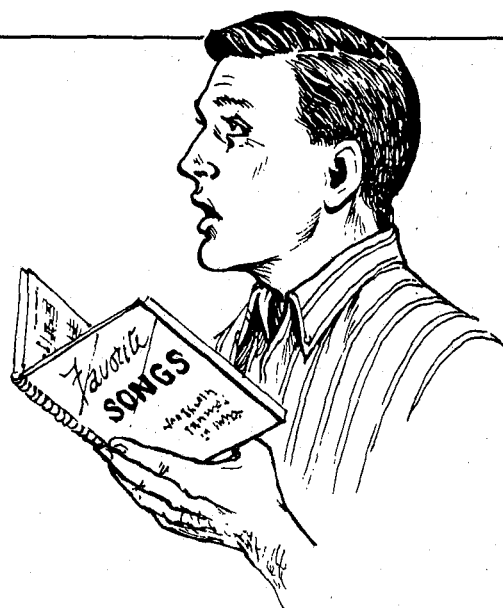


WEEK THIRTEEN

—Sunday—

What a beautiful royal banner you have given to us. It is yourself, in the person of your Son! I prostrate myself before you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Ensign — “The Lord our banner” (Exod. 17:15; Psa. 60:4). I love this beautiful figure of speech — “Hold up the banner and call the troops to move forward”! Dear God, you have been my banner, my *Ensign* for more than 40 years. The real standard held up before me has been your own dear Son. He has always been and is today so attractive and compelling and he has always led the way — I have wanted to follow him. How wonderfully good it is to have a standard, a goal, a mountain to climb. You have put within us such a desire and you are the top of the mountain. You are the ultimate goal of all of life and of every day in it. I see you now beckoning me on!

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Ensign for me. Of course what has just been said applies to all men as well as myself but just here I have the privilege of personal relationship to you as *my ensign*, my flag of triumph! There have been days when I did not have the commensurate emotion, but this is not one of them. I am full of joy and praise and eagerness and I am delighted to expend it before you. I gladly exclaim over the conquests you have already given and those ahead: “Lead on, O King Eternal — the day of march has come! Henceforth in fields of conquest our tents (bodies) shall be thy home.”

How do you personally relate to the leadership of God, and God who is Ensign? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

That you have led and we have not followed is many times sadly true. Dear Lord, forgive. Oh, Father, why are we so reluctant? It is the fear of the unknown and the untried. Fear of our own weakness and inability. All of this is indicative of the sin of unbelief. We are “more than conquerors through him who loved us and gave himself up for us.” Dear Commander, forgive me!

Another sin mentioned in your word is “sexual immorality.” I have been intrigued of late in the use of the expression, “. . . we have divine power to destroy strongholds” (II Cor. 10:4). I take this to mean that any area of sin repeated often can become a “stronghold” of Satan. Sexual immorality is one such sin, one such stronghold. How shall we tear it down? By his divine power — it is his strength, not ours. Exodus 23:29 says, “I will not drive them out in a single year.” Little by little take possession and be faithful in the territory conquered. Dear God, forgive and lead 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

¹¹Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. ¹²Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

¹³When the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God in Berea, they went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up.

¹⁴The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. ¹⁵The men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens and then left

with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible. — *Acts 17:11-15, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How grand an example the Bereans offer to all of us. Where the work hours less in this town than in our own? We can see how the men and women with means would have time, but what of the slaves and the "common people" who are always the ones to hear the message with gladness? Evidently there were enough copies of the Old Testament scriptures for such a daily general examination. There are three groups identified in Berea: (1) Many Jews believed. (2) A number of prominent Greek women. (3) Many Greek men believed. How helpful to me to know your message appeals to everyone.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How persistent is hatred! The Jews in Thessalonica just would not give up! Why did they feel so very negative about Paul? Perhaps a re-reading of Paul's letters to the Christians in Thessalonica would help us. Dear Lord, I want to be open as the Bereans, not closed like the Thessalonians. I know my source of liberty is the same as theirs — your word, I want to examine it all over again today! It is good to read that Silas and Timothy were with Paul in Berea — no doubt they came from Philippi and Thessalonica. The term "brothers" says so much!

It is so important that 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 there is a norm called "truth" — it is your word. (2) Thank you, you expect us to be able to make evaluations you will accept. (3) Thank you for the intensity of investigation — a good example I want to follow. (4) Thank you that the lines of truth and error can be drawn so sharply. (5) Thank you for those who care enough to leave their jobs for the help of a brother, i.e., to accompany Paul. (6) Thank you for the second mile (miles) they went with Paul all the way to Athens. (7) Thank you for the example of Paul — he wanted and sought the company and help of others.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

We shall look at three principles in this record: (1) Paul reasoned and explained but one fact; it became the source of all his trouble — a real "stumbling block" to the Jews, the fact was: "that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead." This gave Paul no end of persecution and misunderstanding. (2) The text gives us the reason for the opposition: "But the Jews were jealous." Can it be that men would go to such extremes as those of Thessalonica just for

envy or jealousy? Of course the Jews would not so define their motive, but the Holy Spirit has already done so. (3) It is interesting to notice that three groups believed in both Thessalonica: (a) Jews; (b) Greeks; (c) prominent women; and in Berea: (a) Jews; (b) Greeks; (c) prominent Greek women. What does this say to me?

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

While some opposed and others believed, Paul prayed — and so do we: (1) Give me a great consuming hunger and thirst for your word. (2) Open my mind to see your Son in all the scriptures. (3) How can I influence the influential? (4) Keep me aware that there are men who will do almost anything to oppose your work. (5) May I be willing to trust others with your work. (6) Lead me to the very place where I can work most effectively for you. (7) Teach me the patience, and yet strong zeal I see in Paul.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from Acts 17:11-15: (1) "The ratio of converts is proportionate to Bible study." (2) "Disbelievers are much different from unbelievers." (3) "I still want Athens evangelized."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

United Kingdom — Points for prayer: (1) *Missionary interest* has waned, and many congregations have never sent out their own missionary. There is a widespread conviction that either the job has been done, or that efforts should be concentrated on Britain's need. Pray for a) *A renewed commitment* by local congregations to world evangelization, to pray out their members to the areas of greatest need, and to adequately care for those who go. b) *The 5,800 British Protestant missionaries* around the world, and that their numbers may be increased by dedicated long-term missionaries. About 26% of all UK missionaries are short-term workers. (2) *Unreached immigrant minorities*. Post-war immigration from the New Commonwealth (Third World states formerly ruled by Britain) on a large scale, brought in many ethnic minorities from lands that have minimal exposure to the gospel, and where entry for missionaries is restricted or forbidden. Most have found homes in the larger inner cities; in Bradford 20% of the city is Asian.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Christ has for sin atonement made,
What a wonderful Savior!

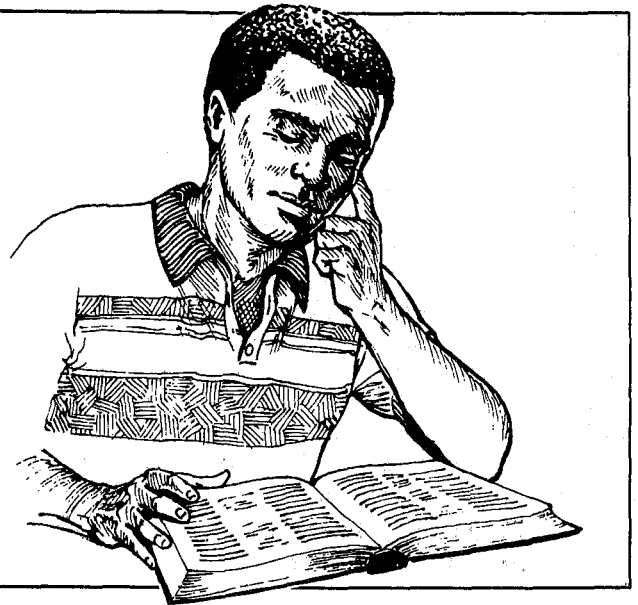
We are redeemed! the price is paid!
What a wonderful Savior!

What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Jesus!
What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord!

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Monday—

What a “sure” — “eternal” — “solid” foundation you have laid for us. I rest myself upon it.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Foundation (Isa. 28:16). How good it is to contemplate God as the foundation of all things — surely of all life. This whole visible cosmos and billions like it have their foundation in yourself! You are the original source — the planner and builder of all we see, and all we do not see. What incredible power and wisdom is yours! Blessing and praise, wonder and amazement is mine and all the men and women of this little speck of your creation called earth! When the foundation is faulty, the whole structure is in danger. But when the foundation of life is: absolute knowledge, total wisdom, unending love, infinite mercy, unquestionable justice, how permanent is the life of the superstructure. Dear God, once again I am shocked into silence and wonder! You have not only laid the foundation of all things, you yourself are the foundation. Thank you, 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

Foundation for me. Let me explore the various areas of my life which need and have found a strong foundation in yourself: (1) My home life — my marriage — Dear Lord, without you and our mutual love for you we would have long ago been living our own selfish lives apart from each other. We are in love with each other because we are both in love with you. (2) My job — what a wonder and amazement it is that I can spend my whole time meditating on and teaching and preaching your word. But if I do not keep a close, personal foundation contact with you even this task can be a bore. But when I build my task directly on you in personal devotion it is a joy no man can express!

How do you personally relate to the permanence of God, and God who is our Foundation? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear, dear Father, that I should ever start the day or plan a project without first building the foundation for it in yourself is surely the greatest of all my sins. This is my daily original sin. Please forgive me! Deepen my awareness of my need!

Idolatry is a sin mentioned in your word. An idol is anything or anyone who gets our heart, thought, will, emotions. More than this an idol is whatever gets our worship, adoration, supplication, dependence. What is it in my life that gets my total, constant attention and upon which I depend? Dear Lord, if it is anyone or anything but you I have an idol and I am an idolater. Some of the projects in which I have been (and am presently) involved could come dangerously near to this definition. Dear God, open my eyes! 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

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Allelujah!
Sons of men and angels say: Allelujah!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Allelujah!
Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth reply, Allelujah!

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

HIS WORD

¹⁵The men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

¹⁶While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

—Acts 17:15-17, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Blessed experience: to travel again to Athens! Here is Paul about to leave his friends and go into the streets

of Athens all alone, but not without you. At the same time Paul felt your presence he felt the real lack and loss of human companionship. Paul was gregarious and needed and wanted companionship in preaching and teaching. Even while Paul was by himself he was thinking of others. "So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left alone at Athens (left by ourselves in Athens). We sent Timothy, who is our fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ (to Thessalonica)."

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Am I as greatly distressed as Paul? Or am I distressed at all as compared with him? "A city full of idols." Dear God, what did he do about it? "So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks." He didn't smash the statuary! Someone else could do that, someone else would do that, someone else *did* do that. I have been to Athens — the statues are all gone, but the idols are still there. It is *only* in reasoning, teaching, motivating, challenging, awakening, that idols will fall and Christ will be Lord! Paul did it, but the ground gained has been lost again.

It is so important that 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 Paul's attitude of confidence, and even dependence upon those who worked with him. (2) Thank you for the wonderful insight that says: his we are whom we serve (worship) — slaves to God — or "no gods." (3) Thank you for Timothy who is an example for all of us — "our brother," God's fellow worker. (4) Thank you for the work Timothy had to do: (a) spread the good news, (b) *strengthen* the Christians, (c) *encourage* the Christians. (5) Thank you there is "a faith" and "the faith" in which we can be strengthened and encouraged. (6) Thank you for the same Scriptures out of which we can reason today. (7) Thank you that Paul was shocked, but not overcome by the idolatry of Athens.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Slaves to the *things* that are no gods" (Gal. 4:8). Why serve something or someone who will not respond to your service? Fear of the unknown and a misinterpretation of the calamities and blessings of life is the explanation. Man is indeed incurably religious. If he is not introduced to the One True God, he will invent gods of his own to fill the void he feels within himself. How restless we are until we find rest in the bosom of our heavenly Father! Such a comment by Paul shows us the proper relationship. We are glad for willing slaves of our Master who is Love.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Paul's spirit was moved to concern as he considered the needs of Athens — so we are moved to pray: (1) Send me helpers in the gigantic task of evangelizing thousands of people. (2) Open my eyes to see idols as idols. (3) Keep me constantly aware of the futility of self-service. (4) There *are* men like Timothy and Silas today — may I learn from them. (5) I need the wisdom to know how to relate men to tasks — or tasks to men — help me. (6) May I remain steadfast amid trials. (7) I need your wisdom to add depth to my reasoning.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I open my ears to hear what you have for me in these verses: (1) "You always work better with others." (2) "Keep your eyes open to life as I see it." (3) "Reasoning precedes converting."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Points for prayer: (1) *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 spiritual and material resources of the USA are of such vital significance for the world and, more, for its evangelization. (2) *There is much for which to praise God* in this great country. a) *A religious awakening* has been gaining momentum since the mid-1970's. The spiritual roots of the first settlers and founding fathers are being rediscovered. Young people are in the forefront of this interest in the things of God. b) *The USA is probably the most evangelized society on earth.* Major evangelistic campaigns have won a respect and credibility for the gospel. c) *A strong reaction* is developing against drug abuse, pornography, permissive legislation, abortion and crime. These evils have been encouraged by a vocal anti-religious minority, and promoted by unwise use of the media. The latter is the distorted image by which the USA is commonly perceived by foreigners.

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 THIRTEEN

—Tuesday—

*What refreshment — cleansing —
beauty I see in the fountain. I jump in
just now!*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Fountain. (Psa. 87:7; Jer. 2:13; 17:13; Ezek. 47:3-10)
How refreshing to appear before you this day and relate you to the bubbling, sparkling water of a great fountain! How I would love to jump in! Bless your wonderful self, I can easily see the comparison — a fountain opened for sin and poor, weary, dirty sinners. How sore and old I feel — I represent ten million more — how delightful to be well and young again! I have found the fountain of youth — come to the fountain, stand by my side — come to the waters — you won't be denied — jump in, quench your thirst, wash your body, relax in the strength and unfathomed depth of the clear, warm water — suddenly you can swim, no fear, what excitement. But most of all you are as clean and renewed on the inside as you are on the outside. Bless your name!

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Fountain for me! I have so closely related to this lovely figure of speech and Person that what I intended for this whole world had much personal involvement. But just now let me think and praise as I stand before the fountain: (1) the fountain is both blue and green in color. Because blue is royal and blue is the sky, it seems so very appropriate, but this blue color is alive, moving, changing blue! Green — as green as the growing, luxurious vegetation all about me. So is your clear, beautiful self — the King of ten trillion galaxies — alive in the eternal strength of an endless life. (2) This fountain is never the same, and yet always the same. In you I find infinite variety and unchanging character. Oh, how I love you!

How do you personally relate to the refreshment of God, and God who is the Fountain? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear, dear Lord, I have not always felt this way, nor have I always even made the mental, emotional effort

to do so. I am the poorer, but you have not been honored as you should in my life — forgive me! A sin mentioned in your word is *witchcraft*. At first thought I can see but little relationship to me, but on second thought, I had better reconsider. Satan is not dead; witchcraft is a real thing. I am so glad I can “bind Satan” not only by the simple verbal rejection of his influence, but by the aggressive refusal to consider even his name, I thus remove his thoughts from my mind. The positive, active presence of my Lord does more than anything else — after all, it is Jesus who binds the strong man.

*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 is my Shepherd, no want shall I know;
I feed in green pastures, safefolded I rest;
He leadeth my soul where thy still waters flow,
Restores me when wand'ring,
redeems when oppressed;
Restores me when wand'ring,
redeems when oppressed.

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

HIS WORD

¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babblers trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean.” —Acts 17:17-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Oh, dear Father, it is a rare privilege I have to each day pause before your word and think with you your thoughts. Your man, Paul, is in the marketplace of Athens. Wasn't it frustrating for him to address those who had almost no knowledge of you? The ones who did listen called him "a babbler." Bless your holy name, there is always something attractive and captivating in the message of the resurrection of your dear Son. It sounded strange and foreign but the call of "deep to deep" was there. They had to hear more, and so do I.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Among the general populace I surely do not have the reputation of "a babbler" — they have never heard from me. Paul was not forever and always known as "a babbler," but for a while in Athens this was his reputation. Could it not be so for me for at least a little while? Would I receive rebuff or interest? I will never know till I try. Would I ever face men of the same syndrome as the Athenians who "spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas"? How sad that the ideas from heaven are still "strange." I am more than delighted to commit myself to making such ideas very understandable and popular.

It is so important that 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 unqualified courage of Paul. (2) Thank you that the gospel meets the needs of both the Stoics and the Epicureans. (3) Thank you for the determination of Paul against great odds. (4) Thank you that I need not preach any more or less than "Jesus and the resurrection" to accomplish God's purpose in this world. (5) Thank you that Paul was willing to speak anytime, anywhere to anyone about his Lord. (6) Thank you that Paul's preaching was also "a teaching." (7) Thank you for every Athenian who heard Paul and that there are probably more in Athens today who have never heard than in the time of the Apostle (what a field!).

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

May we know what this new teaching is? The teaching of John 3:16 is brand new to millions and millions of people upon this earth. How could it be that we have so miserably failed to do the one thing above all others our Lord wants done? Such was not true in the first century. By 130 A.D. all men had heard, and the teaching was no longer strange or new. Perhaps it is because the gospel has lost its freshness that we have not fulfilled the commission. But this is only a symptom — the real cause is our failure in a personal relationship with our Lord. Commercial fisherman from the Sea of Galilee, a tax collector and a super-patriot

are not the kind of people to lead in world conquest, but they did! Peter and John gave the secret: "We can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Surely Paul on Mars Hill can prompt prayer requests: (1) Evangelism with Paul was not so much what he did as what he was. I want to be like him. (2) Give me wisdom to answer the Stoics of my day. (3) Our nation is overrun with Epicurean disciples — I need your help in communicating your Son to them. (4) May I learn how to relate my Lord to the life of all. (5) Give me an audience with important and influential people. (I really do not know how you will answer, but I have not because I ask not.) (6) May I have wisdom in relating to the lifestyle of my generation your message. (7) Open my heart to see the total depth of meaning in the resurrection.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

May I hear your voice in the words of Paul: (1) "There are yet many marketplaces where I need to be heard." (2) "People will still mock — but some will believe." (3) "Philosophy will never satisfy until I am the philosopher."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Points for prayer: (1) *The potential perils of the resurgence of evangelicalism* are matters to turn into prayer. a) *Popularity* can lower spiritual standards, bring in worldly attitudes, and lessen commitment to the Lord Jesus by those who bear His name. Divorce, among other wrongs, has become a major factor in Christian homes. b) *Political power* should be exercised with sensitivity. The Christian Right is likely to become a major influence on into the 1990s. It would be tragic to taint the purity of the gospel with political scandal. The promotion of regional or national interests could be at the expense of the credibility of the message the world needs. c) *Christian leaders* with high moral principles are needed. However, in an increasingly mixed society, prejudice and intolerance could easily be manifested. (2) *Young people* are one of the major areas of spiritual battle today. The bitter fruits of humanistic philosophies are now being harvested in the disorientation, rootlessness and rejection of authority by many.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O Worship the King, all glorious above,
And gratefully sing His pow'r and his love;
Our Shield and Defender, the ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Wednesday—

I am in your will! A very large inheritance is mine! I review in anticipation some of these riches in the closet of prayer.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Heir — possessor of heaven and earth (Gen. 14:19). How beautifully poignant is this word. You are the heir of all things — our Lord an heir with you and you have made us joint-heirs with him. How gloriously good and encouraging this thought is to me! You have right to all the physical world by creation — the right or ownership of all men — every man twice over, by creation and redemption. Blessed be your name! When time shall be no more and all men are called to the judgment, as well as the innumerable hosts of angels, all intelligent beings will then know who is the real heir of this whole universe — and all others like it or unlike it! This is a mind boggling concept, but it really does not express totally your wealth or inheritance — or essential Being. I pause before you in amazement!

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

Heir to me! It would make but little more than curious interest to contemplate how much I have if it were not for two facts: (1) You are my Father and Savior and God. (2) I am a joint-heir with your only begotten Son! This changes all my thinking and surprises me with joy! I am rich beyond the wildest dreams of any man. The treasure I now have in a clay jar called a body is the total content of the sixty-six books called the Holy Book. It is *holy* in the sense of being separate or different than all other books. The precious scintillating jewels in this volume are beautiful beyond all words to describe them. Oh, how I revel in their eternal value! Your daily guidance in my life is such a wonderful part of my inheritance. And then there is a whole wide, wonderful life to come!

How do you personally relate to the inheritance of God, and God who is Heir? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear, dear Lord, for living and thinking like a pauper when I am a billionaire — please forgive. How sad to walk in the dark when we can open the door to the light. How pathetic to lie in bed sick when the Great Physician can raise us to radiant health anytime we reach out for him. Oh, dear Father, forgive this blind, ungrateful son. When we are willfully blind, we even wonder about forgiveness. Dear Lord, I repent of my terrible ingrown selfishness, deception. Another sin mentioned in your word is jealousy, which somehow seems to fit. I have been envious of the poor when I was rich and didn't know it.

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

²¹(All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

²²Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I walked around and observed your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. ²⁵And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything

else. ²⁶From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

²⁹"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone — an image made by man's design and skill."

—Acts 17:21-29, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

I realize it is almost impossible to separate my point of view from yours, i.e., to look at this text through your eyes, but I never tire of trying. It was good that Paul could speak to the men of "the Areopagus" — but in your sight they are of no more value than the men or women in the marketplace. These men had more influence, but no more worth. Paul really addressed himself to the whole city, and all men in it! How did these men indicate their "religion"? By "worship" or that which gets our attention and admiration? Did not the idols and altars only represent the gods who were worshipped?

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I am so glad I need not reach out into the dark to find you. You have reached down in the Person of your Son to find me. Dear God, right now I want to worship you, acknowledge, yield, bow, honor you as: (1) The creator of all — the heaven and earth. (2) You are not in buildings we mistakenly call your house — our own bodies are your house! (3) My service is not because you need it — I do! Others do! You could get everything I do done in a better way by a better means. (4) I owe my life (soul, existence) to you. I owe my breath (life, spirit) to you, as do all men.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Paul plainly puts his stamp of acceptance on the Genesis account of creation. (2) Thank you that my time on earth is set by you — as is the time for all men. (3) Thank you that because of what happened in centuries gone by I now live in America. (4) Thank you that your goodness was given to lead us to you. (5) Thank you that right now you are not far away. You are in me in the person of the "Other Comforter." (6) Thank you that Paul said all men are by right of creation "your children." (7) Thank you that our nature is our accurate reflection of your nature.

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"He is not far from each of us." How beautifully true this statement is. God is just a prayer away. We

can see his character in his Son. We can see his power in his creation. We can see his children in our friends. We can see his very self in the Person of the holy Spirit — who lives in our bodies. From God's perspective he is even closer to us. He sees each of us all the time. He knows the thoughts and the interests of our hearts. How could he be any closer than he is? Dear God, may we practice your presence in us and with us.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Paul's sermon moved me to ask of you: (1) Give me faith to believe that all men everywhere can and will become your children. (2) Grant me wisdom in seeing beyond the external into the eternal needs of man. (3) Deepen my appreciation of your creative power. (4) Speak your word about a place of worship into my heart. (5) Dear Lord, I look up to you in thanksgiving as the giver of every good and perfect gift. (6) Keep me keenly aware of the plain statement of creation made here by Paul. (7) Thank you that of you, in you, from you, I live and move and have my being.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As some of the Athenians heard you speak through Paul, may I also: (1) "God made the world and everything in it." (2) "God lives in the bodies of people not in buildings." (3) "I have decided the exact places men should live."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Points for prayer: (1) *Leadership training.* There are estimated to be over 200,000 preparing for full-time service in theological institutions. In the 194 major US theological seminaries, there was a 20% increase in student numbers between 1977 and 1982, a large majority being Evangelicals, though growth has levelled off since then. Pray for staff, students and a deep level of commitment to the cause of Christ worldwide. (2) *Student ministries* have flourished in recent years. The notable impact of the complementary ministries of Intervarsity, Navigators, CCC and others has led to effective discipleship and outreach on campuses. The large Urbana conferences of IVCF, and CCC efforts such as Explo-86 have challenged many students with the needs of a lost world. The ministries of the Navigators and CCC have diversified into a wide range of activities in the USA and around the world.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

We praise Thee, O God, our Redeemer, Creator,
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before Thee, we kneel and adore Thee.
We bless Thy holy Name, glad praises we sing.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Thursday—

*In this great name: "Jehovah" the
"Self-existent One" — I see so much!
It is in worship this happens.*



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Jehovah — the "Self-Existent One" — the "Absolute." Dear Lord, in a very real sense this is the greatest of your names. I wanted and longed so many, many times, before I became a Christian, for an explanation of all things, i.e., for an original Source or Cause. So many times since I accepted you I have rejoiced in the wholeness of life and the world in which we live when you are related to it. "The Self-Existent One" — what a marvelous designation. Blessing and praise and adoration are not at all adequate to describe my wonder — or the amazement of all mankind 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

The Absolute, the Cause, the Source. Dear Father! I enter your presence with abject confoundment — I want to be silent in the effulgent brightness of your presence! As your children feared to even pronounce your name and substituted other designations such as Adoni — or Lord — so I am speechless before your majesty. At the same time I am full of eager longing to praise your name. To know that I share your nature is a thought to lift us up and move us to cry with the psalmist, "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word."

How do you personally relate to the self-existence of God, and God who is Jehovah? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

What a confession of sin it is to admit I have neglected to praise or even recognize the greatness of yourself — disrespect or sacrilege is behind this sin. At times, too many times, I have been guilty. Dear Lord, forgive me! "Fits of rage" is a sin mentioned

in your word. Yes, I have sinned here — how juvenile is such action and attitude! Just what prompted such an outburst? Fortunately, I cannot remember; but I know you could replay the whole sordid incident if you chose. You have cleared the record and it is there no more! Thank you for the wholeness and that clean feeling *inside*!

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 the blessed hour of prayer,
when our hearts lowly bend,
And we gather to Jesus, our Savior and Friend;
If we come to Him in faith, His protection to share,
What a balm for the weary! O how sweet to be there!
Blessed hour of prayer,
Blessed hour of prayer,
What a balm for the weary!
O how sweet to be there!

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

HIS WORD

³⁰In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead. ³²When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." ³³At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others. —Acts 17:30-34, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

In what sense did you "overlook such ignorance"?

Are you saying you look beyond such ignorance of yourself to the coming of your dear Son? I am so glad you judge men by their motives and not by their record — their motives become their record with you. Dear God, when you judge me “with justice” I am so glad it will be “by my Lord” — because he is also my advocate, my intercessor with you. The one proof for all men of all time is the resurrection. Oh, my Father! I want to make it as important in my mind as it is in yours.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

When I hear of the judgment and the resurrection, what do I do? I want to hear about it again and again. I want to never tire of hearing of the end of time and the resurrection! One day I shall see him as he is. One day I shall be judged — not for my sins; they are already judged and forgiven — for the deeds done in the body: the bad, forgiven; the good? Dear God, to escape hell will be enough! How I want to follow Paul and believe. I accept his words as indeed they are: the word of the living God.

It is so important that 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 your love and mercy in overlooking men's ignorance, but judging them in absolute justice. (2) Thank you for the strong, solid assurance the resurrection gives me, for all you have said and are. (3) Thank you for the day already set when all the inequities of life will be made straight. (4) Thank you that I can constantly repent (change my mind) in light of the judgment. (5) Thank you there is something wonderfully fascinating about the gospel — even to those who have never heard. (6) Thank you that I can hear more and more about him who is raised from the dead. (7) Thank you for the prominent converts at Athens — and “a number of others.”

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“After this Paul left Athens.” We want to answer three questions about Athens: (1) Did Paul fail in Athens? Luke does not say he did, hence we can see no reason to say so ourselves. Luke *does* say he won Dionysius, a prominent man, along with a prominent woman named Damaris, along with a number of others. How large was the number — no matter, he did not fail if success is winning people to our Lord. (2) How did Paul describe God? (a) Creator of all. (b) Within reach of all. (c) Judge of all. The Old Testament prophecies were not used with these Gentiles. (3) Did Paul preach the death of our Lord in Athens? He preached “Jesus and the resurrection” — this would necessarily include the crucifixion. We believe Paul was an outstanding success by God's standard — “he

was faithful.”

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

It would seem Paul had a difficult time in Athens — from the experience there are a number of requests: (1) Teach me how to communicate repentance. (2) Give me the sorrow from yourself that I might repent. (3) Help me to prepare men for the judgment. (4) Open my heart to the reality of your Son's resurrection. (5) Give me the humility to receive the sneers of men as Paul did. (6) How can I reach those of position and influence with your good news? (7) How did Paul decide it was time to leave Athens?

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You spoke through Paul to a number of people in Athens. Speak to me through his message. (1) “I still command all men everywhere to repent.” (2) “My living Son will judge all men.” (3) “The mocking of men does not alter the truth.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Points for prayer: (1) *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 and, in many ways, a legacy of their tragic origins and subsequent discrimination. The civil rights movement achieved much in changing attitudes to the Black community, but there remains a lot to be done to heal the wounds of the past. Pray for: a) *The evangelization of the young people.* b) The conversion of Blacks who have become Muslims, partly as a reaction against White Christianity. There may now be around 600,000 or more Black Muslims. c) *The Black churches.* Many of the largest and most vigorous evangelical churches are Black, but they are isolated from the main stream of evangelical Christianity. (2) *Ethnic minority churches* have sprung up all over the country. The most numerous and vigorous are the Korean churches. A growing concern for, and emphasis on, planting churches among less reached ethnic minorities is encouraging.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

There is never a day so dreary,
There is never a night so long,
But the soul that is trusting Jesus
Will somewhere find a song.
Wonderful, wonderful Jesus,
In the heart He implanteth a song:
A song of deliv'rance, of courage, of strength,
In the heart He implanteth a song.

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Friday—

I can see you as the "mighty one" so much better while on my knees before you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Mighty — or the Mighty One. (Isa. 1:24; 49:26) Bless your wonderful name you are indeed just that to all men everywhere, to all the angels of heaven and to every need of the human heart. You are mighty in your works: (1) *Creation*; (2) *Preservation*; (3) *Resurrection*; (4) *Judgment*. To try to appreciate what you have made, I have looked at a book with pictures of some of the species of birds — what an array of beauty and variety! I am a "bird watcher" only so I can better appreciate the One who created them all. What would a book in which were drawn all the insects look like? Or all the trees? Or even all the weeds? At the same time you also "uphold all things by the word of your power." All who have ever died will by your might be recreated! All men — billions and billions of them — will stand to be individually judged for the deeds done in their bodies. *Mighty* is too weak a word!

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

Mighty for me! Dear Lord, you have shown yourself more than able — yea, abundantly able, to handle all my needs — "according to your riches in glory": (1) My daily bread; (2) my protection or preservation; (3) my resurrection. I could never thank you enough for all these past many years of supplying food, shelter and raiment. How it is that I have these things in abundance and there are 30,000,000 who starve every year, I do not know! Over how many miles have you given me safe travel? From how many overbearing temptations have you kept me? I do stand in awe of the promise that the very Holy Spirit who lives in this body of mine will recreate it at the resurrection!

How do you personally relate to the mightiness of God, and God who is the Mighty One? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I fall at your feet in praise and pause to know I am unclean and need the coal from your altar to cleanse me! The blood from Calvary, the water of your fountain. How wonderfully good it is to be clean! If ever I felt unworthy it is in the face of your greatness! A sin mentioned in your word is "selfish ambition." Dear God, if ever I had an ambition in which you were not the sole object of glory, strike it from my heart!

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

After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ²There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

⁵When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. —Acts 18:1-5, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It is so good to get acquainted all over again with these two wonderful people. I wonder how and where Paul met Aquila? Was Aquila a Christian when Paul met him? I always have questions only you can answer. One day you can tell me all about the blanks that are necessarily left in Luke's narrative. Right now I want to praise you for several things about Aquila and Priscilla: (1) Praise you for showing me that men and women in the time-consuming task of tentmaking can love you and serve you in the midst of their work. (2) Praise you for opening my eyes to Paul's attitude toward support. He did not complain or wait — he went to work.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Father, I want each word of these five verses to take on meaning for me. Luke was specific about the time of this record — no fiction writer would do this. Jews got something done, had influence, therefore were not at all popular with some people. Paul knew a trade and did not have to beg. Paul did not shun controversy — it made some people very unhappy — that was not wrong. Paul used persuasion by argument. Perhaps Silas and Timothy brought financial help from Philippi or Thessalonica or Berea so Paul could spend full time with preaching.

It is so important that 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 Paul's boldness and willingness to go to Corinth. (2) Thank you that political actions can be used to your advantage. (3) Thank you that Paul was ready to adapt himself to living in someone else's home. (4) Thank you for the dedication of three tentmakers. (5) Thank you that Paul was able to "work within the system" of the Sabbath synagogue service. (6) Thank you for "self-starters" like Silas and Timothy — they worked with Paul — but they worked on their own also. (7) Thank you for the strong emphasis Paul placed on preaching.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching." I wonder how much of his content was from his study of the Old Testament Scriptures at the feet of Gamaliel and how much was by divine, direct input of the Holy Spirit? We are sure that he preached in Corinth "Jesus and him crucified." The record of his preaching is right here in Acts and we can gain much by reading the two letters addressed to this church. Paul spoke to many Gentiles, but most converts among them were in the general context of their interest in the Jewish religion. They are described as "devout Greeks." Paul's preaching was powerful in

his effect on the lives of these sensual people. Dear Lord, help me to expect reaction only when people have been confronted with the message. We have no similar results because we will not "devote ourselves exclusively to preaching."

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There is so much to pray about in your work in Corinth: (1) Give me the adventuresome courage of Paul. (2) It will be so good to hear from Paul just how he met Aquila — lead me to a servant of yours like Aquila. (3) Help me to more deeply appreciate my wife who works with me for you. (4) How I need heaven's wisdom to speak persuasively. (5) Thank you for the priceless privilege of devoting myself exclusively to preaching and teaching. (6) Thank you for fellow laborers who encourage me in your work. (7) Thank you for Paul's efforts in a difficult city — may his example move me to the same attitude.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from these few verses in Acts 18: (1) "You can serve me in several ways." (2) "Argument is good if I am in it." (3) "I work best through a team effort."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

USA — Point for prayer: *The native Americans* have suffered intensely in their encounter with European immigrants. They lost almost all their lands, their self-respect and much of their culture. Prejudice and insensitivity have been their lot to this day. Poverty, disease and unemployment are common among those on Indian reservations, and the 50% or so who have migrated to the cities. There has been a strong move among the younger generation to reassert their political and cultural rights.

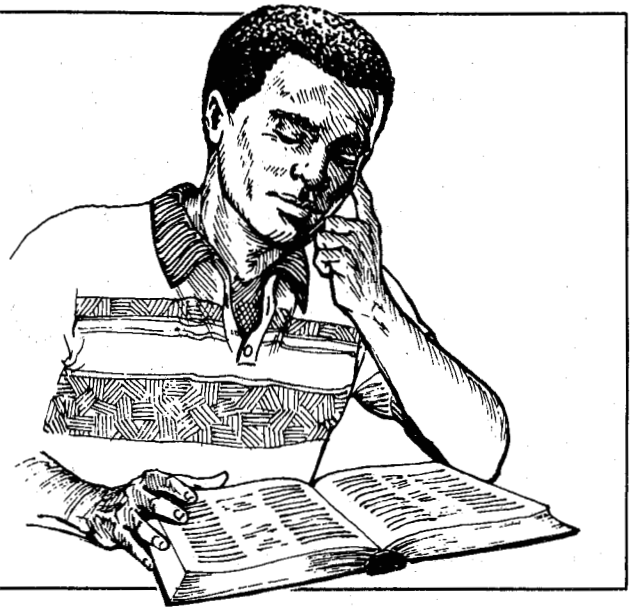
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I've a message from the Lord, Hallelujah!
The message unto you I'll give;
'Tis recorded in His word, Hallelujah!
It is only that you "look and live."
"Look and live," my brother, live,
Look to Jesus now and live;
'Tis recorded in His word, Hallelujah!
It is only that you "look and live."

WEEK THIRTEEN

—Saturday—

Speak to me yet again O mighty preacher! Give me ears to hear you — a heart to obey you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Preacher (Psa. 19:1ff.; Isa. 61:1,2). It is unusual to think of yourself — your almighty self as a preacher — yet your voice has gone out to the ends of the earth, i.e., in the form of the creation above us, beneath us and all around us. How eloquently do you speak to all who have ears to hear! The Bible is another expression of your communication to man — your written sermons — I want to give you a triple A+ in my Homiletics grade book. You have spoken to me and to all other preachers as a model of all we would like to be. How total is your preparation — your living sermon preached in the Person of your Son was prepared several centuries before you spoke to us through 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

Preacher to me. Dear Lord, wonderful Father, Eternal Spirit — I hear you! Your word is clear and constant! Dear Lord, I rejoice and revel in the reading of your message to me. I want to memorize every word and not only so but to assimilate its full meaning; to listen and learn is my highest joy and I shall never, never hear or know fully; but I do purpose to know as fully as I can. Today, just for today, speak to me in the world you have made and in the book you have authored!

How do you personally relate to the preaching of God, and God who is Preacher? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

I fully admit that there are times when I am not listening — when I will not hear your voice through my own conscience — when I follow the ground instead of the sky and hear no more than the creatures who creep upon it. There are times when the faculties

you have given me are focused on the mad and ignorant — to say nothing of the evil and false. What a sad admission of sin. Forgive me! The sin of *disensions* — how could I better describe the conflicting voices heard in our lives today? If you said it; and I believe it; that settles it! Give me inner ears to hear and heed what you say!

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

Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Throw your soul's fresh, glowing ardor
Into the battle for truth.
Jesus has set the example;
Dauntless was He, young and brave;
Give Him your loyal devotion,
Give Him the best that you have.
Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Clad in salvation's full armor,
Join in the battle for truth.

HIS WORD

⁵When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

⁷Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God.

⁸Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

⁹One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.

¹⁰For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." — *Acts 18:5-10, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How gladly I take up your word. I want to join the crowd in the synagogue of Corinth — not to oppose but to understand. How I would like to hear the word of Paul as he testified and argued that Jesus was your anointed One. Why did these Jews object? Was it out of pride and hurt? Was it because their king could not be a lowly Nazarene? How did Paul say the words: "Your blood be on your own heads. I am clear of my responsibility"?

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How many members in the household of the former (or present) synagogue ruler? All included were old enough to understand because they "believed." Such faith came by hearing with understanding. What did the Corinthians hear? What did they believe? This seems such an obvious fulfillment of Mark 16:16. These dear people heard the same good news that I want to hear all over again — "The Anointed One — my King — died for my sins, was buried in a rich man's borrowed grave, and was raised from the dead by your Holy Spirit on the third day."

It is so important that 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 personalness of Paul's preaching — it was a testimony as well as an argument. (2) Thank you for the overwhelming evidence in the Old Testament and the record of His life that Jesus was the Messiah. (3) Thank you for opposition — it is evidence the message is alive. (4) Thank you for Paul's protest — dramatic and personal — clear. (5) Thank you for the possible transfer of responsibility when we have done what we could. (6) Thank you for Paul's unusual boldness in speaking just next door to those who abused him.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I have many people in this city." It is more than provocative to read here that God knew the potential responsiveness of every member of the body of Christ in Corinth. God said something very, very important in this connection. Notice: (1) Because I have many people in this city, i.e., many who will accept if they hear the good news, "Do not be afraid." Dear Lord, how I need to hear this word from you. Paul had more reasons to be afraid than I do. What raw hatred and physical violence faced Paul — what malicious jealousy and envy daily looked him in the face! (2) Because I have many people who will go to heaven

and not hell if you speak — "keep on speaking — do not be silent." God used both the positive and negative for emphasis. It is always easier to stay where you are — or to close your mouth — or to talk about something else.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In the wild city of Corinth there was much of both acceptance and rejection — petitions arise spontaneously: (1) May I know how to testify in such a manner that men will accept your Anointed One. (2) How I need the grace to know when to register a rejection of those who oppose. (3) Thank you again for the holy boldness of Paul. (4) How could Paul escape the abusive treatment of the synagogue if he met just next door? (I need wisdom here.) (5) Help me to preach as Paul did — and obtain the same results — those who hear will believe and be baptized and be saved. (6) Deliver me from all fear of men. (7) Help me to call out of the city where I live a people for your name.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Open my eyes and ears to your messages in these verses: (1) "Clear yourself of the blood of those in your city." (2) "I have those who will respond — keep on speaking." (3) "Lo, I am with you even till the end of the world."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

US Virgin Islands — Points for prayer: (1) *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. (2) *The Church has become very nominal and lacking in vitality.* The Evangelicals also suffer from this malaise. The two Church of God groups and the Nazarenes are growing through conversions, but the majority of the inhabitants, who live in an earthly paradise, are not heading in the direction of the heavenly one. (3) [Note: *St Croix, devastated by hurricane in 1989, is in the USVI.*]

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

All glory, laud and honor
To Thee, Redeemer, King,
To Whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the Hebrews
With palms before Thee went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems
Before Thee we present.