life is always right because it perfectly matches reality. There are no promises not kept — no plans unfulfilled. I do want to be totally open and honest with you. I know you know all if I am willing or if I am not willing. But I want to cooperate with you. I believe you know the very best way of doing everything — therefore I want to learn from you. To some extent I do walk continually in your truth — I want it to be much more fully expressed in every day — yea — *this* day. Even as I say this I know your love will need to be a large part in your answering my desire.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

All of the above was bravely lifted out of the heart of your child. If I were to ask that you test me by your standard of absolute truth apart from mercy I would be lost — lost — lost! To try me in the court of law is

to condemn me to hell. An examination of my emotions and intellect would reveal selfishness and stupidity — i.e. by your standard of perfection. I am saying only that I need mercy upon mercy to give any kind of reality to my earlier expressions. What a paradox! I find strength in both a claim to following your way and equal strength from freely admitting I have failed to walk in your way. Praise your name for your perfectly balanced law and grace in my life.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!
Yonder on Calvary’s mount outpoured —
There where the blood of the lamb was spilt.
Grace, grace, God’s grace,
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God’s grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”

¹⁸He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions, and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.” —Luke 10:17-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What an excited group of men returned to meet Jesus! I want to enter into their joy. What experience with demons did these men have before our Lord sent

them out with power over them? Had the seventy watched and wondered while demons ravished the lives of men and women? Now these men could give the command and demons would obey. What amazing authority! I am glad they recognized it was not by their own authority — Jesus did not immediately cool their ardor — he made an enigmatic statement that related to what they said: *“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”* When? Why? I believe it was a promise of what would happen when he is crowned king in the hearts of men.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The miraculous power granted to these men and the twelve was to prepare the way for the coming of his kingdom. Such miracles were their credentials as harbingers of the king and his kingdom. The greatest source of joy was not the fleeting amazement of the miraculous, but in the imperishable wonder of enrolling our names in the roster of those who will be citizens in the eternal heavenly kingdom. There are no words to express our joy that even now, yea, *right now* our names are written in heaven!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the eternal joy we can have every day in our service. (2) Thank you that demons are still subject to his name! (3) Thank you for the fall of Satan — yea he is fallen *right now!* (4) Thank you for your power over our enemy — I claim your deliverance. (5) Thank you for the value system of my Lord — *he* knows what is important. (6) Thank you for the reality of the spirit world — good and bad. (7) Thank you for the confidence we have of our names recorded in heaven.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” Indeed I do! What a computer you must have in heaven! Since you create each snow flake in its beautiful intricate design only to last for a few moments I have no problem believing you can and do know *every person* who has ever lived or ever will live. You are always so much bigger than any man (beginning with this one) can imagine. The old song: *“When the roll is called up yonder”* might not be far fetched at all! Somehow those names must be announced. Ah, but it will not be done out of my imagination. I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory that my name is written in heaven.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

These four verses stand as a challenge to my heart — will I rejoice for the right or *permanent* reasons? I lift up these requests for that purpose: (1) Open my understanding in the meaning of reference to *“the kingdom”*! Isn't this another way of describing your rule from man's heart? (2) I am in the process, in the amazing task of enrolling men in your service so you can enroll them in heaven — give me your grace — mercy — and wisdom in this glorious task. (3) Deliver me from the *“evil one”*! Lead me not into overbearing temptation.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to reach my conscience just here: (1) *“I have a personal thought-by-thought record of every person who ever lived or will ever live — do you accept my omniscience or not?”* (2) *“If you do you can relax and enjoy my world, and the hope of the world to come.”*

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special ministries — Point for prayer: *Audio-visual Evangelism*. The extraordinary advances in technology are being harnessed for the gospel. Christian film making and TV programming have expanded enormously, and have had a significant impact worldwide.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

“I am the vine and ye are the branches:”
 Bear precious fruit for Jesus today;
 Branches in Him no fruit ever bearing,
 Jesus hath said, *“He taketh away.”*
“I am the vine and ye are the branches;
 I am the vine, be faithful and true;
 Ask what ye will, your prayer shall be granted;
 The father loved me, so I have loved you.”

“Now ye are clean thro' words I have spoken;
 Living in me, much fruit ye shall bear;
 Dwelling in you, you promise unbroken,
 Glory in heav'n with me ye shall share.”

WEEK SEVEN

—Monday—

I knock on the door of my stronghold. You come with the light of life. You remove all fear. Hope and peace are mine. How glad I am to worship you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psa. 27:1). Dear wonderful Father — eternal Saviour — present Holy Spirit (I believe it is proper to address the Godhead). You are my light — but you are also the source of all spiritual light for all men for all time. Light gives perspective to what is either not seen at all or is poorly perceived. How flat and dull and uninteresting all of life looks without the light of yourself from your word. I need not be afraid of the dark. There is no night — nothing unseen or unknown to you. Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Praise you for such a poignant description of yourself: “. . . the stronghold of my life” — indeed you are! I am glad that amid any conflict in which I am no match for the adversary — and even when I put my confidence in your strength I am at times baffled and must retire to the stronghold of prayer and meditation. Praise and adoration are the natural expressions of one who has no other hiding place. You are the stronghold of my whole life, i.e. for every area — and the stronghold for the total length of my life. Your perfect love for me casts out all my fear!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Satan is the great counterfeiter. He calls night day and darkness light. We are no match for his mind, so we believe him. Since light is needed for every moment of every day we have a constant engagement with the great deceiver. Praise your name — you are

an omnipresent Being and are ready to tell us the truth if we have but ears to listen. Forgive me that I have been so often unwilling or otherwise engaged that I was not ready to hear. My largest blindness has been that I have not been afraid of the adversary. It is with such fools he easily wins the victory. Forgive me. I do want to reverence you — but fear the devil.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow’ring o’er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head supply.
When the woes of life o’ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me:
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²¹At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

²²“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

²³Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.” —Luke 10:21-24, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It would seem that of all times your dear Son would rejoice it would not be now. He compared the work of the seventy with the rejection of the three cities in Galilee. But our Lord's rejoicing was "through the Holy Spirit." There would be a few child-like people who would believe. The communication of your love and interest in man was understood and accepted by "the little children" i.e. those who listened with the trust and confidence children place in their parents. Jesus also revealed the ones who did not hear: "the wise and the learned." Dear Lord, I want to be as a little child before you.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Of course what is said here by my Lord is said to all — but I seem to hear my name again and again in these words. I am NOT wise except it be your wisdom — I know NOTHING if it is not what you have revealed in your word. All other knowledge is of temporal and temporary value. Both my Lord and yourself express joy or pleasure in those who with open-eyed wonder accept what you have said. Yea, I share your rejoicing.

I believe that all who chose you are chosen *by* you. It is a constant amazement to me that you should make this astounding statement — I can not recover from the shock! "No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him"!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for my Lord's priorities that allowed him to see past the rejection of the many to the joyful acceptance of the few. (2) Thank you that perhaps there were many more child-like believers than I know about. (3) Thank you for these clear words of Jesus as to just where he obtained his message. (4) Thank you I can now understand to *know* you — i.e. through your Son. (5) Thank you for the eyes of my heart that have been wonderfully opened! (6) Thank you for the high value my Lord placed on such a sight — I accept it. (7) Thank you for the inner ear my Lord has opened.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Blessed are the eyes that see what you see." Dear Lord, I want to indeed see what these men saw. I want to follow you from place to place and be a real participant in all that happened. What a privilege to share in what kings and prophets wanted to see and could not. Give me ears to hear — as well as eyes to see. I do labor at one disadvantage: *I have seen too*

often and too much! I have heard too often and too much. Just for today I want to pause and look until I have opened up the total vista of vision — to hear until your word has become a part of me!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How far, far removed are your thoughts from our thoughts — and your ways from our ways! I lift up these petitions in a desire to bring my thoughts into your captivity: (1) I want to rejoice — as my Lord did "in the Holy Spirit" — I am so "wise" in my own conceits — forgive me! (2) I want the wonder and surprised amazement of a little child — the world about me — the sky — the water — the vegetation — the "ponderous bulks" we call stars and planets are all here to prompt praise. Feeble as it is I raise it! (3) "Be content with what you have" could well be applied to my salvation — help me to receive such words.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I *do not* want to leave these blessed verses! More than this I *do not* want them to leave me. Speak them into my permanent retention memory bank: (1) "I am *right now* in the process of revealing myself in you." (2) "You are living in 'the end of the age' — the night is coming — awake." (3) "Blessed are your eyes" — do you believe this?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special ministries — Point for prayer: *Bible Correspondence Courses*. This ministry is only about 40 years old, but it has grown and become one of the most effective means for following up contacts from literature distribution and Christian radio programs. This has proved the best single means of winning Muslims.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

WEEK SEVEN

—Tuesday—

Prepare us in this time of worship to sense your presence with us throughout the day!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple” (Psa. 27:4). Such a request could hardly be fulfilled literally in the busy life of King David. He could hardly spend all his time inside the temple and still carry on his work as king. Even in the days of the son of Jesse men must have felt you did not live only in a house made with hands — or that the building was not your only dwelling place. We are presently dwelling in the temple of yourself since you live with us in our bodies. How I do want to “gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek his presence with me.”

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

If I can remain aware all day long that my body is your temple I shall have accomplished the first request of David’s prayer. Ah, but the second half is another matter: “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.” There are so many facets of your beauty that I should never exhaust my desire to look — but I do! My attention is distracted into other areas of life and I somehow wander from your beauty. David could see nothing physical in the temple but the structure itself — and in his day it was the inside of the tabernacle. How much more do we have to see as we watch your Son move across the pages of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I believe I can agree with the psalmist that the *one thing* I ask most often of you is that I may dwell always here and hereafter in your presence. I guess it

is in the area of our deepest desire we can find our deepest sin. I want to live constantly aware of your presence — but I do not do it. Perhaps (as Satan even now is saying): “such is an impossible goal.” Such a statement is a lie! I know people who live always in the presence of the lust of the flesh — I know others who live every day — yea, every waking moment in the presence of their love for money. Forgive my weak apologetic attitude. Lead me into your presence and there may I stay.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Savior, Thy dying love
Thou gavest me;
Nor should I ought withhold,
Dear Lord, from Thee:
In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfill its vow,
Some off’ring bring Thee now,
Something for Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁵On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷He answered, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

²⁸“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” —Luke 10:25-28, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The “expert” in the law was a scribe or lawyer. This

was their whole life — i.e. to digest the content, meaning and application of the law of God — and in their case, the traditions of men associated with your law. My Lord welcomes tests — he knows those who test him are giving him their attention — it could be they will learn something. How much about heaven could this expert learn from the O.T.? He was asking about life after death, but he must have also been wondering about putting eternal values in this life. My Lord pointed him to the only answer book: your word!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I am amazed at the answer this man gave to our Lord's questions. He summarized the whole purpose of law and life in his terse words. One would expect almost any other answer but this one. The love of God with our soul, strength, and mind I take to be one expression, i.e. to love you with our whole being. If the estimate we have of ourselves is what we transfer to our neighbor we surely need an adequate self-image. The major emphasis here seems to be the physical care and concern we have for ourselves is what we transfer to our neighbor. To give ourselves to you and to others will put everlasting life into our living! Dear Lord help me to hear you!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Lord is *the* expert in your law. (2) Thank you for man's insatiable desire for life beyond this life. (3) Thank you that man — all men — want to put eternal values in today's world. (4) Thank you my Lord constantly referred to your word as the authority along with himself. (5) Thank you we can will to love you with our whole being. (6) Thank you that I am to love myself in a way that I would want to transfer to my neighbor. (7) Thank you for my Lord's honest commendation of this unusual man.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“‘You have answered correctly,’ Jesus replied. ‘Do this and you will live.’” What life did our Lord have in mind? “Eternal life” was a synonym for heaven — but it was the New Testament revelation that gave us the details. Man feels very keenly the empty, dull meaningless routine called life is not all there is to living. Man says deep within himself: “there simply *must be* something better than this.” The inquiry of this “expert in the law” is the question of every man and woman: “What must I do to put eternal value in my daily living.” The answer is found in total worship and total service. Man is living to die or living to live. Since man is an eternal being he is already involved in eternal death (separation from yourself) or eternal life, i.e. living forever with you.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I will not find a more important question than this one — or a better answer. I lift up these requests in my desire to put eternity into every day — and to enjoy the life to come: (1) Lock me into a search that does not go beyond your word — nor becomes but a repeating of what others have found. (2) Keep me aware that there is no love without emotion — but emotion alone is not complete love. (3) Love that does not include all of life is non-existent — it is not love! (4) When I love as here described I put eternity into every day. Make this real to me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Of all days, on *this day* you speak to my deepest need — I am listening: (1) “Abandonment in worship of myself puts heaven into living.” (2) “Are you doing it?” (3) “Try it — unbelievable joy is in it.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Bible Societies*. It is hard to overestimate the importance of the organizations that provide God's Word for the peoples of the world. Most significant are those grouped under the United Bible Societies (UBS).

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

In lovingkindness Jesus came,
My soul in mercy to reclaim;
And from the depths of sin and shame
Through grace He lifted me.
From sinking sand He lifted me,
With tender hand He lifted me;
From shades of night to plains of light,
O praise His name, He lifted me!

He called me long before I heard,
Before my sinful heart was stirred;
But when I took Him at His word,
Forgiv'n He lifted me.

WEEK SEVEN

—Wednesday—

When we are faced with the mountain of your goodness why should we worry about the mole hills? Give us eyes to see!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Psa. 27:13,14). Back of these words is the prosperity of the wicked and the adversity of those who love you. Your “goodness” equals your fairness or equity. Even in our own lifetime — in our own experience a degree of justice is observable. Each man must, like David, give this his own personal testimony. In my own experience I have already seen your goodness in this life. In any immediate adversity I need but wait and be strong — how easy it is to “take heart” in face of the mountain of your goodness.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have been to India, to Burma, to Jamaica, to several other abysmally poor countries. There are your children there. Can we apply this verse to their lives? Can we ask them to sing this verse? If your “goodness” is to be equated with physical prosperity we had just as well forget it. If however we are speaking of the riches of the heart and home — then many of them are much more prosperous than many fat affluent Americans. All I need to do with most of life is to wait and you will help me to see how it fits together — praise your name! My confidence in your sovereignty is such a comfort.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The word “sovereignty” has not always made sense to me. At times I have forgotten you were Love and therefore Sovereign Love. Forgive me for losing confidence in your work in this world. As long as you have made man a free moral being — and you have

— there is no option but to receive the due recompense of our choices. Forgive me for so often living too close to the trees that I forget the forest. Forgive me for one large and constant sin: *impatience*. How I need to hear again and again your words to my heart’s need, “*Wait for the Lord,*” (and in my waiting I need to be strong and take heart in your control of all that happens) help me — forgive me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by ev’ry foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁹But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰In reply Jesus said:

“A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³²So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

³⁵The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” —*Luke 10:29-37, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is with a real desire to express these words as you would want me to that I approach this portion of worship. Jesus knew the heart of the man before he asked the question: “. . . who is my neighbor?” but Jesus let him ask it. My Lord knew, as I continue to learn, that only in drawing a person out can there be any learning. This man is in for a shock. May I be as shocked just now at my own insensitiveness!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

This parable is all so familiar and all so *unfamiliar*. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was very familiar to all who heard. Just before our Lord spoke these words Herod had dismissed 40,000 government employees — i.e. according to tradition. Many of them became the robbers on this infamous “way of blood.” The reports of many who had been treated just as the man in the parable — i.e. “. . . leaving him half dead” were also all too familiar. Even the busy preoccupied priest and Levite were not unknown. *But* when Jesus introduced the name “Samaritan” it was almost like a curse word in the church house. And yet no one can deny “*he was a neighbor.*” Dear Lord, give me ears to hear!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the reminder that I can “justify myself” on almost any issue — but it does *not* make it right. (2) Thank you that for all time I know that anyone I meet that is in need is my neighbor. (3) Thank you that we still have “the way of blood” with us so we can help those who have been robbed and beaten. (4) Thank you that my Lord was not afraid to identify hypocrisy wherever he found it. (5) Thank you for that blessed Samaritan who married his heart to his eyes. (6) Thank you Jesus asked us to pity others, not ourselves. (7) Thank you this neighbor went beyond the first mile of immediate help — but asked for no “thank yous.”

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.” What a thoughtful, caring person was this Samaritan! Where did he learn such compassion? One day we can meet many such people in heaven who will all tell us that it was of

their own choice they became what they were. Most of them will tell us they hardly knew when or why — but it *did* happen. In the Christian context: there are many “priests” and “Levites” and a few Samaritans — or “*neighbors.*” It is our own deep-down personal choices that make us what we are — or are not. These choices must be held to long enough to develop character and we become what the Samaritan was.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Will this blessed story slip away one more time without the life-changing impact our Lord intended when he told it? I do not want it to. I lift up these requests in a help to prevent such happening: (1) The lawyer had the right answer — but not the right heart to apply it. Give me *both!* (2) Tell me again that: “man can justify himself but such is not right.” (3) Who is my neighbor today? Will I see him — know him when he appears? (4) Who will I pity? Myself or my neighbor? Who is to be helped — how?

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I need your help in making my choices — I pause to hear you speak to me: (1) “You have helped some who you do not know.” (2) “The three keys to self-awareness are: (a) *observation*, (b) *admission*, and (c) *examination.*” (3) “Please let yourself live up to your potential.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries. — Point for prayer: *Bible Translation.* This is an essential ministry if strong, culturally relevant, Bible-reading churches are to be planted. Of the 5,455 known languages in the world only 1,808 have any part of the Scriptures. SIL estimates that 723 definitely need Bible translation work.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the mem'ry find
A sweeter sound than
Thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind!

WEEK SEVEN

—Thursday—

You want me and accept me. This confidence moves me to want you and accept you into my heart. I am glad for this time to express my love to you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy, and I will give thanks to him in song” (Psa. 28:6,7). Dear Lord, you know the hurt of the hearts of all men. We are *so* much in need of *mercy*! I understand mercy to be the expression of personal interest and the meeting of individual needs. Mercy becomes the personal expression or extension of grace. We all hurt in different ways — and yet in the same ways. We cry out for someone to unite our intentions with our actions and heal the hurt in between. It must be, it *will* be in your strength that we are helped. Praise your wonderful name.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How totally weak and helpless I feel — not always, but just now I do. I am helped, and only helped when I remember your love and the beauty of your Son. I rush into your arms to be comforted — I bow before you to be forgiven — I lift up my heart in joy that you want me and accept me. You are my strength and my shield. It is only in my trust in you that I find my help.

It is difficult to do, but I can and I do move into the realm of thanksgiving: to lift up my voice in song is to lift my heart in joy! Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

If I were but consistent in my conduct, attitudes and words, I would not need mercy. Yes I would! For my overpowering pride! Yea, I *need* mercy, I do not want justice. If I would just “buck up” and be strong I would need no one else. Ah, weak as water man!

What stupid, lying words you speak! You have no strength apart from your Lord. As well expect the earth to furnish its own light apart from the sun. Without you I am totally vulnerable — how many times do I need to be “shot down” before I come to you for my shield? Dear Lord in all the above expressions I confess my sin and claim your merciful forgiveness!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

The Lord’s our rock, in him we hide,
A shelter in the time of storm;
Secure whatever ill betide,
A shelter in the time of storm.
Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,
A weary land, a weary land;
Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,
A shelter in the time of storm.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁸As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” ⁴¹“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” —Luke 10:38-42, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

One day in the period of three months, i.e. between the feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication (October,

November, December) — Jesus came to the village of Bethany and the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus (evidently the house was owned by Martha). Somehow Jesus built his time of teaching into his lifestyle — so to be with Jesus was to listen to him teach (or not listen). We teach at specified times and places — Jesus didn't. Mary took a comfortable relaxed position at his feet so she could give her whole attention to him. I want to sit right beside her and fasten my whole heart on what he says. At the same time I can also identify with Martha — how often I am *distracted* in much serving! Teach us, dear Lord!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I hope earnestly that the above expression tells of the way you look at the text in relation to man — at least some men at some times. In this time of worship there will be no question that I am trying to hold your mirror up before me to see myself as you do. My Lord is saying several things to me: (1) A focus on “things” however *good* they are causes irritation. (2) A focus on things can and does produce jealousy. (3) I cannot, I *must not* tell Jesus what to do about *anything* — most especially what is important or not important. (4) Jesus will rebuke me gently as he did Martha — but rebuke me he will. (5) If there is one thing about which I should be upset it is my personal relationship with my Lord.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you Jesus has come to my house and I can sit at his feet. (2) Thank you that Jesus tells me over and over again what is important. (3) Thank you that Jesus says once again to me that he didn't need much by way of a meal to be satisfied. (4) Thank you Jesus was so patient and kind with a presumptuous woman. She is so like all of us. (5) Thank you Jesus defined what was “better.” (6) Thank you we need never lose this close communication with our Lord. (7) Thank you for Luke's inspired thoughtfulness in giving us a lesson no other writer did.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.*” Better than what? Better than food? Yes, we could say learning at Jesus' feet is better than food. However we believe Jesus is saying it was better in his estimation as well. If our Lord gives a value judgment we should surely pay attention. Jesus was not going to be responsible for taking away the best in life from Mary. It is well that we remind ourselves that the choice was Mary's — the same choice can be ours. I chose to sit for at least an hour at the feet of my Lord to learn and worship. I have indeed found it to be the best part of every day!

Besides that, I need him so much I just could not miss our time together.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have taught and preached from these verses more times than I can count — but I am *even now* reaching out to you again: (1) I do so want to build my time of teaching into my lifestyle — is my lifestyle a lesson? Help me! (2) I want *you* — not *myself* or *others* to tell me what is important — the ONE THING that is needful or essential. I know what it is — it is what Mary had — *communion with you!* (3) How I have longed to live “the simple life” — like Jesus — enable me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

If ever my conscience was tender — open — vulnerable — it is now — speak to me! (1) “Why — why do you worry at all — relax. I love you. I am all power.” (2) “Mary kept on choosing the ‘good part’ — so must you.” (3) “I can — I will keep others from robbing you of your communion with me if you will only ask me.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Ministry to Children*. The importance of this cannot be overestimated. They will be the Church of the next generation. 35% of the world's population (45% of Africa's population) is under 15. Every year 130 million babies are born, 112 million of these in less developed countries.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown;
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter ev'ry trembling heart!

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into ev'ry troubled breast;
Let us all in Thee inherit;
Let us find the promised rest;
Take away the love of sinning,
Take our load of guilt away;
End the work of Thy beginning,
Bring us to eternal day.

WEEK SEVEN

—Friday—

What delight we have as we enter the palace of our king. Such a palace is really our place of worship. We enter in with joy.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord is enthroned as King forever. The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace” (Psa. 29:10,11). We cannot give what we do not have. In these verses we receive strength because you are strong, you grant peace because you live in total tranquility. You are also ruler over the flood — the flood of Noah’s day? We are sure such is true, but over the flood of life itself. Praise your wonderful name — you are indeed “King forever.” It is good to relate each of these qualities to myself — I need Someone to rule over the floods in my life. I crown you as King on the throne of my heart.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The older I become the more strength I need. I refer to the strength of the spirit — but this is also reflected in strength for the body. You are the strength of my life. How I do want to relax in your strength and not mine. All is well when you are King — peace is the by-product of your Kingship. In the experience of David he could prove these words in the crucible of day-by-day experience. And so can I! Dear Lord, sit as King over the flood of activities that shall be present in this day. Rule as the eternal King in every relationship of this day. Supply strength for the tasks of this day I did not know I had. At the close of the day and several times during it may I be conscious of your peace.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is such a strength to my heart to remember that if I am about to be drowned by the flood it is not my Lord’s fault — I could choose to sit enthroned with

him over it. But I must take his position related to the flood. When I am beaten down and have been overcome my Lord yet sits enthroned as King forever. I can either accept his rule and reign with him or choose to rule myself and be enslaved. It is just that simple. Forgive my stupidity. I can claim my own strength and fail in the attempt — or I can blame and identify with your strength and overcome. My heart can be in constant agitation — which it is at times — or accept your Lordship and have peace. A peace beyond my human understanding.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I was lost in sin but Jesus rescued me,
He’s a wonderful Savior to me;
I was bound by fear but Jesus set me free,
He’s a wonderful Savior to me (So wonderful!)
For He’s a wonderful Savior to me,
He’s a wonderful Savior to me;
I was lost in sin, but Jesus took me in,
He’s a wonderful Savior to me.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

11 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

²He said to them, “When you pray, say:

‘Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴Forgive us our sins,

for we forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation.’ ” —Luke 11:1-4, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Was the example of Jesus the motive behind the request of the disciples for the lessons in how to pray? It should have been, but it wasn't. John's disciples were given lessons on prayer and Jesus' disciples did not want to feel slighted — or as if they had less than the disciples of John. It would seem to me that as much as our Lord used prayer in his life to follow him would move the disciples to want to learn how to pray.

When my Lord answered the disciples it was not with a formula. He answered that prayer is an attitude expressed in words. Dear Lord, have I represented this text as you intended? I have tried.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

As I even now pray it is out of an attitude — and I want it to be the very one here described by my Lord: (1) *Adoration or praise*: “Hallowed be thy name.” This can and does take two forms — inward — i.e. adoration from myself in your presence. Adoration just for yourself — outward objective evaluation of yourself. (2) *Confession* of my need for your rule in my heart and of my sins against you. (3) *Petition*: for our daily needs in the physical and spiritual areas of life. I shall never, never exhaust the meaning of the model prayer my Lord taught his disciples to pray. (Not to say but to pray.)

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the prayer-life of my Lord — if he needed to pray I need it more. (2) Thank you for the request of the disciples — whatever their motive. (3) Thank you we can learn how to worship — how to pray. (4) Thank you for John's emphasis upon prayer — he was “the greatest born of woman.” (5) Thank you we can come as children to a loving interested Father. (6) Thank you you are altogether worthy of all our praise and adoration. (7) Thank you that my Lord asked us to pray for very physical things — like “daily bread.”

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*And lead us not into temptation.*” This has always been to me a strange part of this prayer. The very thought of yourself leading us into temptation contradicts all I know of your nature. If there is no possibility of being thus led, why pray this prayer? A testing can become a temptation — but it need not be. This is a wonderful request. It means that in answer to our prayer you will not lead us into any situation we cannot handle. We will face many tests out of which we can grow. Because we prayed we will not face a situation we cannot handle. It is the same pro-

mise as that found in I Corinthians 10:13: “. . . God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.” Praise your name.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am delighted to be able to learn from the One who would seem to need prayer the least how to pray the best — I lift up these several requests in just one request: *Teach me to pray*: (1) What do I really know of the prayer-life of my Lord? He got up “a great while before day” — he included private or personal worship IN his schedule — he *did not* — *he did not* leave it out! This I ask of you. (2) Deliver me from overbearing temptations — I truly truly need your help here. (3) Deliver me from the evil one!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am trying to be honest — but I have a most difficult time. If I am not a friend with myself how can I truly be a friend to anyone else? Teach me dear Lord: (1) “Do what you can — NOT what you can't — leave that to me.” (2) “If you do not love yourself (in the way I taught you) you cannot and will not love your neighbor.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Missionaries' Children (MKs)*. MKs often live under unusual conditions; many have an identity crisis as they grow up in two worlds, and some become resentful or rebellious. Pray that parents and children may be a united team for the spread of the gospel, and for a right balance between ministry and family.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Years I spent in vanity and pride,
Caring not my Lord was crucified,
Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary.
Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty,
At Calvary.

By God's word at last my sin I learned;
Then I trembled at the law I spurned,
Till my guilty soul imploring turned
To Calvary.

WEEK SEVEN

—Saturday—

We are in you and you are holy. We are in you and you are righteous. We want to re-establish such relationships just now as we worship.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Sing to the Lord, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning” (Psa. 30:4,5). There are times when it is much easier to sing than others. But there is no time I have found when with a little sincere effort I could not sing. It is good to be called a “holy one” or “separate one.” My holiness is in you and because of your Son. My separateness is in the contrast of your character to the world in which I live. I am set aside and apart from the world to belong to you. Such is true of every one of your children — praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Your anger is only caused by my willful continual disobedience. I am full of wonder at your patience with me. Your anger has indeed been a very brief moment in my experience. Your favor dawns upon me like the morning light. Praise your most wonderful name! In more than sixty years of experience I can say your goodness has been overwhelming! Perhaps it is because I do not want to remember the impossible situations that have faced us from time to time — and still do — but I really cannot consider them as near as obvious or important as your wonderful goodness! In the midst of any weeping is the promise of that eternal morning. Praise your holy name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, as much as I like to sing I do not sing as much or as often as I should. Dear Lord, put your songs in my heart for every day! I *do* want to be your *separate one*. I am repulsed by the crass commer-

cialism all about me. I am nauseated in the presence of pornography. I *want* to be different — I’m glad and eager to be as much like your Son as I can be. I am also deeply grieved at my failures! Forgive me! The weeping I have done in the night has been almost altogether over my sins. You have been so good to us (my dear wife and our family) that I am constantly led to repentance. Keep that bright morning of eternal day ever before me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Be not aweary, for labor will cease
Some glad morning;
Turmoil will change into infinite peace,
Some bright morning.
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
When the sun is shining in th’eternal sky;
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
We shall see the Lord of Harvest,
By and by.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁵Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’

⁷“Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ ⁸I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." —*Luke 11:5-10, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

In answer to the disciples' request about being taught to pray Jesus continues his answer. Here is an example in which we can see the elements of prayer at work. We are the man who has had an unexpected guest in the late hours of the night. We are without provisions — our cupboard is bare. We know our neighbor has plenty but it is a difficult time to ask him for help — but ask him we must, for we cannot ignore our need to show hospitality. It is the persistence of the man (all your children) that gets the bread. Dear Lord, I *do* want to learn the lesson here.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Here are the points of the lesson as I try to sit at his feet to learn (help me with your wisdom): (1) Prayer is to meet a need — at least in the example. (2) Prayer is asking. (3) In this example prayer is intercession — it meets our need as we meet the need of another. (4) Meeting a need is NEVER convenient — it always demands a measure of unselfishness. (5) We do *not* — *do not* have the resources to meet the need — we must go to you. (6) Answering comes out of friendship or personal relationship. (7) The answer is according to the need — however great or small. (8) Every one learned a lesson that could not otherwise have been learned.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that you are telling me to continue in prayer: "keep on knocking" — to keep on asking — to keep on seeking — and we *shall* be answered! (2) Thank you that I can identify with the man who found himself without means to meet a need — indeed I can! (3) Thank you for the *midnight circumstances* — this gives the urgency to praying that must be there. (4) Thank you for the specificity of the request — "the loaves of bread" — teach me to so pray! (5) Thank you that "prayer is not my overcoming your reluctance but laying hold of your willingness." (6) Thank you that you *will* answer when I am best prepared to appreciate it. (7) Thank you for the confident assurance that I will receive just what I need — no less and sometimes much more.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... yet because of the man's persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs." My Lord is

teaching me that in my persistence in prayer I am developing the character you want in me that will be adequate to handle the answer you give. This is the reason for our delayed answers for our children — at least in many instances. The one fundamental lesson behind these words is that you do indeed hear and answer prayer. There is a problem in this concept: just how long should we be persistent? Isn't this answered by the need? If the need persists then the prayer will too. When it is right and helpful "he will get up and give him (us) as much as he (we) need(s)."

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

These are precious "old friends" i.e. these verses. I am glad to lift up these requests from them: (1) I believe you are leading me, at times, into impossible circumstances — it is there I need to know how to pray — help me. (2) So many of my prayers have delayed answers — this is your own purifying process. Give me your own grace in accepting it. (3) Repeat that lovely quotation: "prayer is not my overcoming your reluctance, but laying hold on your willingness." Write this upon my heart!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause before you — reach my heart: (1) "Let me be God — you do not have the resources." (2) "Your treatment of your own children should teach you much just here." (3) "I have millions of years to meet your need."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Christian Literature*. More than half the born-again Christians in the world testify that literature played a part in their conversion. Its role in strengthening Christians is incalculable. The Communists appreciate the importance of literature and spent over \$5,000,000,000 on propaganda in one year.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Shall I crucify my Savior,
When for me He bore such loss?
Shall I put to shame my Savior?
Can I nail Him on the cross?
Shall I crucify my Savior?
Crucify my Lord again?
Once, O once I crucified Him:
Shall I crucify again?

WEEK EIGHT

—Sunday—

Security is in God — and his Son. Not in ourselves on our circumstances. We want to renew this relationship — we do it in worship!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“When I felt secure, I said, ‘I will never be shaken.’ O Lord, when you favored me, you made my mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed” (Psa. 30:6,7). How easy it is to use superlatives. There have indeed been times in all our lives when we felt life was solid and secure and it would not change. Only you can give such security. It is wonderful to attribute to you the fulfillment of a project, or we could say in the language of the poet the building of a mountain. Truly you are the creative power behind all such accomplishments. But there will come a time when security disappears and mountains are leveled out. But even then you are there! Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

There are many times when I know specifically why you hid your face from me. I have moved into a position where I could not see you through the fog of my own selfishness. At other times when I did not know of a particular circumstance that clouded my vision I knew it was in myself and not ever or at all in yourself. I praise you for the wonderful security I can have in you! I refer to the many, many promises of hope and strength and take hold of your character behind such promises and what a security is mine! Even yesterday I paused in the midst of the busy routine to praise you for fulfilling a present need. How firm is my mountain in you!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Even in the midst of the happiest days of rejoicing there is the present knowledge that all could be altered very drastically very quickly. How is it that we place

so much confidence in what we know will soon pass from this scene? Is it because we have nothing else or no one else in whom to rejoice? Forgive my near-sightedness. Forgive me if my disappointment lasts longer than the realization of your intervention. Beyond an acceptance of your turning your face from this desire or that is the possibility of petulant selfishness — forgive me! Open my eyes to all of the same positions I hold now and will hold throughout eternity!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe;
It will joy and comfort give you;
Take it then where'er you go.
Precious name, O how sweet!
Hope of earth and joy of heav'n;
Precious name, O how sweet!
Hope of earth and joy of heav'n.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁴Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been dumb spoke, and the crowd was amazed. ¹⁵But some of them said, “By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons.” ¹⁶Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven. —Luke 11:14-16, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It would seem that at almost every turn in the text we encounter a demon. I know this is exaggerated but there *are* many references to these evil spirits. In this instance the demon is the reason for this man's inability to speak. My Lord cast out this demon in the

most obvious manner possible. All saw it, all knew it happened — even my Lord's enemies! Why did he do it? He did it "that men might believe he was the Christ the Son of the living God" (John 20:30,31). Men could not deny the miracle but they could misread its purpose — and this is being done today!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Why all the trouble in writing and preserving this beautiful record if it is not sufficient and I yet need "a sign from heaven"? Isn't it a manipulation of my Lord to decide for myself how many signs and just where and when they shall be performed before I will believe? If I already believe then the miracles would be performed for a different reason than the one given by my Lord. What I am trying to say is: "Dear Lord, I believe. I am amazed and confess freely and openly that you are the King the Son of the living God. I believe the record is altogether accurate and complete. I need no other signs." If men will not believe because of the record you have given them they do not believe your record.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Lord can drive the devil out of anyone any time. (2) Thank you nothing Jesus did of the miraculous nature was done in a corner. (3) Thank you for the average man in the crowd — he is willing to believe! (4) Thank you that my Lord left men free to choose Satan's explanation or his. (5) Thank you that the very prince of demons has been vanquished! (6) Thank you my Lord would not be manipulated by men. (7) Thank you Jesus had his own tests for truth which were far superior to those of men.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven." How incongruous! When our Lord had performed one sign after another these people are yet asking for a sign. This is a fatal flaw! When God must be what we want him to be or we will not accept him, he has ceased to be God! We have become our own god. Real faith comes by hearing not seeing. Faith once obtained can be confirmed by the signs. But signs were intended to "follow" faith not precede it. To listen to Jesus is what convinced the twelve — the seventy — the women — and many others. We are glad to stand back in wonder at his supernatural acts — they confirm what we already believe about him, i.e. that he is the Son of the living God!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In these verses I find so much by way of identity with the spirit-world. Teach me in these requests I lift up to you: (1) "Greater is he who is in me than he who is in the world," so said John who knew my Lord as few others (I John 4:4). Do I really believe him? If I do he can deliver me from the evil one. (2) Why do men want to give Satan the advantage? This says something about the proclivities of men — speak to my understanding. (3) What a temptation it is to "call the shots" — forgive us — lead us — change us.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I look at these verses yet once again — reach the well-springs of action in my heart: (1) "Have you noticed that disease NOT sin is the consequence of demon possession?" (2) "The multitudes — i.e. the 'consensus opinion' is usually correct." (3) "There are *always* those who refuse to believe."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Christian Literature*: Crash literature programs in many parts of the world create an immense desire for *any* literature among newly literates. Pray for a greater interest among churches in this ministry. Pray for more and better Christian literature.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
Come and adore Him,
Born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore Him. . .
Christ, the Lord.

Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God,
All glory in the highest;

WEEK EIGHT

—Monday—

You want us happy! You have made more than adequate preparations for our happiness. We enter the closet of prayer to find such joy.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever” (Psa. 30:11,12). It is out of your own personal interest in the happiness of man that such a word could be written. We believe the dancing and happiness on this occasion was the dedication of the temple. But even in this we remember the temple was built according to your directions. Life has much about which we lift our tear-stained faces to you. But in such a short time you can and do turn such sorrow into such joy that we want to dance!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How I want to enter into the reality of these verses! It seems too good to be true that you are interested in all that interests us. David decided you were the one who provided the circumstance for such great joy it could only be expressed in dancing. We can agree with this when we think of the greatness and beauty of the temple (although such was but in anticipation with King David). Could we get this excited in the anticipation of your city four-square, the “eternal tabernacle”? David speaks here of a continual song in his lips — we have more reason to sing than he did. The closing words of this psalm will indeed be a reality — “I will give thanks forever” — but it is not at all necessary to wait for heaven.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It becomes almost ludicrous to speak of dancing for joy over some heavenly blessing. We do not get that excited over such a subject. Dear Lord, it is too bad we do not! What is it that would “clothe me with

joy” — i.e. put joy on as a garment? Would a large amount of money do it? Dear Lord, forgive my carnal attitude and sensual desires! A modern psalmist has said: “I sing for I cannot be silent.” Oh, my Father, I want such a relationship with you! I have enough reasons to thank you forever! I also have good reason to wail and put on sackcloth for my willful selfish rebellious violations of your will in my life. Forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Wonderful birth, to a manger He came,
Made in the likeness of man, to proclaim
God’s boundless love for a world sick with sin,
Pleading with sinners to let Him come in.
Wonderful name He bears,
Wonderful crown he wears,
Wonderful blessings His triumphs afford;
Wonderful Calvary,
Wonderful grace for me,
Wonderful love of my Wonderful Lord!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁷Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. ¹⁸If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim I drive out demons by Beelzebub. ¹⁹Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.” —Luke 11:17-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Even now our Lord “knows our thoughts.” Did Jesus imagine that by offering the explanation he did that

these persons would be persuaded and would acknowledge him as the Messiah? He evidently knew some of them would — some of them would not. His logic was unassailable. Does the devil have a kingdom? He does over those who choose to be ruled by him. Our Lord's kingdom is composed of those who have chosen him as king. To dethrone the king in the heart of one of his citizens is not the desire of the king. Does the oldest son overpower the father in a household and throw him out into the street? In the words of our Lord such actions are suggested. Satan is not divided against himself!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Praise your wonderful name — *you do drive out devils!* You can and do liberate me from the evil one. I am glad and eager to claim your presence and power over all the works of darkness in my life. I John 3:8 tells me you can and do “destroy all the works of the deceiver.” Colossians 2:15 tells me you have disarmed the power and authority of Satan at the cross. Praise your name. Hebrews 2:14,15 tells me you have destroyed him (Satan) who holds the power of death — and gave me freedom from fear! John 12:31 and 16:11 tell me you have cast out of my life the ruler of this world (Satan) and have condemned him to hell! James 4:7 tells me as I draw near to you Satan has left. Praise your name!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the One who knows all my thoughts — and yet loves me and wants me. (2) Thank you that such omniscience moves me to repentance. (3) Thank you that I can let Jesus be Lord in my heart and be whole. (4) Thank you that for me in my house Jesus will be king. (5) Thank you the name of “Beelzebub” was chosen for Satan — “Lord of the flies”, how appropriate! (6) Thank you for the Holy Spirit here referred to as “the finger of God.” (7) Thank you for the rule of God that comes each time Jesus is made Lord.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.” This is a most interesting description of the Holy Spirit. He is so described as if to tell us that wherever Jesus wanted to touch someone he would use the Holy Spirit as we would use our hand. In the very personalized meeting of need he would use his finger. There are so many gestures we can associate with the finger — was some gesture used by our Lord in driving out this demon? We do not know. One thing we do know is the man was delivered from the oppression of evil. The rule of God in the person of Jesus

had come into the experience of this man. It is a real source of comfort to know both the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have such a touching personal interest in each of us.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How vastly important it is to allow you to rule from the throne of our hearts! If we do not we know who will rule — this is no vacuum in your world! I lift up these requests for your rule: (1) Satan is never confused about his purpose — neither are you. I am face to face with a choice — just for today — *I choose Jesus!* Not in word but in truth! Help me — strengthen me by your Spirit in the inward man (Ephesians 3:16). (2) *There is liberation from Satan!* I claim your priority in my thoughts! Give me the freedom of your Son.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Your Son has come to destroy the works of the enemy of our lives. I listen just now for the application of your word to my conscience: (1) “Read again the references you made earlier — they are not only true — they are *personal!*” (2) “I can touch you — but NOT if you do not want to be touched.” (3) “You are so much in need it grieves me that you do not want my liberating touch.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Christian Tent-makers:* Hundreds of thousands of Western, Middle Eastern, Asian and African Christians have sought education opportunities or employment. Most have done it for personal reasons. Pray that they may be stirred to witness to non-Christians.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!

WEEK EIGHT

—Tuesday—

You are our hiding place — it is stocked with bounties of your love for us. We enter just now and know we shall be filled and satisfied.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me” (Psa. 31:1,2). There are several qualities of yourself to which we have made reference — and for which we have praised you before — we never tire of repeating them: (1) *“In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge.”* Indeed I have! I find no other hiding place so full of comfort and safety. I do not hide in you only to escape — but because I find you so very interesting and full of pleasant surprises. (2) In you I find One who will never embarrass me. You do point out so clearly my need of improvement — but not in a manner that discourages me.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I almost forget that my praise is intended at first to be all that you are to all men — or at least what you could be if all men would look to you. (3) *“Deliver me in your righteousness”* — am I satisfied that your decision as to when and how I shall be delivered is right? How good it is to commit my life into your hands. When it is time to be delivered from a circumstance you will do it. Until then I can yet rejoice you are at work in developing in me the qualities you want. (4) You are listening — there are times when I want to be assured you hear me by some *“rescue”* on your part. This has happened to me — thank you — praise for your mercy.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I have been put to shame — but it was not of your will — but of my willful rejection of your goodness. I

have been caught out in the field of battle and shut down. All the while I could have been in my refuge. Forgive me. I have chafed and resisted and pouted like a spoiled child when all the while you had not said or indicated in any way that now was the time to be relieved of this care or that responsibility — forgive me. Even when you have sent a rescue squad of angels and saved me from an overbearing temptation I have not really thanked you like I should. It is good to review my failures as well as your blessings. In both I can turn my heart again to you!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus is all the world to me,
My life, my joy, my all;
He is my strength from day to day —
Without Him I would fall.
When I am sad to Him I go;
No other one can cheer me so;
When I am sad He makes me glad:
He's my Friend.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²¹*“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. ²²But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.*

²³*“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.*

²⁴*“When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ ²⁵When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶Then it goes and takes seven other spirits*

more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.” —*Luke 11:21-26, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a powerful section of scripture are these few verses. I could never probe their depth and meaning — but I surely do want to try! My dear Lord is “the stronger man.” Satan *is* a strong man — stronger than any man — and all men apart from the stronger man. I wonder just what armor it is in which Satan trusts? It must be “the lust of the flesh — the lust of the eyes — and the pride of life.” Praise your name — your Son can take the power away from such desires. What are the spoils of the evil one my Lord divides up among us? Surely this must be what Paul meant when he said “we are more than conquerors” — we not only overcome him — we divide up his spoils.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Perhaps “the spoils” are the right use of the desires of the flesh and of the eyes — the right use of a search for status. Dear Lord, I want to move in with you and live with you every moment of every day! I want to bring everything in my nature under your control — only in this way can I be whole. I realize — at least to some extent that any other attitude is a fragmentation of my personality. No doubt my Lord was speaking of the Hebrew nation in his comment about the empty house. They were cleansed from idolatry but seven other evils worse than idolatry — along with a return of idolatry have moved in. Such an example has great meaning to me — a great warning to me!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the blunt statement that Satan has some people safe under his control. (2) Thank you for the equally clear word that our Lord can and does deliver such persons. (3) Thank you I can apply such a deliverance to my own personal needs — right now. (4) Thank you there is no neutrality with Jesus. (5) Thank you I can gather all I have and give it to him to make me whole. (6) Thank you for the reality of the spirit-world here described by my Lord. (7) Thank you that Jesus did not tell this parable to discourage us — but to encourage all we can be delivered from Satan’s power.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.*” If he was lost at first and demon possessed how could his condition now be worse? Because now

he knows what it means to be delivered. Because now he has much more demonic influence in his life than he had in the previous experience. Our Lord was speaking in this veiled form about the Jewish nation that had once been delivered from idolatry. The bondage in Assyria and Babylonia was a part of their price. Having been returned to their land they were now much worse in yielding to satanic influence than they ever were in their past history. What a lesson is in this for each of us! Let’s fill our lives up with his presence and service!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Man’s capacity to move from the sublime to the ridiculous is almost unbelievable! Satan is looking for opportunities and this is surely one of them. A titanic battle of the ages rages and man wonders if pink lemonade is really better than the ordinary kind! I *refuse* to be drugged! I lift up these requests to you: (1) Dear Lord, please be the ruler of this house. (2) My Father, I am but a child — lead me gently home. (3) Please, please touch me and *make me whole*. (4) Fill up my life with *your interests!*

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause long before you — speak to me! (1) “You can influence *many many* for me — believe in *my potential in you*.” (2) “To be passive is to be a captive — guess who the captor is.” (3) “Demons are real — far more real than what you see and know.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Outreach to Cultists: Jehovah’s Witnesses* have grown from 916,000 members in 1960 to 2,842,000 in 1984. *The Mormons* have similarly grown from 1,408,000 adherents in 1960 to 5,300,000 in 1985. Hindu-Buddhist cults, Unification Church (Moonies) and Scientology have also grown.

Praise God for many thousands who have left such cults and found salvation in Christ. Many more are still bound by these delusions.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

My Lord has garments so wondrous fine,
And myrrh their texture fills;
Its fragrance reached to this heart of mine,
With joy my being thrills.

WEEK EIGHT

—Wednesday—

What a blessing to just be quiet in your presence. Here I am safe. I seek your provisions for a meek and quiet spirit throughout this day.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“In the shelter of your presence you hide them from the intrigues of men; in your dwelling you keep them safe from the strife of tongues” (Psa. 31:20). Bless the Lord, O my soul — all that is within me bless his holy name! How pleasant it is to take shelter in your presence! You have given to all men the privilege of finding protection and rest in your presence. It is good and comfortable to draw away from all the world and lift my whole self up to you in adoration. I claim such a shelter even today from whatever intrigues men might have against me. In your refuge — which for all your children today is the death of your Son — you keep me safe from the strife of tongues! How much we all need this!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

“For those who fear you” are the promises above made. I do want to acknowledge my wonder and amazement as I contemplate your power and love. I am indeed afraid as I consider the retribution described by your Son as “everlasting punishment.” In the very same context I find a beautiful *shelter* and *dwelling place*! From how much intrigue that never reached my ears or touched my life have I already been saved by your mercy? From how much strife of tongues have I escaped by seeking your presence as a dwelling place? I want to praise you for such unseen and unknown blessings from your hand!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I have been caught in the intrigues of men. Surely most of the TV programs are prepared by such men. The newspaper and many magazines are but a report of such intrigue. How is it I have time for such in-

trigue, but I forget your presence? Forgive me. It is so easy to be drawn into the “strife of tongues”! How much conversation just yesterday was negative and hurtful for those who were being criticized and to those who were doing it? Dear Lord, forgive me for my part in it. In the midst of such a meeting awaken me to the indwelling of your Self in the presence of the Holy Spirit! Forgive me — keep my mouth shut and my heart open to you.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁷As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.”

²⁸He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” —Luke 11:27,28, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How we wish we knew this unnamed woman and could ask her why she called out this word. She was listening — how well did she hear? Surely she heard more and better than many who were also present that day. It would seem from our Lord’s reply that she was placing too much emphasis upon physical relationships. Mary was such a wonderful person it would have been easy for our Lord to agree with this expression of praise (for him and his mother). We would probably have thanked this unnamed woman and passed on. *But not our Lord! He knew her*

motives — as he does with all of us.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Was not Mary one who heard the word of the Lord and obeyed it? Indeed she was! But the point made is that blessedness is not in proximity with Jesus but with what you have said. This gives us acceptableness with Jesus or yourself! There were many citizens of the nation of Israel who had heard the word of God and had not obeyed it. They were the same people that kept the tombs of the prophets and the kings. These same people honored the past but were deaf to the present. There is such a crucial message in this for me! Hearing is not obeying — honor and respect are not obedience. Approval and acceptance with you and my Lord come from acting upon what you have said. I want to do it today!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for Luke's word about just one woman — "thou Lord seest me." (2) Thank you for any response of praise to our Lord. (3) Thank you Jesus was totally impervious to human flattery. (4) Thank you that Jesus had such a devoted mother. (5) Thank you that we can hear you every day we live. (6) Thank you there is no way to ignore the application of your word to our hearts. (7) Thank you for the desire to obey you. (8) Thank you for the promise of blessedness accompanying our obedience.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." Dear Lord, how I want to be in that company! What word from yourself could those of that day hear? Was Jesus referring to the O.T. scriptures? Or was he referring to the words he spoke? The latter is much more in context. There *is* something to obey in all he says. The blessing comes as a direct result of obedience. Do we then earn anything by thus obeying him? We do for ourselves — God's blessing. But do we make ourselves more acceptable to him? The hearing and obeying are for our benefit. We remain what we will always be in his sight — poor fallible human beings whom you love with an everlasting love. Praise your name!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

This is one interesting text! How *much* there is in these few words for all of us. I lift them up to you in a desire to know more: (1) How long have I been with Jesus? It is now over 50 years! How have I truly heard your word? It is to be answered in how well I

have obeyed it. Help me to list a few areas where you have spoken and my response. (2) You see *me* in the crowd — use me dear Lord — make we willing to go.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

These are most terse, pregnant words — open my heart to receive them — communicate your desires to my conscience! (1) "Please believe *me* about the vast importance of motherhood — NOT what you read in some areas of 'experts.'" (2) "There *is* something to obey in *all* I say — do not raise to importance what I have not placed there." (3) "Rejoice in what you have obeyed."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Development Ministries*: Christian workers have gained credibility for the gospel, and economic viability for local churches, through development programs. In many poverty-stricken areas preaching the gospel without meeting the felt needs of the community would be counterproductive. Dealing with the root causes of famine, disease and economic deprivation is not as glamorous as emergency aid in a major crisis or disaster, but far more effective.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,
When sunlight through darkness
and shadow is breaking,
That Jesus will come in the fulness of glory,
To receive from the world His own.
O Lord Jesus, how long, how long
Ere we shout the glad song,
Christ returneth! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Amen, Hallelujah! Amen.

It may be at midday, it may be at twilight,
It may be, perchance, that the blackness of midnight
Will burst into light in the blaze of His glory,
When Jesus receives His own.

WEEK EIGHT

—Thursday—

We are those “whose transgressions are forgiven” — whose “sins are covered.” We enter the place of prayer with this joy to worship you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him, and in whose spirit is no deceit” (Psa. 32:1,2). I realize these beautiful verses appear again in the New Testament. I want to shout them from the housetop of the world! All men need to hear them. All men need to enjoy their liberating promise! Your forgiveness includes total and absolute forgetfulness; so to be forgiven of our transgressions against you is to be back in complete acceptance and fellowship. You are a covering for our sins, and not for our sins only but for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2). Blessed be your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am *so* glad that you keep a very short account of my sins! Each day — and several times during the day I have a new, fresh start with you! What a joy to know that there is therefore now no record against me in your presence! How does all this relate to deceit in my heart? Is this another way of saying your goodness leads me to repentance? It is surely true! But it also teaches me that I cannot justify and rationalize my sin. My many words of reasoning do not impress you. My facade of apology is torn away. It is wonderfully good to stand before you clean and pure and welcome!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

This stanza in this psalm is a confession. I want to relate to it in a personal context. I have a real struggle over when I am accepting your grace and mercy and when I am taking advantage of it. I do not at all want

to continue in sin *so* grace might abound. At the same time I do count so heavily upon your goodness. I know that the record of my conduct spells out the difference. I do believe I am improving in some areas of my living. No credit to me except my response to your love — to your mercies. Forgive me for in any way deceiving myself (I can not deceive you). I want to express my joy and freedom as I claim the promises of these verses!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There's pow'r in the blood, pow'r in the blood;
Would you o'er evil a victory win?
There's wonderful pow'r in the blood.
There is pow'r, pow'r,
Wonderworking pow'r in the blood of the Lamb;
There is pow'r, pow'r,
Wonderworking pow'r
In the precious blood of the Lamb.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁹As the crowds increased, Jesus said, “This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here. ³²The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. —Luke 11:29-32, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Once again I want to gather on the front row of the crowd. I hear him say to me — and to my generation: “You are your own god — you do not want me.” The generation of my Lord’s day was attempting to dictate the terms on which they would agree that he was the Messiah — he must do certain signs in just the way they specified or they would not believe. Never mind that such signs were not promised in your word — but only in the human traditions of men. We have the same problem today. How glad I am to accept my Lord’s deity — and most especially “the sign of Jonah.” Even the triumphant resurrection!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I hope I represented at least some segment of men in the above expression of worship. The whole point you are making in this section of scripture is that man should submit his reasoning to yours. “*Change your mind as did the Ninevites; change your mind as did the Queen of the South; accept my reasoning, not your own.*” Dear Lord, as much as in me is I am ready to do just this! Life after death and a conscious appearance before judgment is plainly inferred in the words of my Lord — how I do want to *hear* them! What a great preacher was Jonah! What a greater preacher is Jesus my Lord! What a great king was Solomon. What a greater king is Jesus!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus did not at all hesitate to speak out to meet needs anywhere — anytime. (2) Thank you my Lord gives us the real purpose of signs. (3) Thank you for the wonderful account of the reluctant prophet Jonah. (4) Thank you for the miracle superior to the great fish and Jonah. (5) Thank you for the wisdom of my Lord, superior to that of Solomon. (6) Thank you for the clear promise that there will be a day of eternal equity. (7) Thank you for the One who is greater than all!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*Now one greater than Jonah is here.*” In what way was Jesus greater than Jonah? Jonah really made an impression on the Ninevites! Did they know of his miraculous deliverance from the great fish? His appearance might have been affected by the gastric juices of the sea-monster. At least he spoke in such a manner that men listened. His message of repentance was heeded. The appearance of our Lord accompanied as he was by his miracles said something — the quality of his teaching could not be ignored by those who had ears. His message was one of repentance. The promise of a destruction far worse than the fall

of Nineveh was behind our Saviour’s message. In these ways at least a greater than Jonah had come.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I welcome all these references to conservative religious people — such as those with whom my Lord associated — they speak so well to my needs. I lift up these requests: (1) It is one relaxing intellectual/emotional experience to “lean not upon my own understanding” — but to read and understand yours! Renew my commitment to this concept. (2) Should you call me today to give an account of my stewardship I want to be ready — but I need a very large portion of your grace to carry me through!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Jonah — the Queen of Sheba! These are most interesting examples placed before me by my Lord — speak to me through them: (1) “Do you marvel like the Ninevites did? I.e. at the words of my Son — not if you do not repent.” (2) “Where is your sense of overwhelming awe that filled the heart of the Queen from the South?”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *International Conferences*: The ease and speed of international travel has made possible a growing number of world and regional evangelical conferences. Some of these have been pivotal for a great mobilization of believers for world evangelization. These conferences can be expensive luxuries with little long-term impact, or they can be vital catalysts for the advancement of the cause of Christ.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O spread the tidings ’round wherever man is found,
Wherever human hearts and human woes abound;
Let ev’ry Christian tongue proclaim the joyful sound:
The Comforter has come!

The long, long night is past,
The morning breaks at last,
And hushed the dreadful wail and fury of the blast,
As o’er the golden hills the day advances fast!
The Comforter has come!

WEEK EIGHT

—Friday—

Singing to you seems so appropriate and natural. We enter into this time of worship for that blessed purpose.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance” (Psa. 32:6,7). Bless your holy name — if you cannot be found I know who has moved. What David is saying is that when our hearts are lifted up to you we should express them in prayer. We are not always as ready to pray as at other times. When we are moved to praise or petition we should express it. If we do we will prepare ourselves for the flood waters that inevitably come to every life. Thank you for this blessed insight of yourself!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The psalmist is not speaking of a physical “hiding place” (although we are glad to acknowledge such deliverance for his children). David tells us of the escape of the spirit. It is in the temple of the spirit we find peace and rest. In the center of the storm there can be a holy quietness. Praise your name for such a provision! It is with inward protection our Lord has a particular interest. Much of my spirit’s protection is found in the songs of deliverance. To sing *“Faith Is the Victory”* is to realize faith’s victory. To lift my voice in the beautiful words of *“Wonderful Grace of Jesus”* is to enter into the enjoyment of your grace! Thank you for your constant deliverance!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The psalmist said: “. . . let everyone *who is godly* pray to you” i.e. everyone who has their mind upon you. I must confess that there are too many times

when I do not feel like praying to you because my mind has been led away from your presence. Forgive me — I am the loser. You are not found in my consciousness therefore no prayer ascends from my heart or lips — how sad! Forgive me. My spirit has been drowned in the flood waters of this world. But it is only because you were not found in the up-front experiences of my life. Forgive me. I am glad the waters do not always prevail — I am glad for the songs of deliverance that make many days a time of victory. Dear Lord, increase them!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
Through eternal ages let His praises ring;
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I’m standing on the promises of God.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³³“No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light.

³⁴Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness.

³⁵See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. ³⁶Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you.”

—Luke 11:33-36, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My Lord was letting the light of his deity shine. It was time to put his light on a stand so the whole house could be flooded with light. The house was the Jewish nation. My Lord set himself in a conspicuous place so they could see his light. But there is another lamp or light. It is the inner light or eye of the heart. Instead of seeing the deity of our Lord they turned their vision to the lies of the Pharisees and let in the darkness of their accusation: "He drives out demons by Beelzebub." Then the whole body was full of darkness. How tremendously important is our willingness to see him.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How I do want my whole body to be "full of light." I want to focus the eyes of my heart wholly upon him! Dear Lord, I want you to fill all my vision. Somehow may I like the three on the mount see no one but "Jesus only." I want such light to be intensely practical. Who will direct my eating today? Will I look to Jesus or the lusts of the flesh? Who will control my words in a discussion — my own self interests or the interests of my Lord? Do I really want my whole body full of his light? Am I going to let in the darkness of some TV programs? Jesus yet lives and speaks to me just now!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the light of all my world, even my Lord. (2) Thank you I can put him in the center of my house or heart. (3) Thank you he has more than earned such a prominent place in every heart. (4) Thank you I now know what it is that gives light to the whole inner man — even my willingness to see him. (5) Thank you that my whole heart can be full of light. (6) Thank you for the warning of my Lord against the power of darkness. (7) Thank you again for the light of life even Jesus!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you." "The whole body" represents the whole person. What a beautiful, powerful thought: no part of my inner life need be in darkness. The key to such illumination is "the eyes" — "when your eyes are good your whole body also is full of light." Of course Jesus is speaking of the concentration of interest. When I focus all my attention on him he lights up all else. How important it is for me to give my whole attention to his word each day. All I know or will ever know is found in the pages of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. How I do want to meditate upon each word — and most of all *The Word*

behind the words.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What an opportunity is mine! My whole inner person can be full of "the light of life" — I want it to happen! I lift up these requests: (1) Show me a lamp stand for the light you have already given me. (2) Show me also the "cellars" and "peck-measure baskets" of the evil one. (3) Show me anew the deity and love — the compassion — the mercy — the forgiveness of your Son. In these qualities there is light — peace — hope. (4) My interests are so fragmented! Please bring them together in a focus on your Son!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause to hear as if I had never heard before: (1) "'Light' — 'darkness' — 'lamp' — 'eye' — these all describe life — please think — commit — receive my life." (2) "Others are watching you — angels desire what you have — demons know who I am — let your light shine!"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Medical Missionary Work*: This ministry has been one of the major Christian ministries on the mission field for many years. The need impelled the pioneer missionaries to expend much labor and money in developing clinics, hospitals, leprosaria, etc. This ministry needs prayer in these days of change.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Give me the Bible, star of gladness gleaming,
To cheer the wand'rer lone and tempest-tossed;
No storm can hide that radiance peaceful beaming,
Since Jesus came to seek and save the lost.
Give me the Bible, Holy message shining;
Thy light shall guide me in the narrow way;
Precept and promise, law and love combining,
Till night shall vanish in eternal day.

Give me the Bible, when my heart is broken,
When sin and grief have filled my soul with fear;
Give me the precious words by Jesus spoken,
Hold up faith's lamp to show my Savior near.

WEEK EIGHT

—Saturday—

Just now we report to headquarters — not of one nation but of all nations. We want our orders — instructions — help for today. We confidently expect to receive it!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations” (Psa. 33:10,11). What an amazing statement! You take a personal interest in the affairs of nations. You need not watch the international news on TV — you make it! Praise your name! It is an amazement to me that the world has not long ago blown itself up. Now I know why — you have foiled their plans. The purposes of the “have nots” would be to overpower those who have. Somehow such plans have been so far thwarted. How wonderfully good you have been to all men for so many generations! Thank you!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

There is really no need for me to ask what your plans are. You have unfolded your plan in your word from Genesis to Revelation. You are always on time and never late. Since you are total love such plans reflect your character. In my generation — which is quickly passing from this earthly scene — your plans for our nation — and every nation have stood firm. Could we review the history of America in the past fifty years and see your hand of love and mercy upon us? *Indeed we can!* In my own life such is true over and over again. How soon all of us are hastening into your eternal presence only you know. For one it can not be too soon — “Even so come Lord Jesus!”

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The fear of the unknown and the unexpected can take hold of any one of us. Since I know One to whom *nothing* — utterly *nothing* is unknown nor unex-

pected, I can rest my whole life in him. “Perfect love casts out fear.” It is not my perfect love — because I do not have it. It is your perfect love for this whole world — backed with a knowledge of your omnipotence that casts out all my fear! Praise your name! My confession is that too often I have been afraid. Just now I rest my weary soul (life) in you. I have read of your plans for me in your word; I read just here that such plans “stand firm forever.” Praise your name!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go,
Anywhere he leads me in this world below;
Anywhere without Him dearest joys would fade;
Anywhere with Jesus I am not afraid.
Anywhere, anywhere!
Fear I cannot know!
Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁷When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. ³⁸But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised. ³⁹Then the Lord said to him, “Now, then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹But give what is inside to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.” —*Luke 11:37-41, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I do wonder just why this man wanted to eat with

Jesus. He was hardly prepared for the "food for thought" Jesus was going to give him! Was our Lord aware of the basin of water for washing? Did he ignore it on purpose? Jesus went directly to the table with no washing. Wasn't this a breach of etiquette? Not when our Lord knew the motive behind the washing! It should be noticed that the Pharisee said nothing about Jesus' failure to wash. Jesus read his mind and motive. What he saw and read was not good. How I would like to hear the tone of voice as Jesus said: "*you are full of greed and wickedness.*" I want to adopt such a tone of voice.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

My Lord is saying something wonderfully powerful to me. We are your cup or dish — you have made us outside *and* inside. I am so glad you can cleanse me as a whole person. The defilement my Lord saw inside the Pharisee was *greed*. Am I defiled by this sin? What a pious Pharisaic question! Dear Lord, forgive me — I can only ask: "to what extent am I greedy?" To the extent I give to those in need I am greedy or not greedy — isn't this the obvious meaning of my Lord's words? Oh my soul! Wake up! It is true! What other wickedness is in me? Dear Lord, wash me and everything will be clean!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the interest my Lord arouses even in those who do not like him. (2) Thank you for the several times my Lord used the meal as a place of communication. (3) Thank you that Jesus was not intimidated by religious form or authority. (4) Thank you that even now Jesus reads my thoughts and interests. (5) Thank you that I can escape the name "fool" used by my Lord — "Wash me and I shall be clean." (6) Thank you that just for today I can give and be clean. (7) Thank you that there is here a clear word about the benefit of giving to the poor.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... give what is inside the dish (or what you have) to the poor, and everything will be clean for you." This was the particular problem of the Pharisees so our Lord could speak in this specific manner to them. Greed and selfishness dominated their lives. How interesting it is to remember how religious these men were yet how utterly selfish! It should say much to us. Our Lord must have had great concern for these people to speak as plainly to them as he did. We are sure the attitude he had as he spoke these words did much to reach the hearts of those who listened. Dear Lord, reach our hearts, we as a people are full of greed and wickedness and in need of your rebuke!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As your cup I lift up these petitions for my cleansing: (1) How greedy am I? I *do* want to know — in this day make it known to me — or tomorrow — but I would like to know. (2) Giving what is within out of love to meet a need is true cleansing! I give — increase my amount and opportunities. (3) Who are the "foolish" ones in my association? Open my heart and my eyes to see. (4) I repeat what I said earlier: "Reach our hearts, we as a people are full of greed and wickedness — and in need of your rebuke."

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I do want to be "as much as in me is" honest with myself. I cannot be dishonest with you and you not know it — speak to me: "I have made you — created all your desires — and I can enable you to both *will and do* — trust me."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *The evangelizing and discipling of medical workers*. Because more people pass through the hospitals of the world than through its churches, the *International Hospital Christian Fellowship* seeks to win for Christ and train medical personnel to share their faith with those whom they serve medically

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of Life;
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of Life.
Words of life and beauty,
Teach me faith and duty;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of Life;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of Life.

Christ, the blessed One, gives to all,
Wonderful words of Life;
Sinner, list to the loving call,
Wonderful words of Life.
All so freely given,
Wooing us to heaven;

WEEK NINE

—Sunday—

We pause before you and attempt to involve our whole being in worship. Our reasonable response to your goodness is rejoicing and gladness — help us.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation. My whole being will exclaim, ‘Who is like you, O Lord? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them’ ” (Psa. 35:9,10). The entire person is full of joy in contemplation of your interest in our needs! It is right — it is good that we should lift up our whole being to you in praise! The word “delight” is more precise: there is a tingling sensation of wonder and happiness. The response of little children on Christmas morning should be ours as we consider our salvation.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I am glad to say with no hesitancy: “my soul (my entire person) will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation.” It is my privilege and my constant desire to praise you and express my adoration before your throne of grace. There is nothing at all in life I need more than worship before you. What a superlative is this expression: “My whole being will exclaim, ‘Who is like you, O Lord?’ ” And yet it is but a natural response to the One who has given us all things. How many multiplied thousands of times have these words been fulfilled: “You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them”? Praise your name! I believe it is happening right now!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Somehow, “the early dew of the morning is often gone at noon” i.e. as related to my rejoicing in your presence and goodness. I am in a constant search for a way to transfer this blessed time of rejoicing to all

the hours of the day. I do believe my heart is conditioned to respond in praise much more often because of this time with you than it would without this time. Yet, I do confess my miserable failures. (I think now of just yesterday.) Forgive me! Since you have given me your clear promise in verse ten that you will “deliver the poor from those too strong for them,” I do indeed now ask for your rescue.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I need The ev’ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev’ry hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior:
I come to Thee!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴²“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

⁴³“Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.

⁴⁴“Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it.”
—Luke 11:42-44, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How could Jesus speak so pointedly to this Pharisee

without insulting him? He couldn't! We do not have the response of the Pharisee — we do wonder why. Perhaps he was like many of the present day garden variety: it related to everyone but himself. Dear Lord, as I write these words — I want to write them on my own heart.

It is easy enough to relate the word “justice” as given in the context here. It refers to fair and equal treatment among men. But what is meant by “the love of God”? I believe our Lord meant the warm hearted love for you that remained with these men throughout the day and permeated all their relationships. Why did these men lack such an obvious application of all they believed? My Lord is about to tell them!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Pride is the answer! The praise and approval of men was more important to them than your approval. Men were much nearer and much more impressive. How much does it mean to me to be thought of as “a big man in the brotherhood”? Honestly now, answer the question! Pride in self and position can only be lost when such desire is transferred to you and what you offer to me. Only when my pride is in who you are and in the privilege and values of salvation can I escape the trap of Bigshotism! What a shocking statement is contained in verse 44! My Lord says that some men are like graves full of awful corruption and we do not even know it! Dear Lord, is it I? Raise me from the dead! Deliver me!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for my Lord's strong words of “woe” — I am so dull of hearing I *must* hear him! (2) Thank you Jesus plainly said tithing was a good thing — and could be a meaningless thing — all in one breath. (3) Thank you for telling me all over again of the importance of justice. (4) Thank you my love for you can be so clearly defined that men can notice it. (5) Thank you for the rebuke of pride in the life of religious people. (6) Thank you Jesus spelled out just where pride was found — in position and recognition. (7) Thank you for the shocking warning of the hidden corruption of the heart.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it.” Jesus is going to refer to these men as whitewashed tombs full of dead men's bones and all kind of corruption. Essentially he is saying the danger of these men — which is their moral corruption — is hidden from the eyes of men. How much horrible corruption is covered over by a pious appearance only you can know. Are these words asking for a resurrection from the dead? We would like

to believe they are. At least there is no salvation apart from his power to raise men who are dead in trespasses and sins!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have waited a long time to evaluate the application of these verses to my life. I lift these requests to you out of my need: (1) I am indeed a Pharisee in my theological stance — i.e. I accept the plain statements of your word as true! Am I also a Pharisee in my attitude, i.e. a legalist? If I am give me the courage to repent! (2) If I do not give as much money to you with your Son as these Pharisees gave without him — where am I in your value system? (3) I do so *want* to reflect *your love* in my daily conduct — help me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In a more personal manner than at almost any other time you are addressing my conscience — I want to tune in: (1) “I am not at all impressed by what you do — I am greatly impressed in *who you are.*” (2) “I love you — I can enable you — I want you — trust me.” (3) “Love is *doing* — and then *feeling.*”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Missionary Aviation*: What an essential means for evangelism and church growth the Christian “air force” has become! In many areas access is difficult by any other means. There are about 476 aircraft in 48 lands that are used to transport workers, supplies, patients and aid. Without this service, ministries would be slowed or stopped.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

We have heard the joyful sound:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Spread the tidings all around:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Bear the news to ev'ry land,
Climb the steeps and cross the waves;
Onward! 'tis our Lord's command:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Waft it on the rolling tide:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Tell to sinners far and wide:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Sing, ye islands of the sea;
Echo back, ye ocean caves;
Earth shall keep her jubilee:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

WEEK NINE

—Monday—

It is for your love — your faithfulness, your righteousness we enter this time of worship to praise you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O Lord, you preserve both man and beast” (Psa. 36:5,6). Praise and adoration can easily arise to you for your love. In what sense does it reach to the heavens? The angels share in such love. They can tell us so much more about your expression of love than we poor mortals can. Your faithfulness is seen in the skies — the seasons of the year — day and night are all a testimony to your faithfulness.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The consistency of your conduct is like the mighty mountains. The record of all your righteous acts stands like a backdrop of a gigantic mountain! Blessed be your name forever! The record of decisions made by you on behalf of man is like a great deep body of water. There are no impurities; your perfect justice flows like this clear water. It is good to be reminded of these beautiful qualities of yourself! They are: (1) *Love* as high as the heavens. (2) *Faithfulness* to the skies. (3) *Righteousness* like a mountain. (4) *Justice* like the deep water. (5) *Preservation* of both man and animals.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There is no difficulty confessing my deep need of you. May my appreciation of your love increase yet more and more — even as the angels of heaven love you and serve you. How I do need to appreciate your faithfulness to all generations. I cannot at all stand before the white light of your total righteousness — I

must clothe myself with the crimson robe of your Son’s righteousness. If you were to give me justice there would be no hope. But you have chosen out of love and mercy to preserve my life in your eternal presence. Blessed be your name forever.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁵One of the experts in the law answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also.”

⁴⁶Jesus replied, “And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.

⁴⁷“Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them.

⁴⁸So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs.” —Luke 11:45-48, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a shock was due these “experts in the law”! Did this unusual teacher of the law imagine Jesus

would modify his own comment because of the position of these men? Did this expert think our Lord would apologize for his words? If he thought any one of these things he was wrong. Being insulted was not nearly as important as repentance. It would appear that my Lord had very little if any confidence in the possible repentance of such persons. The law regulation bound upon the people by these experts was a totally unnecessary burden. Of what real honor is a tomb if its occupant was hated by the builder? Until repentance takes place in the generations no good will come.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Lord, if I am any kind of expert in your law I want your word to have due course in me. If I am insulted by your word — i.e. your words illumine the areas of my need — help me not to justify myself — but to repent! It is easy to look back upon “the good ol’ days” and declare we are the sons of the prophets. Until we honor you we cannot honor anyone. How easy it is to forget the sins of our forefathers and ignore our own. Dear Lord, I do want to change! I am glad for the true memorial you have left for us. A remembrance of a sacrifice of love and truth.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the unnamed law expert who spoke for all who were guilty. (2) Thank you for sorrow that can lead to true repentance. (3) Thank you my Lord was courageous enough to identify personal need. (4) Thank you that neither the message of the prophets nor the guilt of those who stoned them changed from one generation to another. (5) Thank you for the privilege of opening our hearts to receive your word in meekness. (6) Thank you that Jesus cares enough to tell us of our sins. (7) Thank you that none of us need stay where we are!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... they killed the prophets and you build their tombs.” Jesus is saying “your fathers killed the prophets and you in utter hypocrisy seek to honor them.” If the prophets were alive in Jesus’ generation these same men who build memorials to them would have killed them. It is one thing to look back upon the brave men of the past, it is quite another matter to live with them and receive God’s message of repentance from them. Is our Lord saying that no tombs should be built for the prophets? At least he is saying — “let someone else build their tombs.” You should register your objection to their murder! The prophets did not need a memorial but someone to speak their message all over again: “Repent!”

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am surprised — even shocked at how exceedingly relevant these words are to me and my generation. I do need prayer just here. (1) I repeat it: “May your word have free course in my heart. If I am insulted — I need to be — I must change or be broken. (2) Wake me up! The “good old days” were neither good nor very old. (3) My heroes all had and have feet of clay — give me Daniel’s vision! (4) At your Son’s table I want to rededicate myself.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I await your words that only can create a sorrow that leads to repentance: (1) “What are you doing with the message of the prophets — not their bodies — their words?” (2) “Who complains for me in the treatment of my servants today?”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: Missionary Navy: A number of missions use ships for a wide variety of Christian ministries. Among these are: (1) Operation Mobilization’s MV Doulos and MV Logos — evangelism, ministry to Christians and literature distribution in ports around the world. (2) YWAM’s MV Anastasis — schools of evangelism, discipleship training, evangelism, a university, and an aid ministry in areas of disaster or need.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Silent Night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

WEEK NINE

—Tuesday—

We want to make this time of worship a time to recount your goodness to us. We hide in the shelter of your wings.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. Continue your love to those who know you, your righteousness to the upright in heart” (Psa. 36:7,10). I do wonder just where and when such words were penned by the psalmist? What incident prompted this outburst of praise for your “unfailing love”? How did the writer identify what happened with your love? I believe I can answer these questions. Not in the long gone and now long forgotten circumstances, but in the fact that “every good and perfect gift comes from above.” Any good circumstance that comes our way comes from you. Something happened that answered a real need and the psalmist looked up to the “Father of lights” and praised him as the giver (James 1:17).

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

It is altogether right in the midst of some fortunate circumstance to pause and praise and thank you for bringing such circumstances our way. How indeed *priceless* is your unfailing love! We could spend much money and never buy what you give without price. I like the variant translation of the second half of verse seven: “Both heavenly beings and men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.” It is a little difficult to imagine ourselves as birds — the point is not that we are birds but we, and the angels of heaven, all have a need for the comfort and protection we see in these small creatures as they snuggle beneath the wings of their mother.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How often has some increase in salary come my way,

and instead of looking up I looked in and said “it was long overdue.” When we found the house in which we live and moved into it for a very reasonable price what did we say? “We looked long enough, at last we found it.” How terribly hurtful is unrequited love! When you are the giver and we fail to recognize it — and even attribute such gifts to our selves — what a sin — *what a terrible sin!* And yet I want to say with David, “Continue in your love” — we will wake up and acknowledge you — our hearts will turn to you. Forgive me dear Lord.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

All my heart to Him I give,
Ever to Him I'll cling,
In His blessed presence live,
Ever His praises sing.
Love so mighty and so true
Merits my soul's best songs;
Faithful, loving service, too,
To Him belongs.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁹“Because of this, God in his wisdom said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.’ ⁵⁰Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, ⁵¹from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all.

⁵²“Woe to you experts of the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who

were entering.”

⁵³When Jesus left there, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, ⁵⁴waiting to catch him in something he might say. — *Luke 11:49-54, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a head-on encounter my Lord had with these men! Jesus looked beyond these men to what God would do in spite of them. Praise your name, this is what you always do! If you cannot do it with those who should have been your means — you will raise up another means — but *it shall be done!* “Prophets and apostles” were the foundation upon which our Lord built his called out ones (Eph. 2:20). Some indeed did they kill (Acts 12:1ff), others they persecuted. But the ONE crime of all crimes, the sin of all sins was the death of “the wisdom of God.” In this was the taking away “the key of knowledge” i.e. in the crucifixion of God’s Son. How incredibly sad all this is!

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Our Lord made such men responsible for “the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary.” “Yes,” he said, “this generation will be held responsible for it all.” Our Lord is saying that the attitudes held by the generation of which he himself was a part epitomized the parent sin of all sins; i.e. *disbelief — stubborn refusal to believe!* Unbelief for lack of evidence is excusable but to be inundated with evidence and yet to refuse to believe is the sin (while committed) for which there is no forgiveness. Indeed it was *the sin* behind the death of all the prophets from Abel to Zechariah.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the infinite patience of yourself in continuing to send prophets and apostles. (2) Thank you for the clear predictive word about the prophets and apostles. (3) Thank you for showing me the sin of disbelief or stubborn illogical rejection — I have been warned and informed. (4) Thank you Jesus considered his own death as valuable as the death of all the prophets before him — *yea, it is even more valuable!* (5) Thank you for the beautiful name “the key of knowledge.” (6) Thank you that in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden” (Col. 2:3). (7) Thank you that no one was ever able to “catch him” in any word or action. Bless his holy sinless name!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.*” The entrance was our Lord — the key was his deity. It was a sin almost

beyond explanation as to why they did not accept his Messiahship — but it was a vicious step nearer hell when they by their influence hindered others who would have accepted were it not for these monstrous stumbling blocks!

How sad! Our Lord offered the door into happiness and fulfillment. Surely what the Saviour offered was much better than what these men had in their empty shell of religious form. It is so easy to look objectively upon such men and forget the same possibility is always with us.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I continue opening my heart to receive what my Lord says to me (what the Holy Spirit says to me). I am moved to ask for your help. (1) I want to cooperate not compete but I have one large struggle knowing the difference — please help me! (2) The apostles are speaking to me — particularly “the apostle to the Gentiles” — I do want to hear him — give me ears to hear. (3) How beautiful to learn a new name for my Lord — “*the wisdom of God!*” — “the key to knowledge” — open my thinking just here. (4) Joy of all joys — Jesus is the *way* — the way! Keep the door open!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

“*Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes . . .*” — I do not want to disbelieve even one word you have said. Speak to my conscience: (1) “Please remember — to many *you* are that ‘*lawyer*’ — that ‘*teacher of the law*’ — are you opening the door for them?” (2) “Men today are as unsuccessful in their stumbling efforts to catch me in what I say — you can trust me and my words.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Christian Radio and Television*: This is potentially one of the most useful aids for world evangelization but, as yet, is inadequately exploited. There were 1,450 Christian radio and TV stations worldwide in 1980 — the number is now larger. The USSR is the major nation for international broadcasting, with 310 hours of broadcasting Communist propaganda daily, but the 893 hours transmitted daily by Christian stations exceeds it by far — though with less transmitting power.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love;
I love to tell the story
Because I know 'tis true;
It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do.

WEEK NINE

—Wednesday—

You are all powerful and all wise. Why should we “fret because of evil men?” We enter this closet to get your perspective.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Psa. 37:1-4). What blessed encouragement is in these verses! All such promises proceed like rays of light from your own Self the whole source of Light! The temporariness of time as related to eternity should remind us that it will not always be this way. For those who trust in the eternal they shall receive an eternal reward.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Good will live — evil will die. If there is any one message in these lovely verses it is this. Trusting in your omnipotence and omniscience we shall continue to do good — i.e. teach your word to all men. Thank you for telling me here that I am to enjoy what good things have come my way. It does not say to ignore the poor — but sadly — “such will we have with us always” — you want me to raise my heart in enjoyment and appreciation for what you have given me! When my delight is your delight then it is easy for you to give me the desires (or delight) of my heart — indeed, you already have done it! At the same time this does not answer the specific needs I have for particular projects in which I am involved. *Yes it does! Look at the promise again!*

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, to listen to the news is to be immediately faced with the temptation to “fret because of evil

men.” To open the pages of some magazines is to view the opulence of evil men and somehow to be tempted to envy them. What I need to do is to ask for a rerun on just fifty years ago. The men and women I see on the screen are almost all gone the way of grass or the flower of the field. There is hardly anything worth less than a fifty year old copy of a popular magazine. Unless as an antique it says nothing because it is dead — past — gone. What has happened to those who during this same period of time trusted in you? They are presently rejoicing in your presence. Dear Lord open my eyes.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Shall we gather at the river,
Where bright angel feet have trod,
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God?
Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river,
That flows by the throne of God.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

12 Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ²There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ³What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear behind closed doors will be proclaimed from the housetops.” —Luke 12:1-3, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Ah, the unnamed and unknown crowd was all named and personally known to you. Indeed you had every hair on their head numbered. Any one of them was worth a million times all the rest of your creation! Yet — it was to his disciples that Jesus spoke privately — personally — secretly. Dear Lord I want to hear and etch upon my heart your words: “*Be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.*” But it is a particular kind of hypocrisy that applies especially to religious people like myself. “The seductive unbelief which appears outwardly to be religious, while hiding inner rebellion and wickedness is the ‘leaven’ Jesus was talking about. Hypocritical self-deception is the most insidious form of evil.” —*The Gospel of Luke*, Paul T. Butler, College Press, 1981, p.258.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Surely I have spoken to my own heart in the above expression. Just here I want to express my praise, thankfulness, confession, intercession, or whatever your word moves me to say to you in my worship. I look with the eyes of my heart at verses two, three and four. In both the positive and negative sense is the powerful promise true. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees was shouted from the housetops when such hypocrisy destroyed their temple and their religious forms. What our Saviour told so very privately to a few disciples in a far off land of long ago has been repeated a million times since and is this very day heralded from the housetops of millions of homes.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the multitudes that were attracted to him. Such can happen again. (2) Thank you that I gladly count myself as one totally interested listener in that crowd. (3) Thank you I can and do open my ears and let him warn me about the hypocrisy of self-deception. (4) Thank you for the eternal principle, “there is *nothing* concealed that will not be disclosed.” (5) Thank you that what was said in the dark ages past by my Lord is even now known. (6) Thank you there will be a day when there will be no pretense, only truth. (7) Thank you that I can even now let him whisper in my heart what he wants me to be and do.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.” How very secretive must have been some of the conversations of the disciples of my Lord. But no more secretive than some even today living in a country whose government is opposed to Christianity. How

beyond belief must have been these words to those who first heard them. And yet today the antennas on the housetops of a million homes tell us that the potential is present. We could let everyone know the glad tidings of great joy — which was intended for all people. We simply lack the urgency. When will we break out of this wall of silence? Dear Lord, help us!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There *is* a battle being waged — it is fierce and personal. There *is* a leaven sown in the hearts of men. Dear Lord, just *how* shall I fight — just *how* shall I protect myself from this leaven? I lift up these requests for your own solution: (1) I hear him say, “I know all about the battle *and* the contagion — what I know will one day be known to all.” (2) There will *indeed* be a day when there is *no* pretense — only truth — establish this beautiful thought in my heart. (3) My righteousness is *not* promoted by the wrath of man — so says the Holy Spirit.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to speak to me: (1) “Today as never before all men could hear — but they must have ears — and I must have someone to speak for me.” (2) “How shall *anyone* hear without a preacher?” (3) “Rejoice in what you hear.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Christian radio*: the only direct means of preaching the gospel in 45 lands, reaching potentially 1,700 million people (one third of mankind), especially Communist and Muslim lands. The message still penetrates the Iron and Bamboo Curtains despite Communist attempt to jam them. Many churches have been planted as a result of this ministry.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

One day when heaven was filled with His praises,
 One day when sin was as black as could be,
 Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin,
 Dwelt among men; my example is He!
 Living, He loved me; dying He saved me;
 Buried, He carried my sins far away;
 Rising, He justified freely forever;
 One day He's coming, O glorious day!

WEEK NINE

—Thursday—

This is the day the Lord has made, we shall rejoice and be glad in it. We shall not have another just like it. We enter into worship with this truth on our hearts.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace” (Psa. 37:10,11). Your eternal nature and plans are back of these beautiful words. A thousand years is as one day — so “a little while” could be how long? Men are forgotten in their own generation — or the next — surely by three generations they are no more. Tracing roots of family lineage has become a popular pastime — many more people cannot be found for everyone who is. I have always loved the beatitude of my Lord — “the meek shall inherit the earth.” Only the meek can appreciate what you have put in this earth and upon this land. Only the disciplined humble attitude yields an inheritance.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How I do need, each short day, to live in the light of eternity. How easy it is to be caught up in the details of the mundane and never look beyond the moment of the day. How I want to lift up my heart in adoration for the wonder of eternal life!

Meekness has never been weakness — it has always been “strength under control” — and yet it is humble strength — quiet strength. I could sit before a flower all day and if I were truly meek could inherit all you have given me in this treasure. Or I could in a few minutes tire of looking — smelling — touching — and lose my meekness and your inheritance. Thank you for that “peace that passes human understanding” which is a by-product of exercising true meekness.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

David was thinking of the pressures of evil that hurt

him in several areas of his life. His life was in danger. He lived in the open field and slept in caves. His family was divided. He was mocked and laughed at by an usurper. Have any of these problems faced me? When I complain because of injustice it does not touch such fundamental areas of life. Dear Lord, forgive my selfish childish complaints — open my eyes to the beauty of the inheritance you have given me. I pause to reflect on the eyes you have given me — without them my appreciation of your earth would be so much less. Was there ever a camera like the one you created? No, no — nor will there be. May I focus on a still life and absorb all the color, form and relationships there are in the rose before me. Forgive me for my stubborn bent toward poverty.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp, and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see:
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Savior divine!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

“I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. ⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. ⁶Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷Indeed, the very hairs of your head are numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. —Luke 12:4-7, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Fear of physical suffering is a very serious and real problem. With sedatives we can endure it — but without such — and there have been multiplied thousands who had no such relief — what would it be? This is a word of encouragement to every Christian martyr who faced the tortures of inhuman treatment from the day such words were spoken to our present time. In what sense are we not to be afraid? We are not to yield to their will in our spirits. We are not to serve them. To yield — to accept — to obey is to obey the devil who will continue such torture in the world and life to come.

I have one hard time relating to the verses that follow to the long inhuman treatment given to millions of men and women by those who do not know them. At times wonderful deliverance comes — but such seems the exception not the rule.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I *must* say, I *will* say that the conditions described here are not the extreme conditions of a concentration camp or the refugee center. We are comparing apples and oranges and have no point of reference. The Jewish persecution of the Christians was bad — but it could not compare with what has followed in the last two thousand years. I *must* also say that the wonderful comforting thought is that regardless of what happens to me you know better than I know myself and I can cast my whole self and problems on you.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that I need not be afraid of physical suffering — I do not want it but I need not fear it. (2) Thank you that it will be my Lord who will say “depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” — not me — or anyone else. (3) Thank you that you have surely increased my holy awe or reverence for yourself. (4) Thank you that you know just the exact number of sparrows — what omniscience! (5) Thank you for telling me you know more about me than the sparrows. I can trust my needs — *all my needs* with you. (6) Thank you for the high value you placed on anyone of us — the price tag is the death of your Son. (7) Thank you that you know what goes on in every market place in all the world when men barter and sell.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell.” This is a reference to God — but it is difficult not to associate “the killing of the body” with him. It refers to a comparison of

what men can do to us i.e. “*kill the body*” and what God can do to us: “*throw you into hell.*” Man has power over the body, God has power over the person in the body. This is indeed one fearsome thought! Just how such words are applied relates to the emotional development of the reader. How important to remember his love and compassion. Most of all that we are saved by grace through faith. A careful continual reading of all you have said in your word is essential to the development of the kind of “fear” recommended by your Son.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have read these words often — *too often* if they do not sink into my heart. I lift these petitions that I might know their reality: (1) Am I honestly afraid of the everlasting punishment of hell? I want to be — help me! (2) Somehow *the physical — the tangible* — are too close — you and the world to come are unrelated to today. Dear Lord — awaken my spirit — shock me into awareness! (3) If you do not save me by unqualified grace I have no hope — I cast myself upon your mercy. (4) Your Son has just told me he takes care of sparrows — and of how much more interested he is in me. I trust his value system.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I *know* he is at work — in these affirmations I cast all my cares upon him. (1) “I will *never leave you!*” (2) “I will never ignore or forget you.” (3) “I know all about your sins — and I forgive them.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Relief and Aid Ministries*: Wars, famines, natural disasters and overpopulation have brought immense suffering to millions of fellow human beings. The vivid portrayal of human suffering on TV screens has stirred many to give generously. Pray that the generous giving by Christians to aid programs will be wisely used.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;
Cursed by the law, and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.
Once for all, O sinner, receive it,
Once for all, O friend, now believe it;
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.

WEEK NINE

—Friday—

We enter your treasure house to count up our riches! We know, as we lift each up, they are your gifts to us.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The days of the blameless are known to the Lord, and their inheritance will endure forever. In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will enjoy plenty” (Psa. 37:18,19). Dear Lord, such words are almost more than I can pronounce with the meaning I can see right on the surface. I am blameless in your sight through the blood and righteousness of my Lord, through no works of my own. How very very much I need to hear again your words: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.” What I need to hear all men need to hear — your grace is for all! All my days are known to you — i.e. every event is your event — every choice is known to you (oh, that it were always your choice). How personal you are to me!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The best part of this blessed verse is the last: “. . . their inheritance will endure forever.” It is not the physical inheritance of the land allotted but an inheritance “incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven” for each of your children. Praise your name! Since all the days of the blameless are known to you and you have provided an everlasting inheritance in the world and life to come we can claim the promises that follow: “In times of disaster we will not wither.” For reasons known to you and not to us you have permitted what we define as a “disaster,” but since you already know all our days and have an eternal inheritance all ready *we will not wither.*

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How is it dear Lord that I *so soon* forget these powerful promises? Why do I complain and question? For-

give me! I am inundated by the value system of this world — and I *do* listen. As to this world’s estimates I would always be withered and would always be suffering from a famine. The outlook of the world is always bad, and sometimes worse. Forgive me for believing these lies. Just for today I want to lift up my whole soul to you in praise, because I am blameless and all my ways are known to you. I have a secure inheritance and you are my surety. The disaster is only on the surface — deep down the water is still. I have a secret store in time of famine!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Joys are flowing like a river,
Since the Comforter has come;
He abides with us forever,
Makes the trusting heart his home.
Blessed quietness, holy quietness,
What assurance in my soul!
On the stormy sea,
He speaks peace to me,
How the billows cease to roll!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁸“I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. ⁹But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God. ¹⁰And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. —Luke 12:8-10, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I shall never be able to read these words often enough

— how *precious* they are to me. I do read them in your presence. My Lord was speaking of the persuasion of the heart based upon testimony and experience. In the whole effort of Jesus to persuade men that you had indeed invaded this planet earth in the Person of your Son he was leading us to spontaneously and gladly confess with our mouths what we have believed in our heart. This was not a one-time confession to be forgotten. The issue is far too great for such an attitude. If after we have considered the evidence we disown you — there is no hope (at least while we are of this persuasion).

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

My name has already been mentioned in heaven! Not once — but several times. So is the obvious meaning of acknowledging his Lordship here: it results in the acknowledgement of sonship up there. Jesus is saying he will be patient — very patient while we make up our mind. But after we have carefully personally evaluated the evidence we conclude he is not the Messiah — he is not the divine Son of God. We have in this decision blasphemed the Holy Spirit because we have rejected the evidence the Holy Spirit because we have rejected the evidence the Holy Spirit presented to us in the life and miracles of our Lord. We might not be aware of the alternate power of the evil one. The Pharisees were and expressed the only option: “You by Beelzebub drive out demons” (Matthew 12:22ff). Know it or not this is what has happened when by careful thought we reject his divinity and authority.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Lord wants public open expression of our faith. (2) Thank you for the hosts of heaven who are intelligent beings who appreciate an expression of faith. (3) Thank you for the clear one-way mandate of my Lord. (4) Thank you that thoughtless expressions of disbelief or unbelief can be forgiven. (5) Thank you for the warning that there does come a time when we have crossed the line of no return. (6) Thank you that as long as we are considering the options we have not crossed the line. (7) Thank you that you above know the real intents of the heart.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.” We can never consider this passage apart from the much fuller account given by Matthew in Matthew 12:22ff. It appears in this text that the Pharisees became examples of persons who have blasphemed the Holy Spirit by attributing the miraculous works of our Lord to Beelzebub. Jesus replied that he did his miracles through the Holy

Spirit so to attribute them to Satan would be speaking against the Holy Spirit. This is a direct denial of the deity of our Lord, but in a way that leaves no recourse. We need to be also reminded that this was a longtime calculated conclusion on the part of the Pharisees.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

This is *the good confession* — not just made once — but made every day in one way or another. I lift up these requests to get it done: (1) Tell me all over again how precious it is to be your son — and to have you own me as such in your family. (2) Your existence and the reality of your presence is often a topic for discussion — give me wisdom and boldness here. (3) Give me patience with unreasonable disbelievers. Deliver me from them.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

This is one time when I am face to face with yourself — the Holy Spirit — Satan — your dear Son. Speak to me: (1) “Review again your reasons for confessing me as your King.” (2) “Remember, love is a choice.” (3) “I have chosen to love you.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Saturation evangelism* is the total mobilization of the active membership of a church or group of churches to cover an entire area with the gospel. This has had many titles and forms over the past 20 years. The effects were beneficial in areas where there were strong young evangelical churches (as in parts of Latin America and central Nigeria), but less so in other areas.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Tell me the story of Jesus,
Write on my heart ev'ry word;
Tell me the story most precious,
Sweetest that ever was heard;
Tell how the angels, in chorus,
Sang as they welcomed His birth:
“Glory to God in the highest!
Peace and good tidings on earth.”

WEEK NINE

—Saturday—

Physical provisions and the lack of them is a real concern for us. We enter this time of worship for your help in evaluation.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread” (Psa. 37:25). This is the wonderful testimony of David who lived in the little land of Canaan. I am about the same age as David was when he wrote these words. I could say of the Christians today in the land of America I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. I have seen a number of those who will not work forsaken because they forsook you and their children on welfare. As I relate this to the third world nations I find very little appreciation. When two or three or four generations of Christians have control of a country the promise becomes wonderfully true.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I can indeed remember when I was young and a part of “the great depression” of 1929-30-31. We were not even Christians, but we did honor you and believe in you. We were provided for. My dear Father gave himself to the physical provisions of his family. I stepped out on faith to provide for myself in going to school. In the material realm I have surely never been forsaken. “Begging bread” never even entered my mind. Even when such was true we were not “righteous” in any definition I can consider. It is always out of your mercy, not out of or because of our righteousness we receive your bounties. Bless your holy name forever!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

“I was young — and involved in the sins of youth — and now I am old and I still struggle with the evil

one, and yet I have never, never been forsaken — nor have my children had a need for which there was not a provision.” What a testimony of my need and your goodness! Forgive me, forgive me for my horrible selfishness. At the same time I praise you that I do see progress in Christian character. How totally dependent are we all on your goodness and grace! I am learning slowly what it is to change my motivations to those which please you. I am glad neither of us has given up on the other.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how he could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.
How marvelous! how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! how wonderful
Is my Savior’s love for me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

11“When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, **12**for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.” —*Luke 12:11,12, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

In these verses I see the whole book of Acts reflected. It wasn’t long until Stephen was opposed by “members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen” — “but they could not stand up against the wisdom or spirit by which he spoke.” Earlier it was Peter and

John who were brought before “the rulers, elders and teachers.” What happened? “. . . Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit,” spoke to them in a way and with words that filled these authorities with wonder.

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” What they did not see was “*the Other Comforter*” in them.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Will there ever be a time — has there ever been a time — in the thousands of times I have spoken for you when these words have had a secondary fulfillment in my own experience? I want to read this text right into the essence of my understanding: the Holy Spirit came for the purpose of bringing back to the remembrance of the disciples (apostles in particular) all Jesus taught them. He fulfilled that promise on the occasions just cited — and in several other examples given by Luke in Acts.

If the Holy Spirit brought to my mind something other than what is found in the New Testament it would be a revelation of God’s word in our day. This I cannot and do not claim — but that he helps me with the wisdom available to all men through prayer (James 1:5) I gladly acknowledge. Praise your name.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Lord has anticipated our problems before they happen and has made provisions for us. (2) Thank you for the plain statement that some authorities will be antagonistic and misunderstand. (3) Thank you for the promise of the constant present Holy Spirit. (4) Thank you that we defend and represent someone other than ourselves. (5) Thank you the Holy Spirit teaches us today through his word. (6) Thank you for the appropriateness of the ever living word of the Holy Spirit. (7) Thank you that we need not defend ourselves if we will let you do it through what the Holy Spirit has said in his word.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.” If we believe in a Godhead consisting of three persons — each sharing the same nature then the capabilities of teaching — which would be an exercise of all the faculties of thought, would be a rather obvious conclusion. Our Lord was a teacher while upon this earth. You taught many times through the mouths of your prophets. But even in such teaching you used the Holy Spirit as the means of transmitting your message. To claim such an accomplishment for today is to make a claim exceedingly difficult to support. We are saying by such

a claim that all the truth has not yet been revealed, in blunt contradiction of what my Lord said to his apostles: “But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you into all truth” (John 16:13).

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I delight in these words — I only ask for a deeper — more personal application of them. (1) Deepen my discipline of time — I *must* take time by the “hank of the hair” and drag it into the arena of your will — one hour here — one hour there — fifteen minutes here — a half-hour there. Help me dear Lord. (2) Keep my motives wholly on yourself — deliver me from that morbid introspection that leads nowhere. (3) Open my thinking in the closet that I might open your word in public. (4) Truth is what we all want and need — “that which equals reality” — lead me into it — and the best expression of it.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

If ever you would speak to me via these words it would be now — I pause — open my ears: (1) “You have ‘the truth’ — ask me for wisdom in using it.” (2) “Your sense of *exhilaration* is not wrong — but neither are you an apostle.” (3) “Jesus used a towel — what is your tool for me?”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Short term workers*: More and more young people (and some older ones too!) have been serving the Lord in a cross-cultural situation for periods of a few weeks to three years. It is impossible to reckon the numbers of believers all over the world who give some or all of their time during one year to missionary work, for this may equal the world’s entire full-time missionary force!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I gave my life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou might’st ransomed be,
And quickened from the dead;
I gave, I gave My life for thee:
What hast thou giv’n for Me?
I gave, I gave My life for thee:
What hast thou giv’n for Me?

WEEK TEN

—Sunday—

We wait before you in silence because we expect to hear your answer to questions we can not answer. Silence does not mean we are not learning.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret — it leads only to evil” (Psa. 37:7,8). What is it in your character that calls from man such a response? Man talks far too much! Perhaps I should say we talk much and say very little that is worth repeating. A proper response before omniscience is *silence!* An equally proper response before omnipotence is *to wait!* Even if we must be silent when others are saying what we consider stupid things, unless it is our prerogative to speak silence is better than words. You have a way of teaching men that is a thousand times more effective than many words.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How I need to hear again these words: *“do not fret.”* This is a constant expression of dissatisfaction of one kind or another. Once we believe there is an injustice done (usually against us) we express our displeasure — nothing happens — we repeat it and become more emotionally involved. Soon our fretting can turn into anger and anger can turn into wrath. Such chaos can lead to no end of problems. Perhaps all interpersonal problems develop in the above sequence. Dear Lord, how much better it would be to wait before you until your holy quietness controls our inner self. Since the only control that will last is directed by you, prayer becomes our biggest need and the real source of answers.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The older one becomes the more quiet we are. Such is

not at all an axiom that applies to all older people. Many talk more and more because no one is listening to them. Others are not only quiet — they are morose. Their silence is a result of depression. The whole world (at least the one we live in) seems to be moving rapidly to destruction. The answer, oh my soul, is to *“be still before the Lord. . . .”* In the light of eternity how successful are any of the schemes of men? (Including our own.) If we influence one man or woman to accept your dear Son we can rest in eternal confidence that your will has been done on earth as it is in heaven. Dear Lord, you know how very much I need your forgiveness in these areas of life.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word,
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”
¹⁴Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?”
¹⁵Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” —Luke 12:13-15, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord, I so love the perspective such an effort

gives! I have read this text for myself and for others a thousand times. I get so much more from it and I have so much to share with others when you are the One with whom I am sharing these words. I can immediately identify with the *"someone in the crowd."* He identified in the words or attitude of my Lord Someone who had authority and Someone who could answer a long-felt need. Was this a younger brother who was jealous over the double portion given to the elder brother? Such could be quite possible. This says so much to me as I try to help with personal problems.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Jesus said so much when he said: *"Who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"* At first reading or thought we would think this is exactly what our Lord should be and do. *It is not.* He wants to teach us the principles of daily conduct and let us make application. We are to solve our own problems with the application of his truth. Since covetousness is one of the most constant sins (it is a form of idolatry — Col. 3:5) we need so much to hear his words: *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* Making money and getting what money can buy is not life!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for all the "someones" of all time who have read the deity of Jesus in the tone of his voice. (2) Thank you for this "someone" who wanted personal help from the personal Saviour. (3) Thank you that my Lord knew his task and position and was not influenced by the personal demands of others. (4) Thank you for the rebuke that opened the eyes of all of us as how to solve our own problems. (5) Thank you for the warning that is always needed: *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed."* (6) Thank you for the key to happiness — *"give, not get."* (7) Thank you Jesus took time enough to illustrate his point with a story.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." What a meditation for Christmas morning! (This was written December 24, 1981.) The parents should all know that happiness does not come in brightly wrapped packages (and even this is a questionable judgment), but what of our children? What are we teaching them? Indeed, it is much too late, what have we taught them? It will be our attitudes toward "things" from which they will learn. Words are soon forgotten but our whole attitude speaks an everlasting message into the very soul of our children.

Since one in six verses in the New Testament discusses man's relationship to his possessions we had best settle this essential issue now!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How shall I ask about a text that so reaches my heart? I do want to be totally honest with you. I lift up my needs to you in these requests: (1) I do want to yield my whole inner being to you — you have *all authority.* I am struggling to make this real with me — I ask your help. (2) The sin of covetousness is so subtle — give me your direction in escaping its snare. (3) This is a sin that dethrones yourself — *deliver me!* (4) There are *personal interest groups* in my own experience — give me grace and wisdom in answering your demands. (5) *You are my happiness!* I believe it — help my unbelief.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to speak to me: (1) *"I have come to bring the vital energy of heaven."* (2) *"Possessions always disappoint."* (3) *"I love you — know you — and can use you."*

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Student Ministries:* This is one of the most neglected, yet strategic, fields of Christian witness (there are about 20 million university students in the world.) A number of interdenominational organizations have been raised up by God to fill this need.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Come, ev'ry soul by sin oppressed,
There's mercy with the Lord,
And He will surely give you rest
By trusting in His word.
Only trust Him, only trust Him,
Only trust Him now;
He will save you, He will save you,
He will save you now.

For Jesus shed His precious blood,
Rich blessings to bestow;
Plunge now into the crimson flood
That washes white as snow.

WEEK TEN

—Monday—

With eager anticipation of receiving good we enter into worship. You are closer than our own breath — but we must respond — and we do!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Turn from evil and do good; then you will always live securely. For the Lord loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones” (Psa. 37:27,28a). Dear Lord I shall be glad to turn from evil — just tell me what it is! I hear you say: “Surely this is a rhetorical statement, you know both what is good and evil by observing my Son.” All he did was good and all he didn’t do was evil. It would be more than an interesting study to identify all we have and count dear which our Lord did not have and in which he indicated no interest. In doing good i.e, following my Lord I am at the same time turning from evil.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Security is a fundamental attitude. We either have it or we do not have it. It is a by-product of turning from evil and following our Lord. I am tracing my Lord’s life and words each day — how I want this to be far more than either a devotional or academic exercise. Only when it becomes the close participation of master and slave — of teacher and student — of branch and vine can I claim the security you here promise. Dear Lord, I am following hard on the way. I shall never be able to give justice to you. I shall indeed attempt it with others. For this reason I claim your promise: “I will not forsake you.” This is much more than a negative — you are with me! Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

My “goodness” is truly “filthy rags”! My goodness is *in* and *from* and *of* my Lord — or I have none at all! The very best and most practical application of this

principle would be for each one to so plan his life that he would be as much like our Lord as at all possible — what would Jesus do or say? Such questions asked in deep sincerity could produce surprising results. The imputed goodness of my Lord in which I have salvation moves me to the objective goodness of following him. About all I have to offer you is a sincere desire to serve you — I do love you. Forgive me for my sins and failures. Lift me up as a new creation in your Son!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Why should I feel discouraged,
Why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely
And long for Heav’n and home,
When Jesus is my portion?
My constant Friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁶And he told them this parable:

“The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. ¹⁷He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

¹⁸“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I’ll say to myself, ‘You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’”

²⁰“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will

get what you have prepared for yourself?"

²¹"This is how it will be for anyone who stores things up for himself but is not rich toward God." —Luke 12:16-21, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Your Son told this parable so men might be rich toward yourself. It would be most interesting to hear my Lord report on a man who had an equally successful farm but *was* rich toward you. In the first place he wouldn't be talking to himself, but with you. He would not have "thought to himself" but in your presence and with you. The question is *not* "what shall I do?" but: "what shall *we* do?" Neither would there be a problem as to where to store his crops. They could be sold and the profit given to the One who provided all. The man who is rich toward yourself does not presume on the years of his life. He knows we have not one more day than you give us.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is *so easy* to become calloused to covetousness — dear Lord, I do not want this to happen! It is always shocking to be called a fool — but when God calls us a fool we had better listen! The Greek word translated "fool" means "without mind." Here is a good honest man without common sense. On second thought such sense is not "common" it comes from above. The love of money can cause us to act in the most surprisingly foolish ways: (1) It caused Judas to lose his life, his self-respect and his eternal life. (2) It caused Ananias and Sapphira to lie to God and be lost. (3) It caused a rich young ruler to turn from our Lord in sorrow. Oh, my soul, *be wise* not a fool!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord spoke so often about money — we do too. (2) Thank you I can talk to the One who freely gives us all we have. (3) Thank you I can ask you and know you will deliver me from overbearing temptation of greed. (4) Thank you I have this day and no more. (5) Thank you that all my tomorrows, like today, are in your hands. (6) Thank you for the example of my Lord as he used the material things of this life. (7) Thank you I can be content with what I have.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God." This seems like an all-inclusive statement. When our Lord said "anyone" or "whosoever" we are all glad to relate it to salvation. But this all inclusive word relates also to the negative verities as well. Since there is no

sex, no food (i.e. as we know it) and no money in heaven what is to occupy the mind and interest of all such fools throughout an endless eternity? How I *do* want to be rich toward yourself. How indeed poor we are when we do not relate to the eternal qualities of our Lord. All Jesus is asking is that we build values that last into our everyday living. Today is the day to do it!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I want to enter into my inheritance with you. I lift up these requests with that purpose before me: (1) Break the bondage of covetousness — not for someone else — but for me! (2) Give me a balanced view of life — one that comes from yourself! (3) Will you discover for me the measure of my love for money? No need to deny any love or all love for money — such would just add more sin to a long list. (4) Show me in the use of my money your own direction in my life. (5) Greed is an insidious sin — tear off the mask!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You have our attention when you discuss sex — food or money — in this example it is *money*. Continue to reach my conscience: (1) "The man working on the farm could have been very pleasing to me and not have changed a thing but his mind." (2) "I like fishermen and farmers — not just preachers."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Tape, record and cassette ministries*: The arrival of cheap cassette tape recorders has made it possible to distribute Christian tapes widely and fairly cheaply to both Christians and the unconverted. This has become a valuable tool for evangelism, teaching and the encouragement of believers.

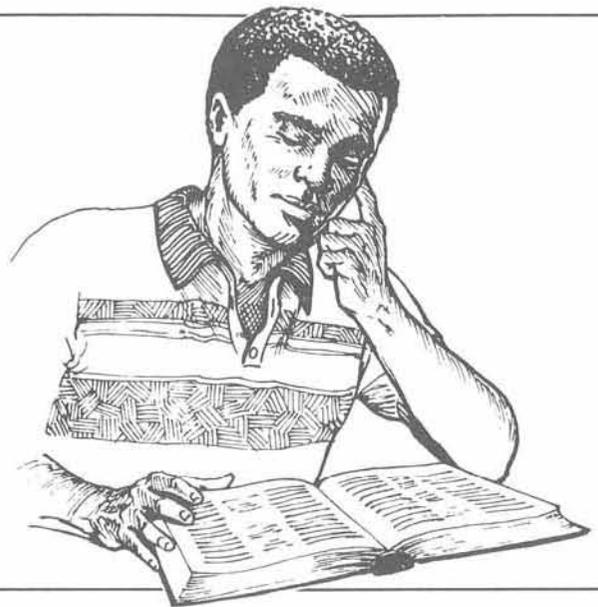
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Break Thou the bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee,
O living Word!

WEEK TEN

—Tuesday—

It is so much easier to live in the light of eternity from the prayer closet. So speak to me today that I shall not forget — ever!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

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

Suppose like the ghost that visited Dickens’ Scrooge I could be shown the date on my tombstone i.e. I could actually *know* the end of my life and the number of my days. Would it make any difference? You have already told me here in these verses! You have said: (1) Your life is fleeting — like a summer cloud; like the steam waft from the tea kettle. (2) Your life in measurement is six inches long i.e. the width of the palm of your hand. In measurements this is the least of measurements. At the most my life could stretch out to nine inches i.e. “a span.” As compared with the light years to the nearest star just how brief is my sojourn?

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

This could be depressing were we discussing my total existence. Both the importance as well as the brevity of life are emphasized in these words. If there was nothing more than the flicker of the light called life then all hope and purpose have died. How like the opening of a door into a palace of joy and light are the words of Jesus: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11:25,26). The question Jesus asked Martha he asks me: “Do you believe this?” I answer, yes, yes, yes. I believe!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

We live under a terrible deception! I move as in a

dream, and we call it life. None of us like to read Psalms 38 or 39 — we would just as soon they be left out of our songs. We can hardly see why they are included. Such is my sin! Forgive me. Too often I live as if the number of days on this earth were endless — they *do have an end*. *How much total trivia has filled the days and hours of my life? How many plans of eternal value were put off for a more convenient season — the winter has come — the seasons have run out! I am speaking to myself but I hear your voice! In the fleeting movement of your hand I want to praise you and love you!*

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

In heav’n’s eternal bliss
The sweetest strain is this,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Let earth and sea and sky
From depth to height reply,
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this, while life is mine,
My canticle divine,
May Jesus Christ be praised;
Be this th’eternal song
Through all the ages on,
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²²Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. ²³Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. ²⁴Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! ²⁵Who

of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?
²⁶Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do
 you worry about the rest? — Luke 12:22-26, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Fretfulness is absolutely unchristian! It is *anti*-christian. My Lord is not setting up an ideal — he is giving a command! Greed is the foundation for all anxiety. Why do we worry about food? Because we will not get all we would like to eat. *Good!* In America, this would be one of our greatest blessings. Why worry about clothes? Because we will not appear as well dressed before men as we would like — greed in America is a sin of epidemic proportions. Wearing less than we need could do much for our humility. All of the above means absolutely *nothing* if we have never believed our Lord's words: "*Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.*" Life is of the spirit not the flesh. The body houses our eternal selves. How are we feeding and clothing the man inside?

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Speak to me dear Lord! I do want to be a real "bird watcher." What percent of the birds that hatch out in the nest live to maturity? If there are four eggs — do two of them die? The answer is: the ones live that are fed by God! For various reasons others die. If God doesn't want you to live you won't live — if he does it will be because he feeds you. Dear Lord, I want to open my ears to these words! Is contentment having food and clothing? Contentment comes from praising the One who supplies all food and clothing by whatever means are best known to him. We could freeze to death or starve to death — but in either case we owe all we had before death to God. Life is his realm — trusting is ours. Praise him while you can and leave the rest up to him.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) I want to hear this command: "do not worry about your life." (2) Thank you that I am always learning all over again this lesson of trust. (3) Thank you I have always had just what you want me to eat — I have often eaten too much, but seldom too little. (4) Thank you I have always had much more in clothes than I wanted to wear. (5) Thank you that I really do believe your estimate of the value of life above food — of the body above clothes. (6) Thank you for the lessons birds can teach us — I want to learn. (7) Thank you that all the hours of this life are your gift.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Since you cannot do this very little thing why do you worry about the rest?" To yourself adding an hour or removing an hour from our lives is a "very little thing." What a startling thought! Life would indeed be a total mystery without you. We are posited in an environment full of the most perfectly complex of creations — such as the smallest or the greatest of the creatures about us. We look up into a canopy of endless space populated with immense spheres we cannot even count — yet all balanced in perfect orbits. We examine our own bodies and minds and are equally puzzled. Indeed we cannot add or subtract anything or explain what we already have without you.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How could we possibly discuss a more practical subject than food and clothes? We learn from you *by observing birds!* (1) Teach me the *balance* you have in your creation — death — suffering — no food — is all a part of life — but I, like the birds, am to do what I can and leave the rest to you. (2) Death is a *gain* — NOT a loss — death is *better* not worse — so said Paul who had learned the lessons I am here trying to learn. (3) This life is but the vestibule of your sanctuary called heaven! How many times will you need to tell me this?

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me yet once again: (1) "Do not worry about your life — you know very little about it — I know all — trust me." (2) "Haven't I given you an abundance of what you do not deserve? Then thank me." (3) "I love you and am at work in you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Recording ministries:* Pray for skilled laborers who can handle the expensive equipment necessary to make good recordings, maintain cassette playback machines, and effectively distribute the tapes. Few mission agencies have grasped the significance of this ministry or exploited its potential.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I have a Savior, He's pleading in glory,
 A dear loving Savior, though earthfriends be few;
 And now He is watching in tenderness o'er me,
 But O that my Savior were your Savior too!
 For you I am praying, . . . I'm praying for you.

WEEK TEN

—Wednesday—

To simply stretch out my hands before you in full confidence of your interest in me is enough to fill me with peace! Enable me dear Lord!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you. I wait for you, O Lord; you will answer, O Lord my God” (Psa. 38:9,15). Since you have created a planet in which all your work complements and completes itself I am sure such a plan is in operation in the experience of man. If you care about the physical operation of the inanimate world about us, and evidence for such care is overwhelming, then the longings of your intelligent creation, created in your own image, would be of the greatest of concern to you. My expectant waiting is based upon my confidence in your omnipotent interest in me!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

There are several qualities of yourself involved in the application of these two verses to my life (or to any life): (1) *You have a plan for man* — not known to us except it is an expression of your love for us. (2) *You are totally able to execute your plan for us* — and are presently doing it. (3) *You live in the realm of eternity* which is in great contrast to the time-space arena of our life — we only see a small part of the whole. (4) *You are absolute in your interest in our lives* — nothing in your plans is unrelated to such interest. We wait while you work — we yearn while you fulfill — we sigh while you are bending over us to touch us with love.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How much of my longings are but expression of my own selfishness? How many of my sighs are but complaints against your chastening is only known to you. I am glad you are at work purifying a people for your

own possession. I am glad to be a part of that inheritance. As I wait I also relate to all you are presently doing. I see a thousand prayers answered in ways I could never have imagined. I am at the same time disappointed in my own lack of love and patience. Forgive me! It is delightful to be able to begin *every day* as the very first day in the rest of my life with you.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

In heav'nly love abiding,
No change my heart shall fear;
And safe is such confiding,
For nothing changes here.
The storm may roar without me,
My heart may low be laid,
But God is round about me,
And can I be dismayed?

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁷“Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ²⁸If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! ²⁹And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. ³⁰For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. —Luke 12:27-31, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My dear Lord, I do indeed want to: *“consider how the lilies grow.”* Behind these words is all the interest

and love of your very Self in every man and his needs. How shall you clothe us? The lilies grow by the provisions you have made for them. The seed, the soil, the rain, the sun and time. All of these are your gifts — but nonetheless your provisions for being clothed. To change any of these provisions is to detract from “*the splendor*” of their dress. The command of our Lord in these verses is: “. . . *do not set your heart on what you will eat and drink; do not worry about it*”! There are those who disobey such a command — Jesus said it was the pagan world which “*runs after all such things.*”

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

There is a statement in the midst of these verses that illumines my mind like a bolt of lightning! It is in these words: “. . . *your Father knows you need them*” i.e. what you will eat or drink or put on. Here is a plain statement of Jesus that we can ask you about food, drink and clothes and you will immediately hear us and take an interest and give us an answer. We immediately think that these are the very items missing with most of the world. At the same time I remember that the small part of the world that has so poorly sought your rule and your righteousness has 40% of the food and clothing.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for your beautiful creation — so full of lessons for all of us. (2) Thank you that you consider the color of the petals of lilies of greater splendor than the linen of Solomon. (3) Thank you that you take a delight in the beauty of your own creation — we can too. (4) Thank you for the wonderful definition of “faith” as given in this text. (5) Thank you for the examples of our own day of men who have demonstrated the reality of this promise in their experience. (6) Thank you that Jesus separated us from “the pagan world” by the simple fact that Christians trust you and pagans do not. (7) Thank you it is my privilege to constantly seek your rule in all of my life.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*For the pagan world runs after all such things.*” If paganism is to be defined by those who “run after” sex, food, and money then we live in the midst of a pagan society. While millions in Northern Africa are starving we have a national problem called obesity — the Bible calls it gluttony! While millions and millions and millions of people are naked, and live in refugee camps, Americans spend an average \$80,000 on a new home. I do not even have an estimate at the billions spent on clothes. I have been to many of the third world countries and I have found more contentment in the lives of some of these people than I find in

America! How eternally true are the words of my Lord!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

The sharp distinction made here between your children and the pagan world speaks to my heart. I lift up these requests for your help: (1) Eating and drinking are always so near me — capture my attention as related to the bread and fountain that have come down from yourself! (2) I take great courage in your interest in our “daily bread” — but for what purpose? Just because you love us and do not want us hungry? Yes, but so we can share with the rest of the world. Help me to fulfill your purpose.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Out of the very mind and mouth of your Son we can hear his voice to us: (1) “I admired my creation — you can too — you will learn so much.” (2) “You can be that blessed man *with* faith — wake up and believe!”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: Theological Education by Extension: This is one of the exciting new tools in the hands of the Church for the training of church leaders. The rate of multiplication of churches in many parts of the world is so great that no residential training scheme could ever provide the workers needed. TEE is a system of training the actual leaders as they lead their congregations, by helping them to study in their homes using specially prepared teaching materials.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing pow'r?
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you walking daily by the Savior's side?
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
Do you rest each moment in the Crucified?
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

WEEK TEN

—Thursday—

You are the original wonder worker! I am glad to enter this sanctuary and try to contemplate just a few of your marvels.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare” (Psa. 40:5). It is with joy I lift my heart to you. I with David say out of my experience: “Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done.” I could enter any one of the branches of your creation and pause in amazement at the wonder of design and color. Looking back over the years of my life I could say: “the things you have planned for us (me) no one can (or could have) recount(ed) to you.” For the multitude of days of good health I praise you. Most of all for forgiveness and salvation!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

In the above account I have been too much involved — there are a multitude who could express their gratitude in much better phrases than those I have chosen. Just here I want to lift my whole soul to you in adoration for all your mercies! I need to be specific and itemize your goodness to me lest I imagine that I have been responsive or that I deserved even the smallest of your gifts. If food, shelter and clothes are the basics then I have lived in abundance beyond the imagination of much of this world’s population. For peace deep within — perhaps this is the greatest of all your gifts to me.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Sad to say, there are no doubt many good things given without recognition of the Giver. There are an equal multitude not given because giving would have

hindered and not helped. As an earthly parent we can all relate to the above thought. How much more, yea, by ten thousand fold is this truth as related to yourself! Dear Lord, I want to so plan my life that it will be your plan. So think my thoughts that they will be your thoughts.

Of all the sins of man ingratitude must be, in all its forms, the very worst. For this day, let me look for ways and times and seasons, small and great for gratitude!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³²“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” —*Luke 12:32-34, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Gladly, gladly do I read this word! The Good Shepherd speaks! He calls us each by name, for he knows us, but as a group he calls us his “*little flock*.” What a dear tender expression is this! If the great, Good Shepherd says “fear not” then there is nothing to fear. The rule of God in the hearts of men became a reality in “*the little flock*” that followed our Lord.

How I wonder if anyone took our Lord seriously when he said (yea, when he commanded): "Sell your possessions and give to the poor." The account of those saved on Pentecost is an eloquent testimony that they did! (Read Acts 2:42-47.)

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

We are glad some wore out their purses by opening them so often in helping the poor. (Of course there are other reasons purses wear out.) Buying and selling, helping and being helped are here associated by our Lord with the life to come. We become more than curious as to what marvelous surprises await us just on the other side of our last heart beat! "A treasure in heaven that will never be exhausted. . . ." Sounds intriguing! This treasure and its use will be eternally secure. Is my Lord saying we should invest our energies and thoughts in those areas of life that have eternal value? Yea, and *much more*.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the dear description of being "the little flock" of my Lord. (2) Thank you Jesus was so plain about the kingdom (your rule) being a gift from yourself. (3) Thank you this is a present gift as well as an eternal one. (4) Thank you that his words have not lost their power or appeal: "Sell your possessions and give to the poor." (5) Thank you Jesus indicates there is a way to obtain resources that never fail. (6) Thank you there will be an eternal day when we will buy and sell and enjoy the eternal value and excitement of the life to come. (7) Thank you Jesus told me where to put my heart.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Value is indicated in various ways: (1) *The time* we give to an object or project indicates the value we place upon it. When most of our time is taken up in the pursuit of money for food and clothes such becomes a real treasure to us. (2) *The thought* we exert in the time given surely marks the presence of our heart in whatever it is to which we have given our mind. (3) *Energy*. How much of our spirit's exertion is given to what we are doing. Such becomes a real god to us because we have given our heart to it. (4) *Talent* or creative activity — this is God's own capacity invested in man and now given to another god. How much more real time, thought, energy and talent are given to the One who deserves it all?

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have loved these words — and the dear One who gave them — for many years. Gladly do I lift up these petitions out of them: (1) You are the Shepherd of this "little flock" — I am just one of the sheep in this fold — but you know me by name and need. Call me — send me — feed me — chasten me — use me dear Shepherd. (2) It is your joy to rule in our hearts — but NOT when it concerns our purse — ah, this need not be true — those in Jerusalem obeyed these words — I want to do likewise.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

How penetrating are these words! I am listening to hear more: (1) "Remember — I will cooperate with all who want my rule in their hearts." (2) "I have a treasure in the world to come just for you — prepare your heart to enjoy it."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Urban Evangelism* is becoming one of the key challenges for the Church and for mission agencies. In 1985 there were 309 world class cities (those with a population of over a million), but it is expected that in 15 years' time there will be 433. Of these, 79 will have over four million people, and 24 will have over 10 million. The cities are strategic for the gospel, but 57% of them have a non-Christian majority and are increasingly indifferent or hostile to the gospel.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

If you are tired of the load of your sin,
Let Jesus come into your heart;
If you desire a new life to begin,
Let Jesus come into your heart.
Just now, your doubtings give o'er;
Just now, reject Him no more;
Just now, throw open the door;
Let Jesus come into your heart.

If you are tired of the load of your sin,
Let Jesus come into your heart;
If there's a void this world never can fill,
Let Jesus come into your heart.

WEEK TEN

—Friday—

How satisfying it is to appear before ONE who is the sum-total of mercy — love and truth! I need all of these blessings. I want to make personal application.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Do not withhold your mercy from me, O Lord; may your love and your truth always protect me” (Psa. 40:11). There are three beautiful qualities in this one verse for which all men can praise you. Without your mercy there would be no hope in this world or the next. The little expressions of kindness and goodness are the application of your mercy. Why do so many men live in safety? Is this a fulfillment of this quality of yourself? If we are to believe “every good and perfect gift comes down from above” then we would indeed say “yes” to this question. The fact that truth is a great guard against all types of evil cannot be disputed. Praise your name for your mercy, love and truth!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Dear Lord, I know there are a multitude of reasons for you to withhold your mercy — but you have not! Thank you and praise you for this fact. I cannot even interpret some of your acts of kindness — I know your mercy appears in disguise from time to time. May I be sensitive enough and wise enough to see your tender self behind the disguise. How is it I have traveled millions of miles in safety? Can I attribute this to your love? I am delighted to do so. I have heard so often of good men who fell into sin in a most surprising manner — I cannot believe such men were deeply committed to your truth. Truth protects from such snares.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

There is no need to assume a pious posture with you. I have not always appreciated your mercy. At times I

misread it — other times I ignored it. Most of all I want to confess my willful refusal to admit the true source of the good things that have come my way. Dear Lord, how I do need your love and truth. It is a love for the truth that is needed desperately in my own experience. To “speak the truth in love” is but a present day application of all we have been expressing. How glad I am to freely acknowledge your protection all the days of my life.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God, my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁵“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.” —Luke 12:35-37, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Alertness is the subject of this whole section of scripture. My dear Lord describes the vigilance we all need

and want: (1) "Be dressed and ready for service." The panoply of the Roman soldier is the only specific garments identified for Christian service. It might be well to at least mention them: (a) the belt of truth buckled around your waist, (b) the breastplate of righteousness in place, (c) your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, (d) the shield of faith, (e) helmet of salvation, (f) the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (2) "Keep your lamps burning." This reminds us of the five wise and five foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1ff). The lamp seems to be our own selves, i.e. our heart or soul. The fire is obtained by the oil — oil has been a symbol of the Holy Spirit — in this case what he himself gave for which we are responsible — none other than his word.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Much of the above comments relate so closely to my own needs. I want to lay the words of verse thirty-six upon my heart. My dear Lord is coming again — "perhaps today"! He has gone to prepare a wedding banquet and now comes to receive the bride to share the banquet! How I do want to be dressed and ready. Am I honestly looking for him each day? Oh — it could be today he will knock and I can open to him. This of course is a figure of speech to point up the alertness needed for his coming. Every day the bridegroom has come to knock on the door of my heart and asks if we might eat with him and he with us?

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord depends on us for service. (2) Thank you that we can be of real use to our Lord in his work. (3) Thank you we can have oil in our lamps and can have them burning brightly. (4) Thank you for the wonderful wedding banquet at which I fully expect to meet my Lord. (5) Thank you I can and do welcome my Lord each day of this year. (6) Thank you I can even now longingly watch for him. (7) Thank you our Lord serves us as we serve him.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them." Here is one amazing description of the second coming! Our Lord is serving us! We are immediately reminded of the scene in the upper room when Jesus girded himself with a towel and washed the disciples' feet. *Service* is the whole name of the whole of life. It is only in serving that we find fulfillment. Indeed it is only in service that we are truly like our Lord. In this description the master of the house treats the servants as equals. At his table they are given places of honor

and he waits on them. We can hardly assimilate such a thought but here it is!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I have been drawn to these verses over many years. I treasure this opportunity to absorb their *impact*: (1) It is possible to be dressed in readiness for his coming or he would not so instruct me. Just now I want to put on the helmet of salvation, i.e. to *think* about the meaning of being saved! Grant me your wisdom. (2) What a glad occasion is a wedding feast! And when it is *your* wedding there is nothing like it. Even now Jesus is preparing the marriage supper — grant me your own anticipation. (3) I believe you are even now knocking at the door of my heart — I hasten to open to you — *welcome!* Come in — eat and drink with me.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

The 37th verse speaks to my conscience: (1) "You are my slave — but I will serve you — does this mean anything to you? What?" (2) "There is a real reward in alertness — what is it?" (3) "I will eat anew with you in this period of my rule in the hearts of men — i.e. at my table — will you know it? Or appreciate it?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Special Ministries — Point for prayer: *Adequate strategies* for the evangelization of the major non-Christian cities of the world. The racial, ethnic, social and religious complexities of modern cities make an all-out effort essential to reach each cultural unit in these cities. Los Angeles, for example, will soon have 300 distinct ethno-linguistic people groups and be 60% Hispanic.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
O precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

WEEK TEN

—Saturday—

We are indeed poor — but you are rich — we are full of need — you have an abundant supply. This is our happy opportunity to be rich and satisfied. Let us enter in!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay” (Psa. 40:17). The beginning word of this verse so well describes the peoples of the U.S.A. We have such an abundance, at least in comparison to the rest of the world — “yet” we are poor and needy in spiritual resources. If our Lord dealt with us according to our sins we would have no hope at all. As you think of us you must surely look beyond our sin and see our impoverishment. The sooner someone takes up your burden the sooner help will come. In what very real, practical, personal way can I bring help to the spirit of man? The sooner each Christian in America asks and answers such a question the sooner help will come. Open our hearts our Lord!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

It is well enough to express this need in these general terms it is quite another matter to make specific applications to my own life and daily routine. I can take some comfort in the fact that we are responsible for providing the tools in building your spiritual house. There are several thousand people each day who are better equipped to teach others, to win the lost, to preach your word because we have by your grace been able to provide such tools. I am glad I do not know the life story of each book that is sent out on its mission. Many of these have a very short life and little influence — but others have a very long life and a very wide influence. Each of them could say: “You are my help and my deliverer”! Blessed be your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Such a word as described above is no substitute for a personal encounter with someone who needs salvation or edification. Dear Lord, I have at times hidden behind the public expression of your work to the sad neglect of personal encounter. Forgive me — I feel very strongly about this. My poverty and need are particularly in this area — help me — and deliver me. From your viewpoint and as related to the lost world I want to cry: “O my God, do not delay.” I cannot lead where I will not go — I cannot teach what I do not practice. Help me and deliver me for I am indeed poor and needy!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁸“It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. ³⁹But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” —Luke 12:38-40, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Jesus uses two figures of speech to describe his coming: As a master who is returning from the preparation of a marriage banquet. In this case he refers to the second and third watches of the night. The Roman division of the night into four watches was: (1) From six to nine P.M. (2) From nine to midnight. (3) From midnight to three A.M. (4) From three to six A.M. Our Lord says he might come from nine to midnight or from midnight till three A.M. But at whatever time he wants us to be dressed with our lamps lit and eagerly awaiting him! If on the other hand: His sudden unexpected coming will be like a thief in the night.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Is the second coming of my Lord a real present reality? Is the second coming something I work into the routine of each day as a very real possibility? How real or remote is it? Jesus told this parable in the presence of eternity. It was two thousand years ago by our computation — but two thousand years are less than a second in comparison with infinity and a place with no beginning and no end. Why did my Lord compare himself to a thief? — or did he? Wasn't the unexpectedness of a break-in the point he made? No doubt the loss sustained by the occupants, who were totally unprepared, was also the point. An invasion of our privacy is at the base of this thought — he will one day shock us into the reality at his coming!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you my Lord said "it will be good for those servants" who are ready when he comes. I do want to be one of those servants. (2) Thank you that he has warned me that however ready and expectant I am his coming will be sudden and we shall never be wholly prepared. (3) Thank you that Jesus could come today. (4) Thank you I can trust in his grace to prepare me for his coming. (5) Thank you for the constant promise of his coming again. (6) Thank you I can let you into every area of life today so your coming again will reveal nothing I have not already shared. (7) Thank you your coming is both expected and will be unexpected.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." However much we believe we are ready for him his coming will be unexpected! What an "hour" that will be! His coming will be unexpected, but we can be ready. Dear Lord, there are times when your coming would indeed be a relief! We are so tired of the daily

grind — so pressed with a hundred duties that to call a halt to all of this and move into the world of perfect happiness is a welcome prospect. Such is an almost purely selfish expression. Our readiness needs to reach out to others or we really do not appreciate the full meaning of his purpose for us. *Maranatha!* Help me to be ready!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

(1) You could come for me before you come for all of us. I awake in the last few years at the 2nd, 3rd and 4th watches of the night. If you are coming for me or for all of us keep my heart alert! (2) "Maranatha — even so come, Lord Jesus." (3) How can I relate in a very practical way to your Second Coming? I shall be surprised — and not surprised — shocked — but full of wonder and praise — help me. (4) Give meaning to the designation "Son of Man" — how is this true?

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Open my heart to receive your word with meekness. (1) "You are the head of your house — but where am I?" (2) "I can break up your house any time I want to." (3) "It might be today."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Operation World — Point for prayer: There has been an encouraging response to earlier editions of *Operation World* from individuals, churches and missions. Pray that the 1986 English edition (from which these thoughts were excerpted) will be used of God around the world to give vision, a prayer burden and stimulus for the completion of world evangelization. Pray also for the translation work on other language editions and the continuing job of updating and revising.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

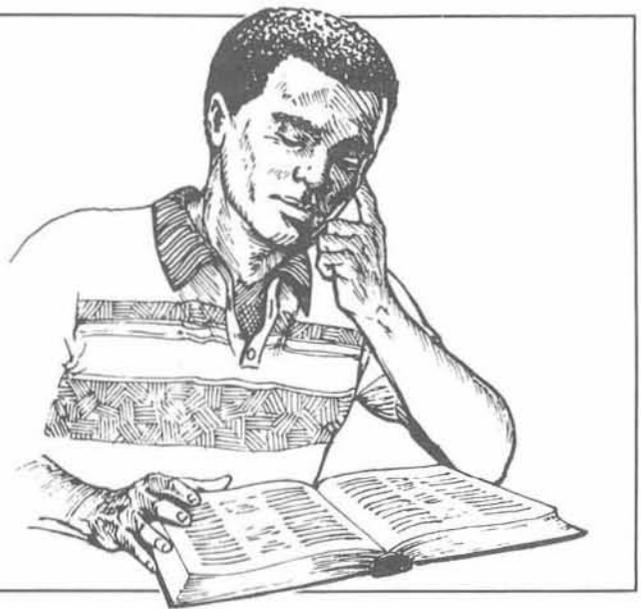
Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.
Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

WEEK ELEVEN

—Sunday—

Day and night you are with me — you are our life. Here is the time and place I can say “thank you.”



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me — a prayer to the God of my life” (Psa. 42:8). Somehow the writer of these words had integrated a sense of your presence into his inmost being and he was aware of your directed love in the events of his day. During the day he had picked up an expression of joy or devotion he wanted to express in the night season. You had indeed become the God of his life — his day and night existence was in and of yourself. Dear Lord, you know how much I would like to follow his example. Can this happen in any and all circumstances? Yes, yes, it is ourselves and *not* the circumstances that make it possible.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

How often do I consciously think of some expression of your love? I can pause real often to do this — i.e. if I really *want* to. Behind such thought process is the fact that I feel you are that much involved in my life. Dear Lord, I *know* you are so much a part of this physical world that it would fall apart without your presence — indeed, it is held together by your powerful word — or we could say by the operation of your laws. Are you less involved in the higher world of human interests? I am simply asking for the opening of the eyes of my heart! In all of this I praise you for the love I see in and behind all of life.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Life is taken up with many interests and very few of them directly associated with your love — why? The nature of some interests would answer the question — and yet would not answer it. We have all known per-

sons with one interest so dominant that regardless of the circumstance they related their special interest to it. Should we be God-dominated people? Should we see and hear and eat and sleep your love to us? I cannot think of a happier prospect! Such an ideal jars on my conscience and makes me uncomfortable. It smacks of sanctimoniousness, so says someone. It is simply because we have never seen it and we believe that “someone” who is Satan. Forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Come Thou Fount of ev’ry blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me ever to adore Thee;
May I still Thy goodness prove;
While the hope of endless glory
Fills my heart with joy and love.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴¹Peter asked, “Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?”

⁴²The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at their proper time? ⁴³It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. ⁴⁴I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁵But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the men and women servants and to eat and drink and get drunk. ⁴⁶The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to

pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

—*Luke 12:41-46, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I take the following instructions to relate particularly to the kind of preparation we should make in order to be ready when you come. Peter is evidently wanting some kind of special treatment. Does our Lord simply ignore his question? He does and he doesn't. If Peter will listen carefully he will find an answer. But all others will also find how to be prepared. It is most interesting that in the parable here the persons who are preparing for his coming are all "managers." They have been given a charge to keep. What is it? "To give them (the servants) their food allowance at the proper time." This is the task of all Christians.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

All of us are in charge of the food allowance for the hungry of this world. There is food enough for the whole world in the granary of your wonderful word! It is more than interesting that Jesus does *not* speak of mere neglect of the hungry. He tells of beating the servants we are to feed. Is neglect to feed equal to abuse? So it would seem. The managers in the second half of the parable have changed the position the Lord gave — they now expect to be served instead of serving. They are also self-indulgent — which is probably the root cause for their neglect. Dear Lord, open my eyes to true preparation for your coming.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus did not consider it necessary to answer all questions. (2) Thank you for the privileged position of the managers of your goods. (3) Thank you you have spelled out my responsibility of giving food allowance. (4) Thank you for the little phrase: "at the proper time." Help me to know when that is. (5) Thank you for the promise of wonderful responsibility in the world and life to come. (6) Thank you that Jesus identified the cause of unpreparedness: selfish indulgence! (7) Thank you that some believers will be assigned a place with the unbelievers — i.e. by my Lord's choice.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers." The description given here was no doubt carried out many times in the days of our Lord. We would think of it as severe measure from a physical viewpoint — but it will be mild and is not even to be compared with the reality of the judgment on that great day. Cutting him to pieces could be typical of the total disintegration of the human spirit

in the everlasting punishment promised to him. The servant who should have been expecting the day and awaiting the hour was ready for neither. What an awesome promise is there made to us! There are many "unbelievers", i.e. those who refuse to believe, in this world but there will be none in the world to come.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

These are blessed words that speak to my service for you — I want to look deeply into them. I try to do so in these requests: (1) I have just last night — and for 5 other times dispensed your food to your servants — dear, dear Lord, I wanted it to be just what you "rationed" for them. Give me your wisdom in my choice of expression. (2) All of us are indeed in charge of the food allowance for the hungry world — we have a full granary — *neglect is equal to abuse!* Lay these words upon my heart!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to speak to me — you surely have my attention: (1) "You are looking at the true preparation you need to make for my coming." (2) "I answer your questions in your service to me — you do not need the answer *before* you serve — but *during* your service."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The Lord's Return — Point for prayer: *The last prayer in the Bible* is "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Peter tells us that we should be "looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" (II Pet. 3:12). How better can we do it than by praying for the fulfillment of Gen. 12:3, Rev. 7:9,10 and Matt. 24:14?

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus is tenderly calling thee home,
 Calling today, calling today;
 Why from the sunshine of love wilt thou roam
 Farther and farther away?
 Calling today!
 Calling today!
 Jesus is calling,
 Is tenderly calling today.

WEEK ELEVEN

—Monday—

This verse is so full of meaning I lift it up again to tell you of my love and adoration.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me — a prayer to the God of my life” (Psa. 42:8). How gloriously true are these words! Every day — several times a day you direct your love toward me — it is not at all necessary that I know each way you have in speaking to my heart — or in each area of your work in developing my character. It is enough to know you do! What earthly parent would want his child to identify all the directions the father has given him? It is enough to teach our children the truth and let them mature in the application they make of it. I can sing a song of joy and care as the shades of night fall about me. This song is a prayer. What a beautiful way to express our worship to you!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What was said above should be typical of all the peoples of all the earth! How far indeed are we from this ideal! This is your desire — it is my desire. Dear Lord, in ways I could not even imagine I want you to open doors for the good news! You are indeed: *“the God of my life.”* All of my life all the time is from you! Am I ready to let you rule in “all the kingdoms of my heart”? Until this can and does happen we cannot expect the men of the earth to know you. By day — every day — today the Lord (even yourself) will direct your love toward me — I am the object of your care and personal concern. Praise your name! I do want to respond adequately to such love! Help me!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

A sense of guilt colors all I say until I claim the cleansing and forgiveness you have so wondrously

promised! Forgiveness and forgetfulness of all I have done against you is such a blessed reality! Praise your name! I cannot know just how you can forgive me — I do — I do, I do want to change! And I have to some extent — but not even as well as I want to. Somehow there is a song — an almost perpetual song in my heart for you. I have no life at all without you. I have lost interest in life without you. Things fascinate for a few days — or hours — but only you can satisfy forever!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not:
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁷“That servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. ⁴⁸But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. —Luke 12:47,48, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord, I sometimes do not like reading these

words! I am the servant here described! I know your will — I have known it for years and years and years. I have been getting ready for almost equal years. It is in *doing* what my master wants I have trouble! Dear Lord, am I setting up artificial standards or ideals? The whole context of these verses is that I be prepared for his coming again. I want that to be a living reality with me! Among your *servants* (not the “unbelievers”) such treatment will be given. Since there will be no condemnation or punishment for “those who are in Christ Jesus” it would seem Jesus is discussing a principle of this life: “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded.” This is but the reasonable expectation of the giver and the natural response, yea, joyous response of the one who has received.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

If ever there was one to whom “much has been given” it is myself — yea, all men and women of America. Millions do not even know that you have been so bountiful or so lavish in your goodness but at least I do! Since I am to multiply what you have given I need to know just what you have given. It is your own Self in the person of your Son. How can I share him with others? How can I multiply the bread of life? How can I let the well burst forth in streams of living water? Dear Lord, you have given me a means and I am delighted to use it! You ask nothing of me that is not a reasonable expectation and one I want to give — praise your name!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you I can be “that servant” spoken of in this text! (2) Thank you for the revelation of “your will” in your Son and your word. (3) Thank you you have given me much more than enough time to “get ready.” (4) Thank you for the sharp — stern warning that there is punishment for disobedience. (5) Thank you that no one will ever feel he has been cheated unjustly — all of us will *know* we have just what our life produced. (6) Thank you for the abundance of your grace given to me — and many like me. (7) Thank you that you are always alive and alert in your response to our service.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” We might add that he will be more than glad to return all the Lord has entrusted to him. There is no coercion in this entrustment. The master *will* ask for a return on his investment, *but* the steward is delighted to give such an account. A demand and a selfish pressure was common among the master-servant relationships of Jesus’ day

(and it hasn’t changed much since). But it will not be so with our Lord and his servants. All his servants know that nothing would be done without him. We all recognize the privilege and high honor we have in his service. What we give is but to give back to the One who has made all possible.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As one who has received much I lift up these requests: (1) In the years I have left show me avenues of service I had *never considered* before! (2) Bring to my attention what has happened to the seed already planted. (3) Give me a servant heart that makes it easy for me to work with others. (4) Cause me to be continually answerable without the sense of earning anything but your approval — and to know you approve of me if I fail.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause just now. I read these two precious verses one more time — speak to me through them: (1) “You can be getting ready AND serving at the same time — do it!” (2) “I will beat some servants — but not necessarily at the last judgment.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The World — Point for prayer: *The harvest of people into the Kingdom of God in recent years has been unprecedented.* Never in history has such a high percentage of the world’s population been exposed to the gospel, nor the increase of evangelical Christians been so encouraging. We are moving forward — let us speed the progress by prayer.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Just as I am! without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

Just as I am! and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

WEEK ELEVEN

—Tuesday—

*You are our hope or we have no hope.
You are our life or life has no meaning!
How good it is to worship you!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God” (Psa. 42:11). How often have I felt this way? Yea, how often have many men so responded to life? There is no need for introspection. It is fruitless and only tends to increase the problem. The whole person or “the soul” of man is involved. The inwardness of man is affected. Men today would call it depression. David evidently suffered very severe depression. The answer? *HOPE* — when there is hope there is life and peace and purpose and energy! You the source of *all* life are also my life — and the life of all men — the hope of all men. There is a consequence of hope — it is praise — but there is also a determination in the heart of the psalmist; he knows back of all his depression is a real reason for hope.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Dear Lord, how closely associated with “things” is my hope! If certain things develop on schedule then I have hope of their fulfillment. If I am given certain responsibilities and I work at them then there is hope of accomplishment and fulfillment. HOWEVER, if amid all such activity you interrupt me — or someone does (never without your knowledge) *then* I could ask the question: “Why are you so downcast, O my soul?” My hope is in you and your larger better purposes! I will *yet* praise you — you have saved me and forgiven me — created me and await me in the world to come — praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The above is a brave expression which is of yourself

and is true — but there are other times when I am neither lifted up nor cast down. It is in the dead level of routine — when I *should* have been glad or sad. It is for this apathy that I need forgiveness. It is not that there is always reason to be full of triumph or tears — it is just that you deserve much more of my self than I am sometimes willing to give. Forgive me .Yea, I need more than forgiveness! I need the eyes of my heart enlightened to the wonders of redeeming grace. I need my ears opened to the strains of angel’s song. I need my tongue loosed to speak of the eternal purposes of life. Release my spirit!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God.
O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us who wait before Thee
Near to the heart of God.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁴⁹“I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.” —Luke 12:49-51, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What power is in these verses! Your dear Son came to set the earth on fire! He was so full of desire that it be kindled. Has the fire fallen from heaven? Indeed it

has! When he took the stroke that belonged to me it was the kindling of the fire that would lighten the world. Has my Lord been immersed in the suffering of the sinless for the sinner? Ah, to ask is to answer — when he said “It is completed” (“It is finished”) we know what he meant! His words sound so strange when we sing the angels’ song at his birth, “Peace on earth.” Such peace can never be until he has been baptized in sorrow — until he has been consumed in the fire of judgment — until he has divided all mankind by the sword of sin’s condemnation.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Oh, my Father! How many upon this earth even know that fire has fallen? In this immense city of over four million in which I find myself (Santiago, Chile), how many know? There are many more that know than in a hundred other cities of the same size in other countries of the world. How I want to tell the whole world of your fire — your baptism and your division, or sword! Lead me into ways of fulfilling this your own desire! The universal nature and exclusiveness of these words shocks me! Your Son and my Lord is so “very very” in all his statements of purpose. He wants to immerse himself in his purpose. He wants to declare war on every evil thing! He wants to cut down the middle on every issue! Help me, oh help me to follow in his train!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that you have indeed come! (2) Thank you you came to reach the whole earth and every man in it. (3) Thank you the fire fell and consumed my Lord as my burnt offering to you. (4) Thank you he entered the vale of sorrow and was covered over in grief for me. (5) Thank you that it is all — *all* finished for me and the whole world! (6) Thank you for the war in heaven that was finished on Calvary. (7) Thank you for the total exclusiveness of his demands in my life.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division (a sword).” These words sound so startling and strange when we relate them to what we hold as an ideal image of our Lord. We think of him as “the Prince of Peace.” After all, didn’t he say “my peace I give to you”? Wasn’t his greeting, “peace be unto you”? All of this is true — but before there can be peace with our enemy he must be defeated in a war. It is of this encounter our Lord speaks. He must *first* defeat Satan in the fire and baptism of Golgotha before he can offer and leave his peace with us. In a larger sense there will always be a conflict with the forces of good and evil. He came to

send a sword!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

You have opened my mind and emotions to see these verses very clearly. Thank you! I now continue my worship before you in these requests: (1) Give me the eagerness of my Lord as I face very difficult decisions. (2) May I stand back and enjoy the warmth and light of the fire my Lord has set upon the earth. (3) How can I best let people know that the fire of judgment and forgiveness has fallen? This is the second time this day I have asked this of you — enlighten my understanding. (4) I wish I knew how to more than affirm your Son’s authority — his sacrifice — his love — his fire and water commitment. Help me!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

The One who prayed for unity now comes to bring division — speak to my conscience about this: (1) “Surrender always precedes peace.” (2) “Slash and burn before there can be a new crop.” (3) “Until there is yieldedness as seen in my Son there can be no unity.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD,

The World — Point for prayer: The growth of evangelical believers in the Third World has accelerated dramatically since World War II, with 1975-85 seeing the fastest growth. During that period Evangelicals in the West and Eastern Europe increased by 1.3% annually. The total number was 75 million in 1975 and nearly 86 million in 1985. In the Third World (omitting China) the increase was 6.7% annually, and the total grew from 68 million to 130 million.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There’s pow’r in the blood, pow’r in the blood;
Would you o’er evil a victory win?
There’s wonderful pow’r in the blood.
There is pow’r, pow’r,
Wonderworking pow’r in the blood of the Lamb;
There is pow’r, pow’r,
Wonderworking pow’r
In the precious blood of the Lamb.

WEEK ELEVEN

—Wednesday—

How beautiful you are! My light — my truth — my joy — my guide. I am glad to worship you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; . . . Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God” (Psa. Psalm 43:3a,4).

Your light will be in and a part of your truth. You were speaking by direct revelation in the days of the psalmist — on a difficult question or situation your message could enlighten and clarify. In one sense we live in a more enlightened day: you have given us sixty-six documents full of your light and truth! Praise your name! At the same time we cry with the psalmist for the wisdom to shine just the light you have sent on the situation that faces us.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

“Guidance, guidance,” this is the cry of our hearts! Dear wonderful Saviour, here is your answer! As your truth led your children to your temple to worship you at your altar, so in every situation your truth, and the light from it, will lead me into your answer for every situation. *I must, I will* make the choice, but *it will be your wisdom that helps me make it!* (James 1:5.) I do ask and believe, not doubting at all.

It is my deep persuasion that when you are my joy and my delight — when I praise you in song I am preconditioned to be able to respond to your truth in just the way you want me to. O God, my God, how I thank you for this understanding!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

In ways of personal, practical daily application I want to apply these words to my life. I know it is a long and slow process — so it is with any in-depth, solid growth. But nonetheless I want it to happen. I am

amazed at my own blindness and willful ignorance, forgive me! Is there a better system of memorizing your word that I do not know? Is there a way in which I can refer to your word much more often during the day than I do? Are there ways of discerning and applying your word in interpersonal relationships I have not considered? Dear Lord, what I am asking is: how can I let your light and truth fall upon my path for each day? If these questions are only rhetorical then I have a monstrous sin for which I even hesitate to ask forgiveness! Help me, dear Lord!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key,
That shall unclasp, and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see:
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Savior divine!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

13 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” —*Luke 13:1-3, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The previous strong words concerning your judgment on sin and sinners reminded some who listened of a contemporary incident that they thought illustrated

the point our Lord was making. It did, and it did not! The slaughter of the Jews by Pilate (and according to tradition it was several hundred) was precipitated by the circumstance of Pilate ruling in an almost impossible situation. It was caused as much by the rebellion and stubbornness of the Jews as by the cruelty of the governor. Both needed to repent! Your will was not found either in Pilate's actions or those of the Galileans. Our Lord is saying: "there is one objective truth contained in my word; when you follow it you are right, when you do not you are wrong — this relates to all!"

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The relation of this truth to my own heart is the important point of all these words! There are various reasons why the righteous suffer — but if they are righteous it is never, never because they are some special kind of sinners. We yet have Job's friends around to remind us that "sin is the cause of it all" — indeed it is — but NOT a personal violation of your law. We could easily have politicians like Pilate, and his capricious choices are not because of our sins! Yet — I want to hear your words to my heart: "Except you set your mind in line with my mind you also will perish" — in this life and the life to come! Give me ears to hear!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the Galileans who teach me of the consequence of the world system. (2) Thank you for our Lord's willingness to relate politics to daily life. (3) Thank you that I can learn by example and experience what true repentance is. (4) Thank you for the strong warnings of my Lord — we *shall* (not *might*) perish! (5) Thank you for the wonderful check and balance you have in both the physical world and the moral world. (6) Thank you that my Lord is giving us the instructions as to who will be lost. (7) Thank you for the rare privilege and opportunity to repent!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"But unless you repent, you too will all perish." It is very easy to see the literal fulfillment of this principle in daily life. When we have violated one or more of your truths unless we change our minds (i.e. repent) our lifestyle will perish. In our marriage: unless we follow what you have said everything falls apart. It is only when we bring our minds under the control of your mind that we find life and purpose. This is a principle alive in every option. We can either think your thoughts and have life or fail to do so and perish. Repentance is an absolute necessity to life. Indeed it is "repentance to life."

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am glad for all opportunities to repent toward yourself. I see in these verses that opportunity. I raise these requests for genuine repentance: (1) Teach me yet again that *you* are the great evaluator, you are our final judge — I want to take my inquiring, questioning, suspicious mind to you and "leave it there." Help me dear Lord! (2) I do hope to meet several Galileans in the life to come — prepare me for such a meeting. (3) Some will *perish* — changing my mind is my salvation. Give permanence to my decision to do so.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

The determination of my likeness to my Lord is in exact ratio to my repentance. Please emphasize this point just now: (1) "Yieldedness is your biggest need — and greatest opportunity." (2) "It is in your mind I am Lord, or I am not Lord — you can bring every thought into my captivity — are you ready to believe this?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The World — Point for prayer: *The dramatic breakthrough in China* since 1975 is hard to quantify. Reliable estimates are that 45-50 million people may have come to faith in Christ since then. This increase, if substantiated, would mean that evangelical believers have increased in the Third World from 74 million to 174 million, or an average annual increase of 9%.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I've wandered far away from God:
Now I'm coming home;
The paths of sin too long I've trod;
Lord, I'm coming home.
Coming home, coming home,
Nevermore to roam;
Open wide Thine arms of love;
Lord, I'm coming home.

I've wasted many precious years:
Now I'm coming home;
I now repent with bitter tears;
Lord, I'm coming home.

WEEK ELEVEN

—Thursday—

The noblest theme I know is the beauty of your person! The King of all kings — the Lord of all lords. Gladly I bow before you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer” (Psa. 45:1). Perhaps it is presumption to relate this verse to myself, but *“my heart is stirred by a noble theme.”* This happens each day at this time, and praise your name other times during the day. The noblest theme I know is the beauty of your loveliness! To know Someone who is always pure as the clear blue sky above me, as clean and refreshing as the pounding surf beneath me — oh, to worship the great intelligent Creator of all this magnificent world is indeed a noble theme. I do hope I can but poorly reflect what ought to be true of every man and woman.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The verses I recite are not poetry, at least in the usually accepted sense. My verses are those I find in your word. You are my “king” in the grandest use of the designation. All the wealth and beauty; all of the excitement of music and the unexpected are in my heart as I worship before you. By your very presence you enable me with whatever skill I have in words, spoken or written. Praise be to your eternal self! I can be, and want to be caught up in the flush and joy of this moment of wonder as I meditate upon your word! There is nothing in this experience called life that can compare with the joy of your presence! Praise your name forever!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Ah, it is not always this way! I.e. it is not always that I am so responsive to your greatness and goodness. My heart is not at all so stirred, nor is my tongue or my pen so ready to lift up a joyful theme. Of course I

do not expect to live in a perpetual palace of praise. But I do expect to be able to praise you at any time in any place — and this has not always happened! Forgive me! Since you are always worthy to be praised and since I have multiplied reasons each day for praising you it is indeed wrong for me not to worship you much more often in joyful thanksgiving. This is a confession of poverty among the wealthy! I want to live today on the edge of the great world of your goodness and mercy. Help me to move in beyond the border.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Thou my everlasting portion,
More than friend or life to me;
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee.
Close to Thee, close to Thee,
Close to Thee, close to Thee;
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

“Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them — do you think that they were more guilty than all others living in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” —Luke 13:4,5, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Our Lord uses two tragedies to illustrate a great eternal truth: *Regardless of what happens to you if you are not right with God you will perish!* One tragedy was precipitated by political activity: Galilean zealots and Pilate’s troops. The other by an accident that

could have touched the lives of anyone. In building a tower in Jerusalem near the pool of Siloam the foundation of a wall gave way and the whole weight of the wall fell on eighteen men who were working under it (or in some such manner). What about the thinking processes of each of these people? If their lifestyle belied the fact their minds were the slaves of sex, food and money there were two deaths for them to die. How I hope I have represented your thinking from these verses!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is *true* that at times you have sent tragedy to teach your children. But it is *not true* that all tragedies have their source in yourself, there are at least two other options: (1) Satan has been known to send some such tragedies — at least be permitted by yourself to use them. (2) The ignorance and willfulness — the cruelty and inhumanity of man accounts for much that is tragic in the world! (Satan being behind all such actions). When I hear of an accident in which several lose their lives what is my response? Would I like Job's friends say "*they deserved it!*"? Dear Lord open my heart to the one need: to think your thoughts and have my heart in tune with you!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for this now ancient record of the death of eighteen workmen — from it I can learn. (2) Thank you for the fact that Jesus was aware of the local news and what it meant in the eternal perspective. (3) Thank you for the fact that the death of the eighteen was not near as important as what happened to them after death. (4) Thank you that all can repent. (5) Thank you for the plain fact that all need to repent. (6) Thank you that Jesus related repentance to his disciples as well as all others. (7) Thank you that when we do repent we will have life — not death.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"— do you think they were more guilty than all others living in Jerusalem?" The tower was like the rain, "it falls on the just and the unjust." Our Lord does not want these men to read more into an incident than really is there. There was a moral problem with these men — and with several others who lived in Jerusalem at that time. What one needed all did: "repentance." How we do wonder about the lives of these unnamed persons. In just what areas of their life did they need to change their mind? If we were to select 100 men from any city today the same sins in a little different form would be present. When the rich man found himself in torment the one word he wanted for his brothers was: "repent." How contemporary is this word today.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How abundant is the supply of energy and health you have given to me! I want to thank you for it — and to freely confess that if a tower or wall should fall upon me today I will enter into your presence with joy! I am so slow to learn it would not surprise me if you would decide to close the books. Teach me humility — and patience. If ignorant disbelievers overrun our land give me a clear memory of how you are able to cause the stubbornness of men to praise you. Repentance is the one static need I have every day!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I wait here before these words of your Son — speak to me out of them: (1) "Walls *do* fall — like rain — 'on the just and the unjust' — only those who repent are saved — i.e. are in a state of repentance." (2) "Do you *really* believe what I just said?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The World — Point for prayer: *The greatest growth* has occurred in some Asian lands, Latin America, and in Africa's Bible belts. Parts of South Asia, the Middle East and parts of Africa are a sobering contrast. These latter are the major pioneering areas for missionaries in the last part of this century.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee;
Out of my sickness, into Thy health,
Out of my want and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee;
Out of earth's sorrows, into Thy balm,
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress to jubilant psalm,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

WEEK ELEVEN

—Friday—

How full of wonder I am as I read this description of your Son written seven hundred years before he was born! I want to stay before him and see him with the eyes of my heart!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever. Gird your sword upon your side, O mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty” (Psa. 45:2,3). This whole psalm is a beautiful description of my Lord before he came to this earth. I want to lift the qualities of these verses to you in adoration: (1) “The most excellent of men.” There are no competitors. In every way my Lord excels all men. (2) The words that fell from his lips during his ministry were of heavenly grace or favor. We shall never exhaust the beauty and depth of his words. (3) Your blessing in the life of your Son has no end. Throughout the eternal existence of heaven we will have reason to praise him.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

(1) The directions for the musicians must have made it possible for them to participate in the real meaning of this praise to yourself on behalf of the Coming One. I want to enter into that kind of praise. (2) In this description the Messiah is a warrior. (a) Gird your sword upon your side. We serve under a commander who never lost a battle. The gospel accounts record a good number of his encounters. (b) He is referred to as “*the Mighty One*” and indeed he is! In every way we consider his qualities, he is “*the great one*”! (c) He has clothed himself with splendor and majesty. This he had before he emptied himself of such qualities. He was clothed again in the glory that he had with the Father before the worlds were made.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I shall always be full of an effort to praise you as I

want to and as you most richly deserve. My words stumble over one another. My attempts seem so very, very, inequitable. My basic sin is one of the lack of involvement. How I do want to tell you what these blessed words mean to me: To have before me “. . . the most excellent of men . . .” and make but a few passing comments is a sin of immense proportion! To listen to the voice and words of God in human form and not to be prostrate before you is the sin of ingratitude. Blessed Lord, gird on your sword and give me the triumph I so much need in my personal life. I yield my mind and will to you. I want to be impressed all over again with your splendor and majesty.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark, how the heav’nly anthem drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶Then he told them this parable:
“A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any.
⁷So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’
⁸“ ‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’ ”

—Luke 13:6-9, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

This parable was to illustrate the subject of repentance. Just who are the persons in this story? It will be easy to see God as the master who had the vineyard. The fig tree represents Israel. Our Lord is the one who came expecting to find fruit, and found none. You had planted your people in a most fertile place. Expectations of fruitfulness were natural. Jesus was very kind in using only three years as the time of expected growth. It had been centuries and no repentance was shown. Our Lord's generosity is also seen in the fact it was not one year after his three year ministry before the fig tree was cut down, but *forty years* — i.e. from 30 to 70 A.D. In the destruction of Jerusalem the fig tree was cut down. He *is* patient, but there *is* an end!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Lord, how can I repent even this very day? How fruitful has my life been as compared to what you expect of me? The nation of America has had the gospel and the means of spreading it to every creature on earth. In 2,000 years we have not done it. In my own experience in evangelism and in edification of the saved I have had more than 40 years to produce the fruit of repentance. How I do wish there were some objective measure for the profitableness of all this time given. One day not too distant this fig tree will be cut down and the account will be added up. I am ready for your judgment — yea, I welcome it! Not of my sins — that was done on Calvary — but of my works. I do want to know just how much wood, hay or stubble there is.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for your constant interest in man. (2) Thank you that we can produce fruit pleasing to you. (3) Thank you that Someone is taking care of your vineyard. (4) Thank you that you expect responsible action on the part of your children. (5) Thank you that each man and woman has a place in your vineyard which no one can fill. (6) Thank you for your wonderful patience. (7) Thank you that we all live from time to time on an extension of your grace.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down." This is a warning directed toward only a tree. The tree does represent man, but such a warning becomes much more palatable when associated with vegetation and not human life. *However* we cannot always and only relate this to someone else. It is easy to consider the Jewish nation or the Pharisees and think: "I hope they heard that, it was directed toward

them." Fruitfulness is *not* an option — it is an *imperative!* Our Lord is far more interested in what we are than what we do — so fruit in character is essential to acceptableness. How glad I am he has not given me the task of deciding how long we shall give this man to develop this virtue or that.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I do want to be like *your* own tree planted in *your* vineyard! It is the streams of living water I need — send them to me — there are two types of fruit reasonably expected: (1) Fruit in my character from the Holy Spirit. (2) Fruit of other children. Only in a daily process of repentance will either one be present — help us dear Lord. Reach in among our leaves and find your fruit! You do have a constant compassionate interest in us — thank you! Can I be one of the caretakers in your vineyard? I *want* to be!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

There "is" a warning — there *is* an end! Speak to me about it: (1) "Payday some day." (2) "When I come it is all over." (3) "It is your works I will judge."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The World — Point for prayer: *The Muslim world is a major challenge*, but the last 10 years have been more encouraging than ever before. Despite the rise of Islamic fundamentalism Muslims have been more exposed to the gospel, and been more responsive, than ever before. The cracks in the seemingly impenetrable wall of Islam can be widened by prayer!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Whosoever heareth, shout, shout the sound!
Spread the blessed tidings all the world around;
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found:

"Whosoever will may come."

"Whosoever will, whosoever will!"

Send the proclamation over vail and hill;
'Tis a loving Father calls the wand'rer home:
"Whosoever will may come."

Whosoever cometh need not delay;
Now the door is open, enter while you may;
Jesus is the true, the only Living Way:
"Whosoever will may come."

WEEK ELEVEN

—Saturday—

*What a strong complete refuge you are!
How strong — how wise — full of
security for each of us. Worship is our
reasonable response!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging” (Psa. 46:1-3).

The trouble I have had of late is being sick in a foreign country and not knowing just how to treat such a circumstance. It is in you and you alone I can find a refuge — and I really need a refuge — and strength! I am glad to crawl into your arms as a little child who hurts and comes to his mother, I do so sorely need your comfort and encouragement.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have been carried away by the need of the moment and related all the above to myself. But I like to think my needs are typical of many, many other people. Just here I want to look again at these blessed words: “. . . though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” It is so good to know there is *Someone* who loves me better than myself — there is *Someone* who lives in eternity — above and beyond the earth, mountain or sea. I sometimes wish the earth would give way and my blessed Lord would come and deliver us from the struggles of this life. But this is a selfish, childish desire. You want to offer help amid our struggles — a refuge in the battle. Thank you that I have found this true in my experience.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Only when in you we live and move and have our being can any of these wonderful words find fulfillment. It is in your word — and your word alone I can give

meaning to these concepts. As example: (1) The ark was a real refuge and strength to Noah and his family. My Lord is my ark and refuge from the waters of judgment. (2) The home of Mary and Martha became a real refuge for our Lord. My home can be that for him and for me. (3) The temple as a beautiful structure must have been for many a true sanctuary of worship; a refuge from the business of the dirty world all about. You are my sanctuary! My body is the dwelling place of yourself in the Spirit!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus is all the world to me,
My life, my joy, my all;
He is my strength from day to day —
Without Him I would fall.
When I am sad to Him I go;
No other one can cheer me so;
When I am sad He makes me glad:
He’s my Friend.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁰On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, ¹¹and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” ¹³Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. —Luke 13:10-13, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Saturday on the calendar in the first century was like any Saturday on our calendar. But, oh, it was so

unlike any we have ever known. For one poor woman it was a Sabbath day never to be forgotten. We are not to associate all sickness with evil spirits — but in this case the woman was a victim of Satan's power — and had been for the long eighteen years! Was she in the synagogue to seek her healing? We think not. She was there like all the others: to listen to the teaching that fell from the lips of my Lord. But in the midst of his teaching he could not and would not ignore human need! Was this woman called up to the front of the building? What would it have been to have the hands of Jesus placed on our body?

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The infirmity of this woman can be typical of the needs of many people (and of myself in particular): (1) All spirit infirmity comes from the evil one and his demons. (2) Our potential is cut way back — we are crippled. Unreasonable anger, or deep resentment comes from the evil one — we can be delivered. (3) Jesus no doubt placed his hands on the very spot where the woman hurt — or his thoughts were directed to this place. Our Lord puts his hand on the very place where we hurt to heal us. When we are ready to stand forth in the midst of a hostile environment and let my Lord touch the very place where I hurt I will be set free! Praise your name!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the desire of my Lord for public worship in the synagogues. (2) Thank you that Jesus was and is a teacher! (Dear Lord, I am listening.) (3) Thank you for another reminder of the very real world of the spirit. (4) Thank you for these cases selected by Dr. Luke to show the tremendous healing power of my Lord. (5) Thank you for the willingness and personal interest of my Lord in deliverance. (6) Thank you for the immediacy of my Lord's healings. (7) Thank you that the woman attributed her healing to you and praised you for it.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . and immediately she straightened up and praised God.” How appropriate are both of these expressions — it could be said of both of us if we would straighten up we would praise God. Lest we take this as a mere play on words we must remember it was an evil spirit that bowed her over. We are so delighted to find someone who will give the credit to yourself for this healing! How many of us have been bent over in an unnatural position because of Satan's influence? I love the little expression about the prodigal son: “*he came to himself*” or “*when he came to his senses*” (NIV). Living and serving you is natural — it is service for the evil one that is nonsense. We can walk

upright — full of strength and vigor when we allow Jesus to touch us where we hurt!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

This brief incident has real lasting value. I see the following needs, and lift them up in prayer: (1) On a scale of one to ten where would I place meeting the hurting world's need? (2) How much of physical suffering is associated with demons? (3) Place your hand upon the hurting area of my life and make me whole! (4) I need to develop my capacity for praise, will you help me? (5) Eighteen years is a long long time to wait for healing — but it came — *I do want your own patience!* — I am far too selfish to wait very long — touch me just here.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I want to receive your word with meekness — speak to my conscience: (1) “Teaching in a religious setting is my job — I am still at it — are you listening?” (2) “Praise is your best response to me.” (3) “Straighten up and you will have something to praise me for.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Points for praise: (a) *The exciting harvest.* The dramatic ingathering into the churches is unique in history. Africa is the first continent to become majority Christian within a single century. (b) *The spiritual hunger* has grown in the backlash of post-independence disillusionment. The bad news of Africa has dominated the world's media, but the good news of church growth has not.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be for sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill the law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save and Thou alone.

WEEK TWELVE

—Sunday—

Truly, truly we grow homesick for heaven when we read these words of description! We enter into this time of worship to condition our spirit that we might be ready.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fail; God will help her at break of day” (Psa. 46:4,5). Ah, what poignant words are these! How I wish I had the eloquence adequate to express the wonder and beauty that springs from these words to my spirit! There is that immense city four square, a cube of 1,500 miles in each direction i.e. the walls are of such an immense height. Inside the city is an eternal spring. From it flows a river of gigantic proportions. As it moves from its source it divides into streams. These streams flow amid gardens and houses whose beauty beggars description. These are but poor words to describe the place he has gone to prepare for us! Praise his name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

“The holy place where the Most High dwells.” How I revel in the feeble attempt to enter into this description of heaven. I have a great desire to be there! All that satisfies man here will be multiplied a thousand-fold over there. I have a vision in my heart of a celestial city — but each time I envision it it grows in beauty. I see another stream and its course through the country and city of God. Dear Lord, someday will you help me to describe from your word in my poor words the wonders of that land that is fairer than day! Such a city is eternal — impregnable; *“it shall not fail.”* The reason? Oh, the reason — “God is within her.” Such is true of the real city of God within each of us. How I long to comment on the little phrase: “God will help her at the break of day” — he has helped me at a thousand day-breaks — praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God?

CONFESSION OF SIN

Lest I be exalted overmuch you have given me daily confession of my failures, of my willful violation of what I know is your will for my life. At this moment it seems impossible that I could so violate what you are and what you have said. But it is true — and at the times of my sinning it did not appear at all impossible. Forgive me Lord, and most of all guard me from that pious hypocrisy that mistakes feelings for faith. Faith is doing what you have said. Elevated feelings cannot cover a stubborn willingness to yield my will to yours. Only the blood of Jesus can cover my sin and make me whole again! Praise your name!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Alas! and did my Savior bleed?
And did my sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a one as I?

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁴Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

¹⁵The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey and lead it out to give it water? ¹⁶Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?” —Luke 13:14-16, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is most remarkable that the very words of this unnamed synagogue ruler are preserved. Supposing his words were obeyed — how many would be healed? If Jesus were not there to heal them, none would be made well. What a thoughtless, callous attitude! Yet no different than some we ourselves have. We say by our actions: “You can be saved on Sunday in the sanctuary — come at that time — do not bother us on the other six days of the week.”

Our Lord truly did identify such people: “hypocrites!” They were self-condemned! They were ready to forget Sabbath regulations (and such applications were only tradition) if it related to their pocket book in the form of livestock. But there was something unholy about caring for physical need in the worship service — dear God, forgive us!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Indeed I do want to read this all over again and as it were written only for my eyes. I never saw it before but our Lord used the fact that both the woman and the animals were tied down as a point of comparison. The ox and the donkey were tied and waiting in their stall. They were very thirsty and in need of refreshment. The long day of the Sabbath will not pass until human kindness (if nothing else) will move the owner out to the barn and lead them to drink. One day without drink is one thing, but to be bound for eighteen years without the water of life is quite another! Oh, dear Father, thank you for the One who cares about the bound and thirsty and who can set them (me) free!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord was indignant over the real needs of men. (2) Thank you for the clear stupidity of the words of the synagogue ruler. (3) Thank you that Jesus was not afraid to make people angry or hurt their feelings. (4) Thank you that human need took precedence over all other needs in the mind of my Lord. (5) Thank you that Jesus spoke so kindly of this woman in calling her: “a daughter of Abraham.” (6) Thank you for the tender words: “. . . whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years.” (7) Thank you, praise you we are by him set free!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her.” It did seem a most appropriate day upon which to be made free. The Sabbath was given to commemorate two wonderful events: Creation and the giving of the law. Our Lord created healing for the woman out of the same energy that he used with the

Father to create the world in the beginning. Praise his name. Our Lord came to set this woman free from the law of sin and of death. He was to consummate on the cross that freedom for her and every woman and man upon this earth. Truly the day of rest was just that for this poor person. The first Sabbath rest she had in eighteen long years. Glory be to yourself!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I try to separate the real from the unreal — the form from the substance. I lift up these requests with such a purpose in mind: (1) Jesus healed not just to make people comfortable — have I accepted his purpose? Is he truly Lord of my life? Men and women are “bound” by Satan — their one need is the “water of life.” How shall I lead them to it — to him? (2) Give me your estimate of the important — and the unimportant. (3) I want to appreciate more than ever my sonship as a son of Abraham and yourself.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I hear you say to me: (1) “I do not want *any* of my children bound — except to me.” (2) “Total liberty is total chaos.” (3) “Every day can be the day of rest for you.” (4) “Satan has *no* personal interest in you.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Point for prayer: *The African Church in crisis*. Prayer and effort will have to be made to conserve the fruit of growth and prevent spiritual tragedy on a massive scale. (a) Much church growth has been without a deep repentance from sin and the works of darkness. (b) Many have come to faith, but lack teaching. (c) The critical lack of trained leadership is crippling growth.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I am resolved no longer to linger,
Charmed by the world's delight;
Things that are higher, things that are nobler,
These have allured my sight.
I will hasten to Him, Hasten so glad and free,
Jesus greatest, highest,
I will come to Thee.

WEEK TWELVE

—Monday—

*Teach us how to be quiet in our spirit.
Open our inner self to hear what you
are saying in these verses. Gladly we
worship you!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress” (Psa. 46:10,11). What will I learn if I am quiet? Much more than if I say anything because you have so much more to say and I can not listen if I am speaking. Oh, how much you do indeed say about yourself and your Son — how convinced I am that you are God! All the evidence of your person is in your word — I hear Lord! If I am still and quiet I can put into perspective what I have already seen and heard. It is indeed in quietness that I learn how to discipline my thoughts and turn them to you. This verse is in quotation marks in the translation (NIV) I use. I wonder why? Is it that you yourself are saying these words?

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I would indeed receive these words as direct from heaven. What do you say? This is a positive assertion: “I will be exalted among the nations.” Dear Lord it will be easy to see this come to fulfillment when you send your Son the second time, but I do not believe you had such a thought in mind. You want your Son exalted in the midst of the 220 nations of the world RIGHT NOW! Even the physical earth will honor and exalt you when you change the “eager expectation” into reality. This old decaying world will be liberated and brought into glorious freedom (Rom. 8:19-21). Praise your almighty name. I am ashamed we have not done so much more in raising your name among the nations of the world.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Do we really want these words to find fulfillment? I.e. that all nations will exalt you? In America we are far, far too comfortable to want this word completed in our lives. There are too many bugs and snakes — and besides, “They have their own religion,” why bother them? I am confessing the sins of others — but I include myself. I must feel somewhat this way or I would go on much more than a temporary visit to these far off places. (This was written in Goiania, Brazil.) Dear Lord, we are “blood guilty” before you. Forgive me, I cannot, and do not ask for others — but for myself — I can do my part in the part of the world where I live, but there are thousands of others to do it where I live. The only recourse I have is that I can multiply my effectiveness in others I help prepare.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

We’ve a story to tell to the nations
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy,
A story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light.
For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
And the dawning to noonday bright,
And Christ’s great kingdom shall come to earth,
The kingdom of love and light.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁷When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing. —Luke 13:17, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I take some kind of satisfaction in this beautiful climactic verse. To read that: “*all* his opponents were humiliated” is the triumph he deserves and we are glad he achieved. But were his opponents changed? We like to believe some of them were. You know them all by name — and what happened to every one. Did their humiliation lead to repentance and joy? Lest we become too happy over the delight of the crowd — we need to remember it was this same kind of crowd who were to cry: “crucify him.” Their joy was superficial. There are always those who want to see “the establishment” torn down. They were delighted with his wondrous acts — but did they see behind them to the One who did them? We want to believe *some* of them did.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

At least one in this crowd can be delighted with all the wondrous things he did with a full knowledge of the meaning of all he did. What wondrous things are you doing among us today? Dear Lord, open my eyes that I may see the eternal transaction that happens when one person is brought out of darkness into light — from the power of Satan unto yourself! This is a liberation greater than that of the woman in the synagogue long ago. Such “greater works” is why you came — and why you returned to the Father. Yea, and why you sent the blessed Holy Spirit. Dear Lord I do want to share in this labor for you!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the powerful words of Jesus that divided the thoughts and the intents of the hearts of these men — and all men. (2) Thank you that one day *all* his opponents will know he is Lord — and God. (3) Thank you for the “common people” who hear Jesus gladly — even today. (4) Thank you that Jesus causes delight that does not go away. (5) Thank you that Jesus is alive today working in our midst. (6) Thank you that wonder and praise are so fitting words to describe my Lord’s works. (7) Thank you for the very, very brief time he was with us — that he might be with us forever. (8) Thank you for helping me in the last few days of personal worship.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... *but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.*” Why were they delighted? Was it because some friend of theirs had been made well? This could be a cause of real joy. When this was repeated over and over again it is easy to see a whole large crowd of people full of excited comments about the wonder of being made whole.

We wish Luke had told us more of these “wonderful things.” It would seem that no one really understood. The synagogue ruler didn’t — the Pharisees didn’t. The people were superficial in their understanding! Did this bother our Lord? I have spoken when I felt very few really understood (like last night). How I do want to be like Jesus in this regard.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

My dear Lord triumphed! What happened to his opponents? It was so long ago — and so very far away. However, you have a record of the whereabouts of everyone who was there! I lift up these requests out of this one verse: (1) May my humiliation lead me to repentance! I do need to change. (2) Give me an omniscient view of the work — the teaching — and the life of my Lord. (3) I do want to delight in your Son and my Lord — I need a fresh look at him! (4) My life and activities seem so circumscribed! Enlarge my horizon! Take me back to him.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

There is a whole volume of truth in this one verse — teach me from it: (1) “You are like the woman who was healed — aren’t you?” (2) “There is glorious freedom in believing — in accepting my miraculous work of salvation.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Africa — Point for prayer: *Islam* is the strongest ideological contender for the hearts of Africans. One of the major needs for pioneer missionary advance in Africa today is among the millions of uncommitted followers of traditional religions who live in a belt across the continent from Senegal to Ethiopia. Pray that uncommitted peoples may be evangelized before they turn to Islam.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Sinners Jesus will receive:
Sound this word of grace to all
Who the heav’nly pathway leave,
All who linger, all who fall.

Come, and He will give you rest;
Trust Him, for His word is plain;
He will take the sinfulness:
Christ receiveth sinful men.

WEEK TWELVE

—Tuesday—

You are on your throne in heaven and all is right with the world. I am saying with the psalmist; “God reigns over the nations.” Teach me in the closet what this means to me.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne. . . . for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted” (Psa. 47:7,8,9b). It is easy to accept the fact that you are King of all the earth, at least the physical world. The more one observes your physical creation the more full of wonder we are. In the jungles of Brazil there is an incredible mass of vegetation. You are aware of every leaf and insect in the midst of that medley. I can and do sing a song of praise for the wonder of your creative power.

Surely the next phrase must refer to your potential ruling over the nations of the world. Or do you have a subtle plan that is being worked out contrary to what any of the kings of this earth knows?

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The statement in verse nine: “the kings (shields) of the earth belong to God” is to me totally amazing! It does sound here like we are to understand you are involved in politics! Such is a bad word — you are involved in raising up and tearing down kings and kingdoms. Praise your name that I can place my confidence in your sovereign will being worked out in the affairs of men. Whether you own the kings or their shields you manage the fortunes of their kingdoms. How full of wonder I am at the subtleties with which you rule in the affairs of men! I am so glad to acknowledge such — even if I do not at all understand it.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is so easy to forget these powerful promises. The

news reported in all the media gives no recognition — let alone honor to yourself. It will be a real interesting experience to be present to find out who was the controlling power behind all the nations of the world. Please forgive me for living as if this were not at all true. I cannot imagine the amazement on the faces of those in high places when they know of your part in all that has happened. I do wish I could remain much more god-conscious on an international level. I can if I will — dear Lord, help me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

¹⁸Then Jesus asked, “what is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew, became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches.” —Luke 13:18-19, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Such a meaningful description of your work in the hearts of men! Your rule in our hearts is like the small grain of mustard seed. But first of all someone must plant it! Oh for the privilege of being that man. I am glad I have been able to plant your living word in the hearts of many men and women. In this seed is the eternal energy of your very self! I am glad my Lord compared life to “a garden.” So often this imagery

becomes a part of your expression. I much prefer your descriptions of life and your work in the hearts of men to the downbeat crude words of men.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How I do want to open my heart to receive what you have said. If my Lord said you would be as fruitful in the hearts of men as a mustard seed in the garden, then *I want* to believe it. How we need to plant it — how we need to plant it in faith and full assurance that it will grow and become a great tree! It was recognized by all. Notice the obvious helpful points in these two verses: (1) The rule of God in the lives of men begins with the seed of tremendous power. (2) It was lodged in the heart. (3) The rule of yourself is rapid when we want you as Lord. (4) Your rule has real practical value and outreach.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord found ways of illustrating his teaching. (2) Thank you for your rule in human hearts. (3) Thank you for the desire to honor my Lord. (4) Thank you that your own divine life is in the seed — the mustard seed of the kingdom. (5) Thank you for the one who planted the seed in the garden of my life. (6) Thank you for the promise of wondrous growth. (7) Thank you for the tremendous use and influence your kingdom can have.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . and the birds of the air perched in its branches.” There are several possible points of interest in this little phrase: (1) The birds of the heaven no doubt represent people in “high places” — who are attracted to the kingdom. (2) These persons are attracted as a natural response — as birds to trees. There is something solidly real about Christianity. (3) These persons seek shelter. Christianity is essentially a source of encouragement. This is one of the largest attractions: i.e. that we can find “a shelter in the time of storm.” (4) It is from such a perspective one can look at life and find protection. Looking at life from our Lord’s view gives us a vista into eternity past and eternity to come.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Every day there are 41,000 unborn babies aborted? How many new births are aborted? Every day your seed is planted in the hearts of men — how many seeds? How imperceptively are they dropped into the human heart! Dear Lord, for every book we mail — for every lesson taught — for every leaflet distributed

the mustard seed is in it! Protect it — water it — fertilize it. There is a strange and beautiful unobtrusiveness about the character and mission of your Son — this does so encourage me! His whole contribution to the human race was but a mustard seed — ah, but what a tree it produced.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue to reach my conscience. (1) “How hopeless seemed the task of my Son, but so is the law of the Spirit.” (2) “The seed is a man — a man is the seed — learn — learn from this.” (3) “The good news has the principle of indestructible vitality in it.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Points for praise: (1) *The gospel has been preached in nearly every country in Asia.* Only in the Maldives and Mongolia is there no organized indigenous church. (2) *The most dramatic advances have occurred over the past 20 year.* Notable is the growth in South Korea, China and Indonesia. (3) *The rapidly growing missionary movement in Asian churches is encouraging.* Many young Asians are enthused with a vision for a lost world.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

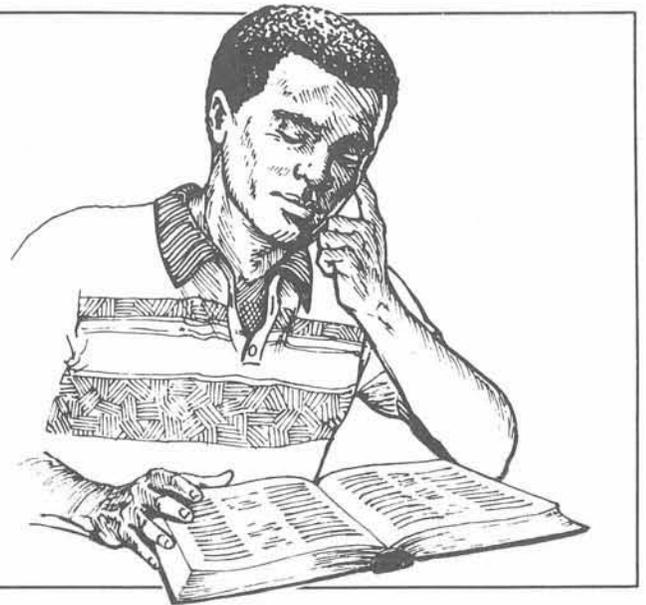
The Church’s one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the word;
From heav’n He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Elect from ev’ry nation
Yet one o’er all the earth;
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With ev’ry grace endued.

WEEK TWELVE

—Wednesday—

Just here we praise you for the great and the small in life. You can be the joy of our whole life. Make it so just for today.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain. It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth” (Psa. 48:1,2). Dear Lord, I want to praise you for your greatness. You are great in mercy and because of this all men can lift their hearts in joy to you. (Ah, that all men would know of such mercy and accept it.) You are great in kindness — in the little things that make life more comfortable. I attribute every one of them ultimately to you! You are great in hope — surely we would have long ago died in the slough of despond without the bright hope you kindle in the heart of all men. Bless your holy name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

The above has indeed been “just for me.” I cannot, however, with the son of Korah extol the beauties of Jerusalem for you no longer live there. The city of yourself, your holy mountain is found in the hearts and lives of your children (essentially this has always been true). Such an abiding place is indeed: “beautiful in its loftiness.” The place where your Son was nailed to the cross has been elevated until all the earth can see him! It is in him and his death that you dwell — because of him and in him we seek and find your abiding place and our abiding place. Such indeed becomes “the joy of the whole earth.” Forgiveness and salvation for all!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

My blessed Father, this morning my heart is indeed full of praise and adoration. But such is not always true. There are days when I can hardly see above the horizon of my own little petty problems. Forgive me.

You are always worthy to be praised; I am not responding to reality when I fail to praise you. I want to assimilate the truth that you are living even now in the bodies of your children. As a universal assembly they compose your own city, your holy mountain, beautiful in loftiness and the joy of the whole earth. This is more than I can truly comprehend! Open my mind and emotions to receive this lovely fact.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I love Thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.
I love Thy Church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁰Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? ²¹It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.” —Luke 13:20,21, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is good to know such verses are talking about us! You are telling each of us just how we should evaluate the message we believe and teach. There is incredible growth potential in what we speak. “A woman” could indeed represent the bride of your Son. It is important that we see several facts in this brief parable: (1) The yeast must be possessed, held, known by the

woman. We can't and won't mix in the yeast if we do not even know what we have. (2) It must be mixed into the dough. Yeast only becomes non-operative when it is kept apart from the flour. (3) The promise is that the whole world could be permeated with the good news!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I am glad to say I know something of the power of the yeast you have given me. I believe in the promises of growth and influence. But I have not been as involved as I want to be in mixing this leaven into the dough. I have made it possible for others to do it. In human computations this is good — and no doubt you rejoice this is so. But I long to be personally involved in mixing in the yeast. Help me — open my eyes and break my heart. (I realize these are dangerous requests, but I dare to make them!) I confidently expect you to give me opportunity to see answers today! May I be willing!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the multiplied pictures we have of your rule in men's hearts. (2) Thank you for the built-in growth potential in the kingdom. (3) Thank you that to us you have given the yeast for the world. (4) Thank you we do not have to look far to find a place to plant the seed or hide the leaven. (5) Thank you that leaven has a way of working on its own. (6) Thank you we cannot take the credit, but we are working with you. (7) Thank you for the promise of world leavening that is always before us.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . until it worked all through the dough.” How wonderful is the promise that in any situation it is possible to leaven the whole lump! However each part of the dough must have contact with the yeast. There is no way that indirect work can accomplish this purpose. The ramifications of this principle applied to evangelism are tremendous. Someone worked out the equation that if one person won one person and that person won another and the process was repeated thirty-three times the whole world would have been won.

What a beautiful figure: it is in the production of bread our Lord chose to show us the world can be won. He himself is the bread we become. He himself is the leaven hidden in our hearts.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As you speak to my heart I respond with these re-

quests: (1) I know “the glad tidings of great joy” has fabulous growth potential — ah, teach me *more about it!* (2) Just *how* can I mix the yeast in the world in which I live? (3) Keep the whole wide world ever before me. *Your rule* in my heart must be first and foremost — people learn from what we are. (4) Open doors of information to just how your yeast is raising the level of this lost world — I need to see the whole picture.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

This text has truly reached my deep need — continue to do so — I am listening: (1) “Please see that leaven is from the outside — it is *not* a part of ‘human nature.’ ” (2) “Leaven changes the nature of the meal — this is how I work.” (3) “Leaven uses the composition of the meal — as well as changing it.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Point for prayer: *The Church, as a whole*, is stagnant or even losing ground in Sri Lanka, parts of India, Bangladesh, Taiwan and, to an extent, even Hong Kong, though in each land the more evangelistic bodies are growing. There is much nominalism that needs to be replaced by a living, vibrant faith.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

My stubborn will at last hath yielded;
I would be Thine and Thine alone;
And this the prayer my lips are bringing,
“Lord, let in me Thy will be done.”
Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee;
Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.

I'm tired of sin, footsore and weary;
The darksome path hath dreary grown;
But now a light has ris'n to cheer me:
I find in Thee my Star, my Sun

WEEK TWELVE

—Thursday—

*I want to honor you in my attitudes —
towards you — toward others —
toward myself. Help me just now!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love. Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness” (Psa. 48:9,10). Since we are your temple today this could be a beautiful expression of our personal worship before you! You are within us and we are within you. We want to lose ourselves in contemplation on the One who lives in us! Your love is indeed unfailing. It is a blessing to review in our mind the examples of your faithfulness in love to the nation of Israel from Egypt’s bondage to Canaan’s happy land. It is a great source of wonder to review the last 200 years’ history of the U.S.A. and mark your unfailing love. Most of all it is a source of praise to meditate on the past fifty years of my own experience and see over and over again your goodness to me!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Were the whole world a stadium and all mankind were seated in it as spectators; were there some way of placing before us the qualities of yourself for our praise we would never cease to express our honor to yourself. Through the endless ages we would be amazed over and over again at the different facets of your unfailing love. How I want to praise you in a somewhat adequate manner.

In your right hand is the scepter of righteousness — i.e. you have always decided what is right for all men. Most especially for me. In another turn to our meditation we can say that by the power of your right hand you have declared me righteous. Not of myself — but because of your unfailing love!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Within your temple meditations on other matters than your unfailing love have happened. I am ashamed and embarrassed to consider what has received time and thought within your holy place. Much of our meditation is useless and meaningless. Must life be taken up with such subjects? Some have no moral value but simply take up time that could be so much better spent in your presence. Forgive me. If the innumerable hosts of heaven praise you constantly why is it thought absurd that we do the same? Of course such beings live “by sight” in your eternal presence. I do want to come closer to this ideal. Help me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee.
Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²²Then Jesus went through the cities and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. ²³Someone asked him, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?”

He said to them, ²⁴“Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’”

“But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’”

²⁶“Then you will say, ‘We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.’”

²⁷“But he will reply, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!’”

—Luke 13:22-27, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

All the preaching our Lord does from 13:22 through 17:10 is apparently done “beyond” the Jordan in Perea. (See John 10:22ff.) There seem to be three factors present that call forth this question: (1) Many were following him no more. Defection and dissatisfaction were seen on every hand. (2) Jesus was increasingly emphasizing the individual responsibility for salvation. (3) There was a strong opposition to our Lord and his words and works by the Jewish authorities. How blessed it would have been to follow through the towns and villages and listen to his teachings. I can just now at least hear his words: “*Make every effort to enter through the narrow door. . . .*”

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Lord, I do want to indeed make every effort to enter through your Son into the life that is life indeed! Once again I am impressed with his exclusiveness. The way of salvation and service is just as narrow as his words.

There *will be* a time when the owner of heaven (even yourself) will close the door and no amount of pleading will open it again. This is one awesome thought. How brief at best is the life we have — briefer still are the opportunities that come to us to yield our hearts to him. It is only by such yielding that we really get to *know* our Lord. Social contact and superficial listening will never, never be enough. Dear Lord, I want to enter the narrow door!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the question that put salvation into focus. (2) Thank you we are all called upon to make a personal effort to surrender our thoughts and our desires to yours. (3) Thank you that we have been told some who associated with you will go to hell. (4) Thank you for these strong words: socializing is not at all enough! (5) Thank you for the plain promise of life after death — as seen in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets. (6) Thank you that evildoers are equated with those who do not enter the narrow door. (7) Thank you I can truly eat and drink with you today.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“*I do not know you or where you came from.*” Since our Lord had omniscience this was quite a statement! What he meant, of course, was that he never shared in what they did or in the place from whence they came. The opposite is also true: my Lord does know me in the intimate manner of a husband with his wife — there are no erotic overtones in this, but there is all the dearness and tenderness of marriage in the relationship. Our Lord lives in the same house with us in the person of the Holy Spirit. My Lord’s words are given in the context of death and salvation. Our love for and living with Jesus is not just a lovely ideal — it is an eternal necessity!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

The question asked here has not lost its impact — all the factors that originally prompted the question are again present. I open my ears to hear his answer. I do so in these requests: (1) I hear your Son speak to me — his voice — his tone — his manner are all full of love and personal concern for my needs — but I must enter — I must obey. Help me blessed Lord. (2) I am eager for a relationship that is much more than social — more than religious — the dearness and tenderness of marriage *can be* — will be mine. Work in me to “will and do”!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause to look up — to wait — to listen. Speak to me: (1) “I love you — I can do no less — but I can do much more — you *must* share my desires.” (2) “I desire that *none* perish — how many do you want to see go to hell?” (3) “Wake up.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Point for prayer: *The Church is under pressure* from, or discriminated against by, non-Christian religious majorities. In some countries, almost the entire Christian community is drawn from the more isolated, or despised sections of society. Only the Holy Spirit can sweep away barriers erected by man, which stop the flow of life to other communities in these lands. The breakthrough must yet come.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

WEEK TWELVE

—Friday—

In my heart of hearts I want to “walk about Zion.” Teach me yet again of your eternalness as I enter this time of worship.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end” (Psa. 48:12-14). This is saying something about yourself in your kingdom enterprise for all generations. “Zion” represents your collective work in the hearts of men. It was physical and temporary in the days of David, it is spiritual and eternal in our day. I have been walking about Zion down here in Chile and Brazil, South America. I have found 85 to 90 assemblies. As I “count the towers and consider her ramparts” I do want to remember what I have seen and tell it to the next generation.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Dear Lord, the citadels of your presence, the strongholds of your outreach are marvelous to behold! If somehow we can communicate to every generation the wonder of service to our Lord we will soon reach this world for you. It is the sense of service to you — of worship to you — of learning at your feet that keeps us going in your kingdom building. Dear Lord, somehow help me to encourage these dear ones who are indeed on the front line of battle. It can be very, very lovely on the frontier — and in the wilds of a new country some of these, your servants, are laboring for you. Dear Lord, impress upon me, and through me to them: “. . . this is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide to the end.”

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How easy it is to lose this sense of purpose when we return to the ease of America! I want to remember

“Zion” is also set up in America! To “walk about Zion” is to walk about yourself! No organization — no human institution can ever suffice. The psalmist said after his viewing of the city: “For this is our God. . . .” Indeed it is! Only the divine qualities of yourself give value to what we are or do. To “count the towers” is to number the qualities of yourself that give us a view of life — a perspective on eternity. Oh Lord, how I need this. When I “consider well” your impregnable defense against all the forces of darkness I am greatly encouraged. My security becomes a wonderful reality. Your “citadels” must be your offensive centers. Give me a place in them along with others who love your appearing.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁸“There will be weeping and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. ³⁰Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last.” —*Luke 13:28-30, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My Lord is saying it will be very difficult for the Jews to change their minds (or repent) about the universality of the Messianic kingdom. In answer to the question: "Lord are only a few people going to be saved?" he says "No" — not few, but many! Even those who have not had opportunity to hear the Messiah — to eat and drink with him. Persons such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets will be saved. But each of these men came to God by the narrow door of "agonizing, struggling, self-sacrificing faith." Without this same kind of faith you will suffer weeping and gnashing of teeth as you stand on the outside looking in. Salvation or Kingdom citizenship will depend upon acceptance of God's mercy by faith just as these men did.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

If Jesus had not mentioned those from the east and the west there would be no hope of our salvation. There are going to be some wonderful and shocking surprises on the judgment day. *Now* is the time to awake to reality — ". . . there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last." Some people whom the world would consider of no value will be first into the kingdom. Others the world consider prime prospects for salvation will not be saved. I want to apply this text to myself: I want the same kind of faith as the patriarchs and the prophets. I want to be last in my own estimate. Dear Lord, I struggle with the same religious pride found in these Pharisees! Help me!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus was not at all intimidated by the religious leaders of his day. (2) Thank you that Jesus is the One who throws people out of the kingdom. (3) Thank you that he himself is the narrow door. (4) Thank you for those from the east and the west who are even now entering the kingdom of yourself. (5) Thank you for the feast I have here in your kingdom. (6) Thank you for the provisions you have made for the eternal kingdom. (7) Thank you that because of your grace we who were last have become first.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

" . . . those who are last will be first; and the first shall be last." These words are true in several ways: (1) Those who think they are last in their contribution to life will find to their total amazement that so much more was done through their influence than they ever dreamed. On the other hand some who consider themselves first will find that so much of their work was

wood, hay and stubble. (2) The last in man's estimate has so many times been the first in the estimate of God. Matthew Levi was last on the social ladder — Jesus called him and he has become first. The same could be said of Zacchaeus. Jesus called four fishermen who were surely last in human estimate to be his special "sent ones." Praise your name for your wondrous grace!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How very *much* is said about heaven and the world to come — how *little* do we emphasize this vital subject. I am glad to lift up these requests about the life to come: (1) Enlarge my expectations! There are few things. I enjoy more than a good meal with a good friend — a good meal in pleasant surroundings with my wife is my high joy! Since I am the bride of your Son I can only await the marriage supper with wonder. (2) Give me the confidence that comes out of your love not my good works. (3) I anticipate meeting *so many* interesting people — prepare my heart to share with them.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I pause to hear the words of my Lord for my heart: (1) "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth — for some." (2) ". . . they will come from the east and the west, and the north and the south. . . ." (3) ". . . some are last who will be first — and some are first who will be last."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Asia — Point for prayer: *Persecution is very real in Communist states.* Despite the greater degree of freedom for Christians in China, there are believers in prison for their faith. The Church, where it exists, only does so illegally in North Korea, Mongolia and Kampuchea. In Vietnam, Christians are under constant surveillance and pressure.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Buried with Christ, my blessed Redeemer,
Dead to the old life of folly and sin;
Satan may call, the world may entreat me,
There is no voice that answers within.
Dead to the world, to voices that call me,
Living anew, obedient but free;
Dead to the joys that once did enthrall me —
Yet 'tis not I, Christ liveth in me.

WEEK TWELVE

—Saturday—

Anticipation — deep longing for being taken unto yourself is at least one motive for my worship. Enlarge my understanding!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“But God will redeem my soul from the grave; he will surely take me to himself. A man who has riches without understanding is like the beasts that perish” (Psa. 49:15,20). Bless your wonderful name, even in this ancient document is this plain promise — this bright hope. We have been delivered from the fear of the grave. How much brighter is this hope since your Son came. Thank you for the assurance that life continues beyond the grave. This is but a door into your presence. There is a personal interest indicated here: you know me and love me and will take me into your own home. Riches seem to be indeed the goal of men upon this earth. Unless we understand the purpose and limitations of riches we are no better at the end of life than a dead dog or lion.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

All the blessed promises of the N.T. are added to this beautiful verse from the Psalms. You have already purchased me for yourself and delivered me from the fear of death. I repeat over and over again the words of your Son, “He that liveth and believeth in me *shall never die!*” My body will die and be dissolved, but I shall never die. I shall never be separated from you; I will be but translated into your eternal presence. Praise your name!

All Americans are rich in the estimate of many third-world countries. Shall we use what we have with your understanding? Will we plan so our riches will continue to bless men after we are dead? Dear Lord, open my mind to know how best to do this!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How can it be that there are times when I fear death?

Do I fear the unknown possible pain associated with leaving this life? Is it fear of the uncertainty connected with this day of departure? This is true. But I want to be able to say with *no* hesitancy: “*To die is gain*”; “I have a desire to depart the body *which is far better.*” Dear Lord, forgive me when these words have become but pious platitudes, and not living testimonies of my faith! I believe that just back of the shadow called this life is your eternal self! You are awaiting eagerly to take us unto yourself! Keep this fact ever fresh and new and real before me. How easy it is to fall in love with what we imagine riches can do — open my understanding!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Be not weary, for labor will cease
Some glad morning;
Turmoil will change into infinite peace,
Some bright morning.
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
When the sun is shining in th’eternal sky
Some bright morning,
Some glad morning,
We shall see the Lord of Harvest,
By and by.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³¹At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.”

³²He replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’” ³³In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next

day — for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!” — Luke 13:31-33, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I do want to see these words just as if I had never read them before! It seems very strange that Pharisees of all men should warn our Lord about the murderous intentions of Herod. There was no love for our Lord on the part of these men — unless Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea was behind the request. I do not know the purpose of these words, but I do appreciate the influence our Lord had in Galilee and Perea and over the lives of the Pharisees.

My Lord used a metaphor in describing Herod and it was not at all complimentary, but it *did* look into his heart and read his character. Jesus said he was not leaving until he was ready — the plots of Herod would not influence him at all!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Jesus knows the hearts of all men. I wonder what type of animal he might choose to describe me? Am I a fox? A jackal? A rat? A weasel? Dear Lord, I am glad you know my heart. It is not in me either to know my own heart, or the hearts of others. How I wish I could be confident in either the presence of demons or casting them out. I know demons are present — but just how to define their work or cast them out is a problem with me. Help me Lord!

Jesus was sarcastic! This is a bit of a shock. I need to see with whom and the purpose of his sarcasm. It was with the Pharisees and its purpose was to let them know he did not fear Herod. It also pointed to his coming death in Jerusalem.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus' enemies recognized his tremendous influence. (2) Thank you for the historical accuracy of these Gospel accounts. (3) Thank you for the total fearlessness of my Lord! (4) Thank you that Jesus knew what was in all men. (5) Thank you that Jesus was never in a hurry — and yet was never late. (6) Thank you for the biting sarcasm Jesus used on these religious leaders. (7) Thank you I can be drawn up short as I consider the fact that my Lord knows all my intentions before my actions.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem.” How powerfully ironic were these words of Jesus! He let these Pharisees who attempted to warn him about Herod know that he both knew Herod and did not fear him. The Pharisees really wanted Jesus in Judea or Jerusalem so they could at-

tempt to trap him or in some way destroy him. Jesus wanted these men to know he understood them and their character just as well as he did that of Herod. How cutting these few words must have been to the hearts of the Pharisees. “Surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem.” He will be in Jerusalem soon so they like their fathers can kill God's prophet!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Look into my heart dear Lord — how would you metaphorically describe me? I want to be your sheep — not Satan's goat. I lift up these requests out of this strange encounter: (1) Since it is not in me to know my own heart or to direct my own steps — I cast myself at your feet. (2) Threats did not intimidate my Lord — give me his resolve and clarity of purpose. (3) Rulers did not run his life — he described them — and Herod in particular for what they were — may I be like him who is King of kings! (4) Sooner or later all of us — *beginning with me* — must say like your dear Son: “*I must!*” How is it with *your own* priorities in my life? Help me dear Lord!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

These are searching words — I let the barriers down — speak to my conscience: (1) “It is possible to be *dead wrong* and have no emotional response to the fact.” (2) “Emotions are always by-products of decisions — ‘Strive to enter into the narrow gate.’ ” (3) “Trust me — I know where I am going — I am **THE WAY** — I am *reality!*”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

The Caribbean Area — Point for prayer: *The relative stagnation of the Church* in the Caribbean is cause for deep concern. Once Caribbean missionaries played a major role in evangelizing West Africa. Why not again? In many churches there is much enthusiasm, but less depth and little outreach. There is much religion without personal faith in Christ, and various cults are making rapid inroads.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Who at the door is standing,
Patiently drawing near,
Entrance within demanding?
Whose is the voice I hear?
Sweetly the tones are falling:
“Open the door for Me!
If thou wilt heed My calling,
I will abide with thee.”

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Sunday—

We have an All-Mighty One who calls all men to him for rest or for judgment. I bow before Him for rest.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“The Mighty One, God, the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets” (Psa. 50:1). Bless your great and wonderful name! In this one beautiful verse you are described as: (1) *The Mighty One* — we might add the All-Mighty One — and the *Only* Mighty One. How I do like this quality of yourself! It so well fits all I know of you. (2) *The Lord* — i.e. the One to whom all men must ultimately answer. How sophisticated man has become — i.e. in his own eyes. The real sophisticate will one day call his creature to acknowledge his Creator. (3) You will speak and summon all creation to stand up and be counted!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

My expression of praise to you . . . even as I attempt this personal expression of praise I am beset on every hand by interruptions — but I am determined you will indeed receive from me praise and adoration. Such a beautiful description of your power: “. . . the Lord speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.” What seems to us to be only the natural rising and setting of the sun is actually a result of your summons to rise and set. We know it is but the rotation of the earth and the activity of the light and dark as a consequence — or do we? Who was it who set such activity in motion? Even your own Almighty Self. Praise your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I struggle to keep your praise uppermost in my mind and on my lips. I am making progress, but there are other interests that continually clamor for my attention. Forgive my involvement in what I know is but

transitory. The more people I see in more countries the more depression and unhappiness I see written on the faces of so many. What a delight and joy springs to our lips and emotion as we consider your almightiness and power. Forgive me that I am not more often at your throne of grace. It is a rare privilege to confess my sin to such a Great One!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
In joy or pain;
Come quickly and abide,
Or life is vain.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev'ry hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior:
I come to Thee!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁴“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

³⁵Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ” —Luke 13:34,35, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What blessed and burning words are these! No doubt the reference to slaying the prophets in Jerusalem, and his covert promise to come to Jerusalem reminded Jesus of what would happen in this city in but three months ahead. He was not nearly so grieved over his own soon-coming death as he was over what

would happen as a culmination of Jerusalem's rejection of all God's efforts to gather them to his heart. The figure of the hen and her chicks is a touching one — "Of all the sad words of tongue or pen it is these words, it might have been." Jesus expressed it in four words: "*You were not willing.*" But one day they would be willing! When it was too late and the sentence had already been pronounced.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Lord, I know how easy it is to assume I am gathering to Him — but this can never be only an assumption. I do wonder just how my Lord would have fulfilled his words if the Jews of his day had been willing. A more practical question is what this means to me in my own personal life? It could mean, as we attempt to relate to the figure of speech: (1) The mother hen gives a signal in sound to the chicks when danger approaches. They hurry under her wings in response for security. How many many blessed words he has given to me of danger. I hasten to abide in him. (2) The mother hen leads her brood to the area where food is found — when they have eaten they return for rest and shade. How obvious of application all this is to us.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the personal interest Jesus had for the people of Jerusalem. (2) Thank you for the deep emotional involvement my Lord had in the acceptance or rejection of his message. (3) Thank you for the message here that to reject his message is to reject himself. (4) Thank you that Jesus gave Jerusalem several opportunities. (5) Thank you for the comparison of the hen and the chicks — not very flattering as to intelligence, but comforting as to interest. (6) Thank you for the clear fact that without Jesus as host the house is desolate. (7) Thank you that some did sing: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name (authority) of the Lord."

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*" (Psalm 118:26). It seems to me more than passing strange that it is thought that this 118th Psalm is the one our Lord and his apostles sang before they went out into Gethsemane. It is an application of this verse to the nation of Israel that has confounded scholars for a long time. Just *when* were the words to find fulfillment? They were sung when our Lord rode into Jerusalem on a donkey — about three months from the time they were spoken. Perhaps they were fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed and the nation (house) was left desolate in 70 A.D. There are others who project these words ahead to his second coming when

everyone — "Jews first" (?) will acknowledge his Lordship and indeed say "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." At whatever time they had or shall have historical fulfillment I want them to have personal fulfillment *now* in my life!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There are so many parallels between Israel in the time of my Lord and the very religious people of our day. I lift these requests in an attempt to help us all: (1) Only you know when the storm will break over our land — when the thunder and lightning will come — I am just one of your very small "chicks" — help me to hear and gather under your wings. (2) Lead me out into a secure area — give me the common sense necessary to follow you. (3) Show me again the tear-stained face of your Son as he weeps over us — perhaps such a view will touch our hearts.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You have my attention — continue to speak to me: (1) "To reject my message — my words — is to reject me." (2) "It is day — the night has not yet come — let us be up and doing — not just *talking!*" (3) "Blessed is he who comes by the authority of myself — has this happened to you?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Eastern Europe — Point for prayer: *Praise God for the growth of the Church in Eastern Europe.* In the midst of suffering and trials, the Holy Spirit is working in many areas. God reigns today — even behind the Iron Curtain! Evangelical believers have ultimately increased in every country of the region since the coming of Communism, with the possible exception of Albania and Bulgaria.

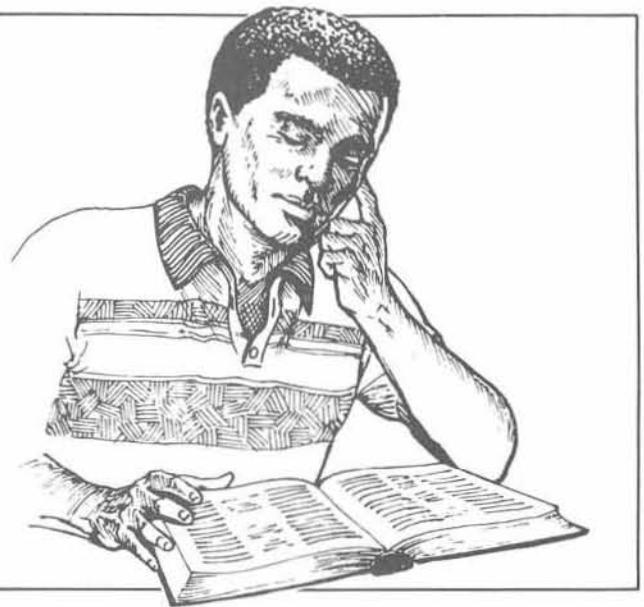
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
 Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
 Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
 His child, and forever, I am.
 Redeemed, redeemed,
 Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
 Redeemed, redeemed,
 His child, and forever, I am.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Monday—

How good it is to have someone who never lacks confidence — someone who knows everything and everyone. Even yourself!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it” (Psa. 50:9-12). What a tremendous statement of your total independence and self-sufficiency. You told Israel that you had no need for their domestic or wild animals since all of them belonged to you. You know by name every bird in the forest and every one of the small animals of the fields. What a tremendous declaration of omniscience and omnipotence! Thank you, thank you for reminding me (and all men) that you do not of your nature need us — we need you!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

You have chosen to need me — you could, and have, existed before I or any men were created — but you have in your infinite love created man for your companionship. Praise your name! I want to take another look at the world in which I live and affirm this blessed truth: “. . . the world is mine (yours), and all that is in it.” How wonderful that since you made me for yourself and you created the world for yourself you also created it for me! Oh bless your wonderful wisdom and love. When I accept the fact that your own infinite reasoning is behind the world in which we live I can look at it and evaluate with meanings that have no end!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How often do we imagine you could not get along without us. Or at least this is the impression we

create. If you were hungry, or in any other way in need you would not ask us for help because you, as a part of your own nature have created more than adequate provisions for yourself. You are not at all indebted to me — you own me *nothing* — utterly *nothing*. I owe you all things. At the same time I in you and because of you have all things and abound! Forgive me for “laying claim” to anything except as a gift from you. All of your promises are “yea and amen” — but only because you have said so — not because you owe me anything. I want to keep this record straight — help me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

All the way my Savior leads me:
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my Guide?
Heav’nly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well;
For I know, whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²²Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. ²⁴The Jews gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

²⁵Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me, ²⁶but you do not believe because you do not belong to my flock. ²⁷My sheep hear my voice; I know

them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." —*John 10:22-28, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The "Feast of Dedication" was started in 164 B.C. by Judas Maccabaeus. It was held on December 25th. This accounts for the reference to the winter time. The winter season in Jerusalem began at this date. The Temple had been defiled by the Gentile ruler Antiochus Epiphanes but was conquered and cleansed and dedicated three years to the day by the Jewish patriot referred to above. It was cold and my Lord sought the protection of the porch of Solomon in the temple. The Jews felt they had him cornered. They surrounded him like a pack of carnivorous animals about to make a kill. They wanted a clear unequivocal answer to the question: "*Are you the Messiah?*"

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

The answer of my Lord is an answer to me — and to all others of our generation who seek other evidence (of a subjective nature) than that already given to us. Dear Lord, dear Lord! You have indeed already told us! Do we believe you any more readily than the Jews on that day in Solomon's portico? The miracles you did (and I want to trace every word of every one of them) speak to me for you! Disbelief comes from not being a sheep! If this is so, and I know it is, then dear Lord make me a sheep. Your voice speaks through your miracles. I shall know NOTHING of them until I read your word! When I accept you — truly accept you in my heart — as Lord I am at that moment given — and do *now* enjoy eternal life!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the clear historical accuracy of your word. (2) Thank you for the wonderful events that happened on Solomon's portico. (3) Thank you for the confrontation of Jesus and the Jews — out of it has come such blessed words! (4) Thank you that Jesus was never ready to submit himself to man's proposals. (5) Thank you that his miracles speak so plainly and fully and finally of his Lordship. (6) Thank you that Jesus drew such a sharp distinction between *unbelief* and *disbelief*. (7) Thank you that as your sheep I presently enjoy "eternal life."

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." Sheep are stubborn, stupid animals. But when they trust the shepherd they can be very submissive and obedient. It is so blessedly true that when we trust him and yield to his voice no one — or

any thing can snatch us out of the protective hand of the Good Shepherd. I want to day by day claim this wonderful promise: "*they shall never perish.*" Not in this life or the life to come will I ever be separated from you! My willingness is an essential part of this assurance. "We cannot be protected against ourselves in spite of ourselves. . . . The sense of the divine protection is at any moment sufficient to inspire confidence, but not to render it unnecessary," Westcott.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What an exciting encounter! It is winter again — the crisp air — the cool weather — and 1900 years later! You speak to us now as you did then — may we be better listeners! I lift up these requests with this purpose in heart: (1) There is a sense in which some can hear, some can see — and others are deaf and blind. Keep me aware of the subjective element. (2) For all the 20 centuries that have elapsed and *your word* is with us — *amazing — amazing — what a treasure* — I treat it as such — increase my awareness. (3) Shock me into reality — *I now have eternal life!* I shall never die — just change my address. What a wonder!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

It will be enough to just let you speak these words once again into my conscience: (1) ". . . the works that I did in my Father's name, these bear witness of me." (2) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (3) ". . . and no one shall snatch them out of the Father's hand."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Eastern Europe — Points for prayer: (1) *The thrilling growth of the Church in Romania and parts of the USSR* has been with touches of revival too. In both lands the pressure of the authorities on the churches has been particularly severe. (2) *The widespread impact of Christian radio* has been remarkable. One well-known radio preacher has an estimated audience of four million or more every time he speaks!

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling,
 Calling for you and for me;
 See on the portals He's waiting and watching,
 Watching for you and for me.
 Come home, come home,
 Ye who are weary, come home;
 Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
 Calling, O sinner, come home!

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Tuesday—

I worship you because: We hurt where only you can help. You hurt when we do. You can and do give us a clean clear record.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Psa. 51:1,2). What marvelous and abundant qualities of yourself are seen in these two verses! (1) Mercy — which is that blessed capacity to meet deep personal hurt. How I need your mercy — how gladly do I claim it. (2) *Great compassion*: this is the expression or application of mercy. But it goes a step further. *Compassion* indicates you hurt when I hurt. Your empathy with me is *great* i.e. deep and profound. (3) *You can obliterate my transgression of your law!* Blotting of a record on a clay or wax tablet was accomplished by smoothing the surface until there was no indication that a record was ever present! Praise your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What I have written for one I have written for all. All of us stand on the same level ground before your judgment seat! (1) When the sacrifices were made upon your altar great care was taken that all impurities were washed away before it was offered. Dear Lord, I am delighted to accept — to claim the washing away of my sins — all my sins. I can now offer a clean heart before you as a living sacrifice. (2) The cleansing of the sacrifices was a continual necessary part of the offerings before you. So it is with me: I am glad to claim the continual cleansing of the blood of your dear Son. What I have expressed here in the first person has such a wonderful application to all persons. May our sin and forgiveness be just as personal as it was with David.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

This whole psalm is a confession — a deep personal penitent confession. I want my expression of confession to have these same elements in it! I become disgusted with my sin — i.e. with my repeated sins. I am so glad that as long as I want to change and do better your mercies will not fail. Dear Lord, I do not know my heart as to my motives — you do, I leave it there. I take refuge in *“your unfailing love.”* I know you see the whole complex battle between the forces of good (yourself) and evil (the evil one). I count so heavily upon *“your great compassion.”* Just now, right here I claim the promise that all my sin is blotted out and there is no record at all that I have ever sinned against you! Wonder of joy!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child, and forever, I am.
Redeemed, redeemed,
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed, redeemed,
His child, and forever, I am.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁹*“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.”*

³¹*Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, —John 10:29-31, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Such penetrating words! Jesus is talking about us! We

had best give him our undivided attention. We are a gift of yourself to your Son! What a beautiful truth! Jesus bought us — the Father loves us and gives us into the care of the Good Shepherd. You are greater than all opposition to us! There seems to be a joint protection committee: you and your Son, both intent on caring for us. Praise your wonderful name! In the six words of the 30th verse I find an atomic bomb of meaning! In what sense am I to understand that you and your Son are one? I would say: one in nature i.e. essence. Both of you are deity and the fulness of yourself dwelt in your Son (Col. 2:9).

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

So often in these expressions of worship I am sorely tempted to wait until I can say it in more meaningful expressions — but I know this is Satan's ruse to detour me from worshipping you at all. I resist him! I will use whatever words I do now have to worship you!

Dear Lord, do I even now belong to you? Yes, yes, I do! How I want to pause and let this sink into my total consciousness! You are "greater than all." Greater than the false prophet — greater than any persecution or persecutor. You are greater than famine, nakedness, danger or sword. You are greater than death, life, angels, demons, the present or the future. You are greater than powers, heights or depth or anything else in all Creation!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that I belong both to you and your Son — what security! (2) Thank you that if I choose not to love you or obey your Son I shall not see life. (3) Thank you that no one can snatch me out of your hand, but being a sheep I can decide to jump out — God forbid! (4) Thank you that you are greater than all my opponents — I hide myself in you! (5) Thank you for the remarkable statement that Jesus made: "I and the Father are one"! (6) Thank you that Jesus used the expression "my Father" instead of "our Father" because he sustains with you a unique relationship. (7) Thank you for the privilege of personal worship.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I and the Father are one." I could never adequately treat this wonderful statement. But then that is not my purpose. I want only to praise you and wonder in your presence as I read the words the Holy Spirit has given through the apostle John. In every one of the blessed qualities of yourself I can hear your Son say: "I and the Father are one." In all your expressions of concern and personal interest in your people, he says again: "I and the Father are one." Then to turn this

around: in every word and deed I find recorded on the pages of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John I can hear you say: "I and my Son are one." Thank you!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

We are in real good hands! In the hand of your Son and of yourself. As I view my security I lift up these requests: (1) May the total deity expressed in these words "I and the Father are one" sink into my heart. (2) Just now you are making provisions for my deliverance from Satan's snares — give me your own wisdom in the choices I must make for today. (3) I do not want to see pasture without my Shepherd's guidance — I do not want to live in this world without his protection. How good it is to praise you and rest beside the still waters!

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your ministry to me as the sheep you know and love: (1) "Why is it so few want to stone me today?" (2) "Always remember that I am your God first — I am Saviour — shepherd — redeemer — but first I am God." (3) "Love me — I love you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Eastern Europe — Point for prayer: The confrontation between Christianity and atheism. The two are incompatible. Christianity is the only ideology with mass appeal that has been able to stand up to Communism and even expand under its, sometimes, extreme efforts to eradicate religious belief. Pray for the triumph of the Cross in this spiritual conflict.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Why did my Savior come to earth,
And to the humble go?

Why did He choose a lowly birth?
Because He loved me so!

He loved me so,

He loved me so;

He gave His precious life for me, for me,
Because He loved me so.

Why did He drink the bitter cup
Of sorrow, pain and woe?

Why on the cross be lifted up?
Because He loved me so!

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Wednesday—

I gladly bathe in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. I do that just now in the closet of prayer.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge” (Psa. 51:3,4). What attributes of yourself can I find in this confession of David? The *a priori* assumption that you know what is best for man in his relationship with the opposite sex is here. Praise you for your constant concern in this relationship. You also know how deeply serious sin is. The quiet resulting from sin is in the personal sense much worse than the act of sin. You created us to be free and open by and through forgiveness!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I can identify with David in his sense of guilt. Who among us escapes David's sin according to our Lord's definition of adultery (Matthew 5:27-29)? David is here taking the drastic action Jesus recommended to escape such sin. It would seem that David sinned against a number of persons besides yourself. (1) He sinned against Bathsheba. (2) Against Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba. (3) He sinned against his high office as king. (4) He sinned against the people who loved him and respected him. But all of these were nothing when he considered yourself. David also freely admits he alone is responsible for his transgression. He makes no attempt to rationalize or excuse his sin. He makes an open confession not only to free his conscience but to openly confess you are right and just and good!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I have identified so closely with David! *“I know my*

transgressions.” Since others will read these words there is no need to in print name or itemize my sins. But before you I do name them — confess them. Yes, yes, I *know* my transgressions. *“My sin is always before me”* — so true! But your fountain for sin and uncleanness is also always before me. Even now I plunge into this fountain and arise as clean as a new born child! *“Against you, you only, have I sinned.”* I sometimes wish I had much more conscience about how my sin affects others, but with you — you are indeed my first thought in transgression. But if I did not believe you could and would forgive me I would not even appear before you. I am so glad that my sin is always ultimately against you because I know you and love you and want to please you — forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains,
Lose all their guilty stains,
Lose all their guilty stains;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³¹Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, ³²but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

³³“We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” —John 10:31-33, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It does appear so strange that when Jesus did at last tell them plainly about his Messiahship (even as these men requested) they would have none of it. It all relates to what the Jews expected in the Messiah and what you had really promised. There were no stones in the area of the temple where Jesus taught — they hurried over to a place where repairs were in progress or where construction was under way to find stones. Was it after they returned that our Lord said: “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of them do you stone me?” But they *didn't* stone him — I wonder why? There was something in his words and its demeanor — *it was yourself!*

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

If no one else got the message of our Lord's claim to deity these Jews did! Why had Jesus shown these men so many great miracles? He is saying in words no one can miss: “these are my credentials — my identification papers.” These miracles indeed did “*speak*” for Jesus. But for those who have no ears such a message is lost! If I ask for miracles today to confirm his deity am I not saying what he did was really not sufficient? Dear Lord, I am convinced — I believe — no ordinary or “*mere*” man could do the signs you did. I believe you are Immanuel or “God with us”! I fall before you and worship you as my Lord and my God!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus made his claims so clear that the Jews *must* react to him. (2) Thank you for the clear indication that Jesus did not want men to ignore or sidestep his claim to deity. (3) Thank you for my Saviour's estimate of his own miracles: *many, great, and from the Father.* (4) Thank you that I can read of these miracles over and over again and establish my faith in him through them. (5) Thank you that Jesus makes us face the evidence and make up our mind. (6) Thank you that I have been willing — oh, so willing, to accept you as my Father and Jesus as your Son. (7) Thank you that one day this same Jesus will come to judge the world in righteousness.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” This is a testimony as to the effectiveness of our Lord's words. Somehow these Jews totally ignored his miracles and therefore failed to read his credentials. There are men today who have fallen into a greater sin; they refuse to believe the historical evidence of the credibility of your word. I do believe the reasons for accepting the Bible to be just what it claims — your word — are overwhelming. Praise your name I

am glad to honor your claim as “Immanuel” or “God with us.”

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Are my expectations fulfilled in your Son? They can be and should be. I want to pray about them: (1) I expect to live forever. I have this gift right here right now. He has given me such life. May the enormity of such a gift be mine. (2) I expect a clean clear record with you — “there is therefore *now* no condemnation to them who hide themselves in your Son” (Rom. 8:1). Give me courage and humility to claim this gift.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Continue your ministry to my needs, I am listening: (1) “Read my credentials all over again — hang them permanently on the walls of your memory.” (2) “I have never been ‘mere man’ — but my favorite designation is ‘Son of Man.’”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Latin America — Point for prayer: *Praise the Lord for the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in Latin America this century.* This has been one of the great success stories of modern missionary endeavor in times of persecution and severe economic stress. Nearly 10% of the population is evangelical Christian, with the highest percentage in Chile (21%), followed by Guatemala (19%) and Brazil (16%).

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Come ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and pow'r.

Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings you nigh.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Thursday—

You can and do accomplish what I cannot do. It happens right here and right now in personal worship. Gladly do I enter in.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place” (Psa. 51:6). David is revealing your heart as well as his own. Truth in any area of life is that which equals reality. You want me to be totally sincere or genuine. In the depths of my being you want what I say with my mouth to perfectly match my conduct. It is truth in the inner parts that only you can supply. “To will is present” — indeed, I do want to, but to fulfill this intention is just not in me. However, since it is *your* desire — and *my* desire I know *you* can enable me to accomplish this blessed purpose.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

These words of Psalm fifty-one have such a personal meaning it is easy to forget I want to speak on everyone’s behalf — but it has really been accomplished since my need is common to all men.

It is in the second phrase of this verse I take great hope: you can and do teach me wisdom (which is the best use — in this case the divine use — of knowledge). If I will pause long enough and open my heart to your word you will apply your word to any given situation in a way I could never of myself conceive. Thus the truth or reality you desire (and I do so much desire) will be fulfilled. Praise your name for this answer!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I have been afraid of this verse. It speaks to such a deep need. I have felt very little agreement with truth and my conduct. I guess I was expecting something like a perfect performance. Praise your name for forgiveness — which I claim and surely need, but just

now I praise you you have helped me to see just how I can find “truth in the inner parts.” Just for today and my needs, I bring them to you. More and more do I want to open my “inmost place” and let you teach me wisdom. How wonderfully good it is to know you are at work teaching me (as I am willing to be taught) so I can reflect the truth in my conduct.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Would you live for Jesus
and be always pure and good?
Would you walk with Him within the narrow road?
Would you have Him bear your burden,
carry all your load?
Let Him have His way with thee.
His pow’r can make you what you ought to be;
His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;
His love can fill your soul, and you will see
’Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are gods’? ³⁵If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came — and the scripture cannot be broken — ³⁶what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? ³⁷Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. ³⁸But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the evidence of the miracles, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.” — *John 10:34-38, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Jesus had a way to defuse the bomb that was about to go off. Very calmly and deliberately he referred to Psalm 82:6 in which their own Scriptures referred to their own judges of that day as "gods" i.e. those who had intuitively receive your word and spoke it. What such "gods" spoke cannot be altered in any way — or fail of fulfillment. They had for all these centuries accepted this designation of these men, why now object if God is speaking again in his own person. In the second step in defusing Jesus speaks very plainly of the value of his miracles.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It is to his words about his works I want to give myself! Jesus says of himself, "whom the Father set apart as his very own. . . ." How meaningful! You set him apart from yourself and all the holy angels. You set him apart on this earth by his words and works — in both cases, "as your very own." How precious your Son was to you! You sent him into the world — he came because he wanted to, but you also sent him!

When Jesus gives such a heavenly high estimate of the value of his miracles we had best take another look at them. He had done at least thirteen separate miraculous acts. The creative hand of yourself was in every miracle! What a profitable time I expect as I review these acts of God.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the high value you place on those who spoke for you — they were "gods." (2) Thank you for the plain statement of our Lord that the Scriptures are divinely inspired, authoritative and imperishable. (3) Thank you for the assurance that every promise and agreement made in the Scriptures will be kept. (4) Thank you for your infinite love that set Jesus apart and sent him to save us. (5) Thank you that I can see your own omniscience and omnipotence in the miracles of my Lord. (6) Thank you that I can learn and can understand. (7) Thank you for the joy of acknowledging your Son as equal with you.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

" . . . that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." How well our Lord knows the hearts of all men! He knows that it takes time to learn and understand. In the spiritual realm it takes much time. The concept of incarnation can be understood much sooner than the integration of that concept into our inner being! We shall be all of life attempting to learn and understand just what our Lord meant by these words. It is a comfort and

strength to remember as we see our Lord in the gospel accounts that the Father, even yourself, is in him. Wonder of wonders!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am impressed over and over again with the power in the words of Jesus — I lift these requests that I might understand them better: (1) In what sense were these men "gods"? Only in the sense that they spoke on your behalf — even as your Son did? (2) Is Jesus saying that not one word of yourself — whether it comes from your Son's lips or the mouth of the prophets, will ever fall short of fulfillment? (3) Your Son was so precious to you — and so he is to me! — and so are his miracles — I want to consider them again! Give me help here dear Lord, I need it.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I understand these words: *" . . . the Father is in me, and I am in the Father"* — but I do not understand them — speak to me about them: (1) "I was the walking, talking Person of God in human form while on this earth." (2) "I was more 'at home' with the Father while on this earth than I was with anyone else."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Latin America — Point for prayer: *The Roman Catholic Church* has passed through 30 years of tumultuous change. The traditional monolithic structure that once dominated the continent has gone forever. The impact of the Vatican II Council, theological diversity, emphasis on Bible reading, and the influence of the charismatic movement, have been enormous.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent pray'rs;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Friday—

It is hard to imagine anything "whiter than snow" and most especially my heart — but it is true! It will be true again today — here - now!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (Psa. 51:7). How shall I lift up my heart in adoration to you? What I say for myself I say for many: (1) You know when I am in need of cleansing. As near as I can understand there never would be a time when such cleansing was not needed. (2) This whole cleansing is related to the sacrificial system — hyssop was used in applying the blood to the door posts and the altar. It is through the eternal once-for-all sacrifice of my Lord that I can be made and kept clean. (3) You will have to wash me — I cannot wash myself of this impurity. I can claim the promise: "whiter than snow."

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to take another approach to your throne of grace. Do I really believe you want me clean? Of all your desires this must be at the top of the list. Your provision is abundant here. (1) You have offered the one sacrifice for sin. (2) My acceptance of your sacrifice and application of the blood through repentance and prayer keeps the cleansing current. It is wonderful to stand before you each day as "clean." I am so glad to be right now "whiter than snow." There is nothing I need more or claim less. Dear Lord, I want to reverse this relationship. Shall we ask and not receive — particularly in this most needed area? No, no, he has indeed answered!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

This whole psalm is a confession. This verse is a confession. Should not a confession indeed be a form of praise and adoration? When appearing before you it must indeed take such a posture. I know you love me

so I know if I am sincerely in need you will move to meet it. When I bow before you (in my heart as well as my body) I am acknowledging my love for you and my worship of you. All this and more takes place in confession. What I am trying to say so poorly is that my confession must have the therapeutic of worship in it or it is self-defeating. Dear Lord just now I throw myself upon your mercy and claim the promise of cleansing, and that even now I am whiter than snow.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But O the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story — Saved by grace;
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story — Saved by grace.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³⁹Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

⁴⁰Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed "and many people came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true." ⁴²And in that place many believed in Jesus. —John 10:39-42, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

"Moral rebelliousness had so hardened the hearts of the rulers of the Jews that they would not even con-

sider the miraculous and merciful works of Jesus. All they could think of was taking Him and using Him for their evil purposes." Just how my Lord "escaped their grasp" i.e. in a physical way, I do not know. He said "no man would take his (my) life" and we believe him. The three words "in the early days" is such a poignant expression. Our Lord's association with John the Baptist was one of mutual admiration. It is of real interest to me to find my Lord seeking a place of rest and recollection. Here he stayed for a while. Dear Lord, how we all need such a place.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It was probably near the place where John baptized Jesus. It was good to remember your voice out of heaven. Could Jesus hear again the same words of approval? How many days was it before the people found him? Did Jesus recall the ministry of John and his faithful witness? It is good for each of us to renew our relationship with you by just such a place. What the people said of John is more than of little interest: "John never performed a miraculous sign" — and yet he was full of the Holy Spirit from his birth. The people remembered what John said, not about himself — but about his Lord. We wonder just what words they found fulfilled in Jesus?

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for my Lord's ability to escape the plots of men — he can do it now for his body. (2) Thank you that Jesus sought a respite from the pressure of life. (3) Thank you that his real rest was in prayer and meditation with you. The place was just a physical convenience. (4) Thank you the time element is mentioned — "Here he stayed" — in spite of the desperate importance of what he was doing he took time out. (5) Thank you for the interest of the common people. (6) Thank you that Jesus did not send them away. (7) Thank you that John's mission to glorify his Lord was being fulfilled.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"And in that place many believed in Jesus." Did these persons believe because of his miracles or because of his teaching? No doubt both were true. There was a third factor: *his personal presence!* No doubt these people who looked upon him and watched him throughout several days could see the real source of his power: the presence of deity in human form. Perhaps a fourth factor was the desire on the part of these common folk to find a Messiah and believe on him.

It is wonderful that we have all these factors in our favor. We have the imperishable record of all he said — of all he was. The eye of faith supplies us an

altogether convincing picture of him as deity in flesh. Most of all we *want* to believe him — we have no other option in this world!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Now that I have been such a long time (by human measurement only) in your service I do look for those places where I can rest and recuperate. From such a place I lift up these requests: (1) Lead me to just the places where my teaching and preaching might have the best effect. (2) Deliver me from unreasonable men — I cannot handle them. (3) I believe on your Son — I want to increase and deepen the quality of my faith. (4) To some extent I have learned to practice your presence — teach me more! Much more!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

How shall I open my heart to you? I *want* to — speak to me: (1) "You have my leaven — get it in the meal." (2) "You are my light — find a prominent place to let *me* be seen."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Middle East — Point for prayer: *The home of the early Church is now the most needy mission field in the world.* Spiritual decline and the Muslim conquests between the seventh and fifteenth centuries have steadily reduced the percentage of Christians in the region. Centuries of discriminatory legislation and taxation and, at times, outright persecution have led to many nominal Christians converting to Islam. Emigration and, occasionally, massacres have further reduced numbers.

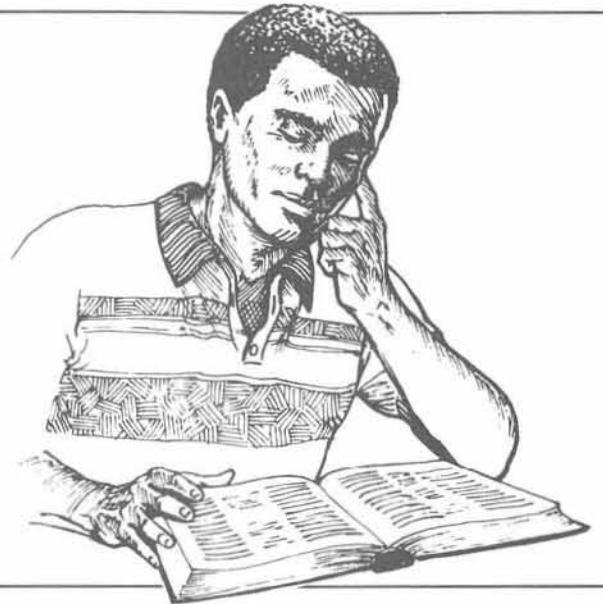
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Far and near the fields are teeming
With the waves of ripened grain;
Far and near their gold is gleaming
O'er the sunny slope and plain.
Lord of harvest, send forth reapers!
Hear us, Lord, To Thee we cry;
Send them now the sheaves to gather,
Ere the harvest time pass by.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Saturday—

You speak and it is done! You have spoken about the forgiveness of all our sins. It is therefore done! Just here and now I claim it!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity” (Psa. 51:8,9). David is about to burst out in a song of joy and gladness. It is a marvelous encouragement for me to know you are the source of that joy and gladness. All such happiness has its beginning in the forgiveness of sins. It is your constant dominant desire to forgive all men and take them to your heart as your sons and daughters. It is a pleasant picture indeed to see one happy family that holds no negative attitudes toward one another or you.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Bless and praise your holy name! How full of delight and joy I am! You have refused to look at my sins, you have smoothed the surface of the record of my transgressions. I am brand new! I am free of all guilt; of all that can in any way hinder my exuberance! You did produce a crushing weight of guilt — i.e. by reminding me that I was indeed responsible for my sin. Once I desired them in my innermost heart, I was forgiven and now praise your name I am free!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

You have indeed been teaching me wisdom in the inmost place. The acceptance of responsibility on this level is the catalyst for the change. Your forgiveness is not something I can manipulate. Your forgiveness is just that: a forgiveness that belongs to you and not to me. I am to repent i.e. change my mind from “the inmost place.” It is then and only then that change in conduct will be consistent. If I have not been crushed I cannot be glad. There *must* be a godly sorrow for

sin — i.e. one that reaches the deepest recesses of my being *before* there can be a change in character. Thank you for teaching me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

More like the Master I would ever be,
More of His meekness, more humility;
More zeal to labor, more courage to be true,
More consecration for work He bids me do.
Take Thou my heart, I would be Thine alone;
Take Thou my heart and make it all Thine own;
Purge me from sin, . . . O Lord, I now implore, . . .
Wash me and keep . . . me Thine forevermore.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

14 One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. ²There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. ³Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” ⁴But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away. ⁵Then he asked them, “If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?” ⁶And they had nothing to say. —Luke 14:1-6, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord I want to accompany your Son as he goes into the home of this prominent person. Jesus was no doubt invited — he went willingly to do what he could for you. There were those who were not invited and came only as spectators to watch the rich eat. The man with the affliction of dropsy was one of the uninvited. The Pharisees cared not at all about his sick-

ness — he was but a pawn to be used by them to trap Jesus. Jesus was invited to the feast so they could embarrass him. Did such a motive affect anyone's appetite? Apparently not — the Pharisees were too calloused and Jesus was too confident for such to happen.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Our Lord knew their motives — he could see through the deception. He anticipated their objection by his question: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" The word "lawful" as used here means: is it permitted or possible. *He asked the same question in a little different form before this: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath?"* They remained silent because they knew there was nothing in their law to hinder him from healing on the Sabbath. Perhaps they didn't think Jesus *could* heal and thus set their trap for him. In whatever case they were caught in their own snare. It is of no little interest to note that Jesus took hold of the man — doubtless to show the healing proceeded from his person.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the Sabbath to remind me of your creation and your law. (2) Thank you that Jesus used so many social occasions to teach. (3) Thank you for the influence our Lord had in prominent places. (4) Thank you that Jesus did not ignore nor exalt human need — he met it! (5) Thank you for the catechetical method of teaching used by Jesus — a good example for me. (6) Thank you Jesus not only silenced his opponents, he taught them. (7) Thank you he has both taught me and closed my mouth to objections.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"*And they had nothing to say.*" Dear Lord so many of us feel this way for various reasons: at times we have our minds and hearts on other things and the result is we are tongue-tied on the one subject upon which we should be most vocal. At other times we feel what we do have to say is not worth saying. Our poor thoughts and words are so inept that to express them is worse than being quiet. How I hope we are never silent for the same reason as these men. They were begrudgingly quiet. They had not yielded their will to my Lord, but they were unable to answer him. Cursing and physical violence would have been the response of less religious men. I am glad to be silent and know you are God!

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I, like these religious men, watch my Lord *very close-*

ly — Ah, but what is *my* motive? Is it to find at least one more way I can serve him? A new way to love him more deeply? There are so very many full of suffering in my world. Do I see them through the eyes of Jesus? What is his question to me about these men? I am sure he will ask a question that includes law and grace — and that shows the man's need — what will it be? How many of your sons have fallen into a well? What shall I do about them?

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

So often I find myself without words — I have no reply — but you are *never* mute — speak to me: (1) "I am yet in the healing business — but I need the news told — will you help?" (2) "How shall we tell all men? *You know* — think — wait — listen — and then ACT!"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Middle East — Point for prayer: *Islam has become the greatest missionary challenge to the Christian Church.* (a) *Muslims are convinced that Christianity is divided, decadent and in decline*, and that their religion is the answer to mankind's problems. Pray that their eyes may be opened to see who the Lord Jesus really is, and that they may be drawn to the gospel of grace. (b) *Islamic fundamentalism* has brought revolution to Iran and tensions right through the Muslim world. Pray that the harshness and extremism often manifested may cause many Muslims to consider the claims of Christ.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours;
Work while the dew is sparkling,
Work 'mid springing flow'rs;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

Work, for the night is coming,
Work thro' the sunny noon;
Fill brightest hours with labor;
Rest comes sure and soon;
Give ev'ry flying minute
Something to keep in store;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man works no more.

