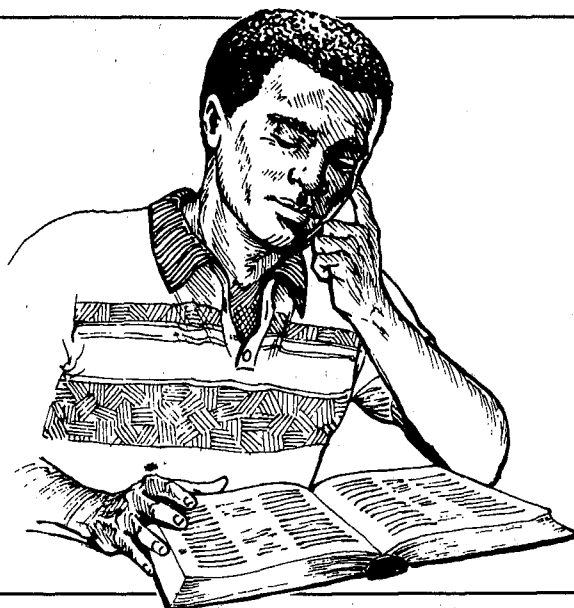


# WEEK ONE

## —Sunday—

*One day our strength will be everlasting. Just now it is only in you we are strong!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Everlasting Strength* (Isa. 26:4). (So many of these terms are applied to our Lord Jesus, but I like to remember the oneness of the nature of my Lord and our Father — as well as the blessed Holy Spirit.) It is one thing to be strong some of the time — it is quite another to be strong all the time. To contemplate One who is described as “Everlasting Strength” is quite beyond our grasp, but nonetheless just what I want, what all men want for our God! Bless your name! There has never been a time when you were not strong. There has never been a circumstance in which you were anything less than Everlasting Strength. There never lived a man who has ever found you less than everlasting Strength.

*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

*Everlasting strength for me!* Dear, dear God! How more than encouraging this is to me! My strength is multiplied infinitely when I recognize by faith that my strength is your strength — “according to the power that worketh in me — both to will and to work your good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). My strength is not “like that of ten thousand” — nay — but like the strength of the Creator of all. I have often blocked the channel of both receiving and communicating this Divine energy, but it is not because it is not there or I could not or should not have it. For the tasks of today — for the temptations of today — for the opportunities of today — Oh, Thou my Everlasting Strength!

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

### CONFESSION OF SIN

What a commentary on sin! I am weak when I could be strong! This is the fundamental sin: “Don’t bother

me, I’ll do it myself”! “For while we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly” — it is because we left you out that we were without strength. Dear God, forgive me for the sin of all sins — living, thinking, willing, without you! “Factions” — When some poor weak man has gathered a little group about him and separates from others, and somehow feels he has “found the truth” a faction is formed.

*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

<sup>11</sup>So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

<sup>12</sup>While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court. <sup>13</sup>“This man,” they charged, “is persuading people to worship God in ways contrary to the law.”

<sup>14</sup>Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, “If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. <sup>15</sup>But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law — settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things.” <sup>16</sup>So he had them ejected from the court. <sup>17</sup>Then they all turned on Sosthenes

the synagogue ruler and beat him in front of the court. But Gallio showed no concern whatever. <sup>18</sup>Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. — *Acts 18:11-18a, NIV*

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Paul stayed eighteen months in Corinth after you spoke to him in a vision. I am glad for the heavenly vision of your Son through whom you speak to me today. How long was Paul in Corinth before you spoke to him? Six months? Was he two years in Corinth? So good to read here that Paul's primary task in Corinth was "teaching them the word of God." Who was taught? The potential people of God — the very ones our Lord commanded us to teach. After he taught them he baptized them and then taught them again.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

You promised that "no one is going to attack and harm you" — yet here is a united attack made on Paul in the very place where the promise was made. When did it occur? Eighteen months later — after many people were taught and became Christians. What came of the efforts? Harm came to the attackers not the attacked. The judge's sympathies were with Paul, not those who opposed him. How encouraging it is to see you at work in the affairs of men. You work through opposition — politicians and any or all misunderstandings. It turned out to Paul's good and your glory. Dear God, I know you are at work today in ever changing circumstances of my life.

*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 letters — full of meaning and help to us. (2) Thank you for Paul's sentimental attachment to those with whom he worked. (3) Thank you that Paul was a "persuader" — what an example! (4) Thank you for Roman law which helped Paul and others to respect orderly, fair procedure (at least at times). (5) Thank you for Gallio — perhaps he was one of "your people" in Corinth — at least he seems to be able to evaluate. (6) Thank you that sometimes the law of planting and sowing produces a harvest in this life, i.e., as in the case of Sosthenes. (7) Thank you for all the many converts made in Corinth. I hope to meet each one and hear of all the circumstances of their conversion. In heaven there will be no time or thought limitations. Amen!

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time." This statement appears after all the opposition. What

caused such a decision? Perhaps it was the words of the Lord in the vision: "I have many people in this city." Paul wanted to find a few more of God's family. Perhaps it was his attachment to the people he had already found. How near and dear these new Christians became to Paul. The encouragement of the people themselves — i.e., their words of gratitude and love could have been a large factor. By reading again the two letters Paul wrote to this assembly we see the strong attachment Paul had with them. Establishing new believers in the faith was a very large part of Paul's work. May such dedication and purpose ever be with us.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

This was the time and place for Paul's first of many letters to the churches he established. There are a number of requests suggested: (1) May I have the perseverance necessary to continue amid opposition. (2) Thank you for the wonderful capacity of memory. (3) Give me the grace to write a letter of encouragement — even this day. (4) Help me to appreciate the law and order that makes all our preaching and teaching so much easier. (5) Deliver me from unreasonable and wicked men. (6) Give me wisdom as I read the letters Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. (7) Thank you for the family concept so evident in all Paul's work — help me to imitate him.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from these few verses: (1) "Find your fulfillment in the joy of others." (2) "I can bring the wisdom of this world to nothing." (3) "There are men who will not listen — find some who will."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Uruguay* — Points for prayer: (1) *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. (2) *The hurt and frustrations in society since 1968 hang like a shadow over steps towards full democratic rule.* Pray for the nation's rulers. Pray that these tensions may create a longing for spiritual reality.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

All praise to Him who reigns above  
In majesty supreme,  
Who gave His Son for man to die,  
That He might man redeem!  
Blessed be the name, blessed be the name,  
Blessed be the name of the Lord;  
Blessed be the name, blessed be the name,  
Blessed be the name of the Lord.

# WEEK ONE

## —Monday—

*Oh blessed shepherd I come to you in the closet of intimacy — lead me, feed me, protect me.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Shepherd* (Psa. 80:1-17; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 28:4). We think of our Lord as the “good shepherd” and he is indeed. But we need also to worship you as the Great Shepherd of all men. How beautifully good it is to hallow your name as “Shepherd.” (1) You know every man who has ever lived or will live — by name and by every need. There are no sheep caught in the dark and cold that you do not want to bring light and warmth. (2) For every sheep you have for food just the greenest of pastures and the quietest of waters for restoration of heart. (3) There are many in high places who do not know the families or interest of those who work for them. This is not at all true with 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

*Shepherd for me.* It is one thing to worship you as the universal shepherd; it is quite another thing to consider your personal interest in every part of my life. The dark valley of death is not the only valley through which you have led me — and will lead me. (1) The valley of decision — how often have I come into this place. I want to pause and read your directions and look up, and wait and then walk for you are “with me.” (2) The valley of disappointment — how dark this place can be! But this could well describe the total response you received in the visit of yourself in the Person of your Son. You have been there — you can lead and comfort me. I pause to read again and again and again to you the Great Shepherd.

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

### CONFESSION OF SIN

Oh, oh, how basic is my sin! To be a dumb (stupid)

sheep — and I am — and to imagine (somehow) that I could “direct my own feet” is so fundamental a sin as to be the parent of all other sins. Dear Father and Shepherd, forgive me! I do love you. I know by sad experience I cannot find my way without you. I come again into your care and acknowledge gladly your interest and direction in all of my life.

*Envy* — do I envy those who do more or have more in the same area of my interests? A super-critical attitude toward them would indicate I am indeed envious. When you have given me abilities and possessions to say nothing of a particular position that no one else has — for the simple but profound fact that no one else is me! Why should I be envious? 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

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,  
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;  
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.  
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves;  
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

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

### HIS WORD

Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken. <sup>19</sup>They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. <sup>20</sup>When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. <sup>21</sup>But as he left, he promised, “I will come back if it is God’s will.” Then he set sail from Ephesus. <sup>22</sup>When he landed at Caesarea, he went

up and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch. — *Acts 18:18b-22, NIV*

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How I wonder what vow Paul had. It has taken the form of the Nazarite, but what was the content of the agreement? It could very well have related to the work at Corinth. I wonder why Luke included this comment if he does not tell us what it means. Thou Lord knowest! Am I to take a vow today? Priscilla and Aquila could tell me. I want only to thank you and praise you for all you are saying to me in these verses. Why is it the wife is here mentioned first? How good to see your will being worked out in the every day activities of Paul.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

If I were to take a vow to lose weight, or to overcome a habit, or to fulfill a project, how would I do it? Perhaps more important: should I see Paul's practice as an example? He was a Jew, and a Pharisee — vows were a part of the Old Testament economy, but was this why Luke included this comment, i.e., to teach us something for today? Paul let his hair grow until a certain time — he took the hair he cut off and put it on the altar in Jerusalem, as a part of the ceremony of the Nazarite vow. Are vows necessary if we have made the all-time, one-time commitment to our Lord. Because I do not have answers and so want to *know* — help me!

*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 mind-stretching incidents and questions. (2) Thank you that I can choose; that no one is forcing me into a choice not my own. (3) Thank you for that great city of Ephesus and all the associations we shall have later with this place. (4) Thank you that your will is found in the daily activities of life — Jesus said his Father was always at work. (5) Thank you for Paul's careful thoughtfulness. He left someone to serve when he himself could not. He brought greetings to the church to whom he really never owed anything. (6) Thank you for the wonderful renewal of friendships that must have occurred at Antioch.

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

Three facts about Aquila: (1) He and his wife were both tentmakers and therefore shared in the source of livelihood. (2) They worked together in hospitality for Paul. Perhaps they shared together in their acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. (3) They shared together in accompanying Paul to Ephesus and in the work of our Lord there. What did Paul do every Sabbath? He attended the synagogue services — with the

purpose of sharing his faith with the Jewish people there. Why did Paul separate himself from the Jews at Corinth? In each case the Jews separated from Paul — they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

The record of the second journey is completed in these verses. It is a good time to seek your will in prayer: (1) Although we do not know the purpose of Paul's vow, give me the same dedication to your purposes. (2) Thank you for Priscilla and Aquila — give me fellow workers of similar attitudes. (3) Dear Lord, I need reasoning powers from yourself. (4) Help me to know when to stay and when to go in every situation. (5) Thank you for the confidence I can have that your will is being worked out through circumstances. (6) Thank you for every safe journey.

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

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from 18:18-22; (1) "Vows made and kept can help your discipline." (2) "Even Paul did not accept all speaking opportunities." (3) "Follow Paul's example in selfless dedication."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Vanuatu* — 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. Some islands have been touched by revival, and there is much encouragement; however, in other islands and areas, spiritual life is at a low ebb. Pray for the training of leaders in the three Bible colleges.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Come, friends, sing, of the faith that's so dear to me,  
Revealed through God's Son, in Galilee;  
He brought peace on earth  
and good will to the sons of men,  
Go tell it to the world, her king reigns again.  
I am so happy in Jesus, Captivity's captor is He;  
Angels rejoice when a soul's saved,  
Some day we like Him shall be,  
Sorrow and joy have the same Lord,  
Valley of shadows shall sing;  
Death has its life, its door opens in heaven eternally,  
Christ is King.

# WEEK ONE

## —Tuesday—

*I am trying in this time of worship to respond to you as a ransomed captive — help me!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Redeemer* (Isa. 59:20,21; Hosea 13:14; Gen. 3:15). The last few names have had a dual meaning, i.e., our Lord as well as our Father. You surely are a redeemer though the person of your Son. All the work of your Son is a joint work with yourself — blessed and wonderful is your name. All mankind has sold himself to Satan — the ransom price was paid out of your love for us. How tragic to be taken captive and held for ransom — and yet this is just what has happened to the whole world. Why would you want to ransom someone who has chosen of his own free will to be a captive? What an enormous price must be paid! What could possibly be of equal value to the eternal spirits of all men at all time? Billions of dollars could not be an adequate price. The ransom is for something of moral worth — it can not be in animal blood, or in silver or gold. Spirit must pay for spirit — man must pay for man — but in this transaction it was through the Son of Man. You considered the death of your Son of equal value to the eternal death of all men. We are redeemed!

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*I am redeemed!* Dear Lord, I do, I do want to enter fully into this relationship! That you would consider me so valuable that if I was the *only one* to be taken captive you would have left heaven to pay the price for me. Is God obligated to Satan? Of course not! I am! It was my debt he paid. He paid the wages of sin for me.

If I had not heard that the price has been paid or I have not accepted it Satan yet has possession of me. But once I have accepted the incredible fact of my redemption I am now free! The beautiful thought is that the price that freed me bound me to my redeemer with golden cords of love. I am free to serve you — this is the only true freedom!

*How do you personally relate to the redemption of God, and God who is Redeemer?*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

How sad to return to the bondage from which I have been liberated. "For freedom did Christ set me free." Oh, dear God, that I should want to return to slavery! I am so constituted that I must — I will serve someone, or something, and his I am whom I serve — if sin, then death, separation, frustration — if I serve my Lord, then I have all that is in him. Dear, dear God, I do not want to return to bondage; I do love you, I do gladly accept the freedom of service in my Lord.

Drunkenness is a sin described in your word. What a terrible price is paid for intoxication! Battered wives and children are part of the price. Horrible self-loathing is more of the same price. But there is intoxication in more than the bottle of liquor. I have been drunk on pride more times than I like to think. God, forgive me — oh, humble me — I hear you say "humble yourselves." I have been drunk on self-pity — my values have been so, so distorted. Forgive, forgive, heal me!

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

### 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, 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

<sup>23</sup>After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

<sup>24</sup>Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. <sup>25</sup>He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup>He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. —Acts 18:23-26, NIV

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Paul's task is my task — if he was ready to revisit some places several times so as to teach and encourage I am sure I can and should do likewise. What a pleasant name is "disciple" — or learner. My blessed Lord is still at work through his learners making more disciples. We can all become stronger in our understanding, and dear Lord I purpose to do so, and help others to become strong!

I like this man Apollos — I want to be just like him! (1) A "learned man" — probably meaning he had a good formal education from the schools in Alexandria. There are fine Christian secular schools where one's mind could be disciplined. (2) "With a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures." Dear God, this means a knowledge of *every word* you have written — if you will give me strength and time I will pray through every word you have given in your book. (3) He was instructed in the way of the Lord — someone had taught him. I want to be taught everyday, everyday by someone.

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for men who speak with fervor — it sets your fire in us. (2) Thank you for accuracy, i.e., concerning our Lord. I want to be most accurate on every word and thought of my blessed Savior. (3) Thank you for the capacity and desire to change, to learn more. (4) Thank you once again for the marvelous example of the greatest born of woman. (5) Thank you for many, many men and women who spoke out boldly for you in the face of severe misunderstanding. (6) Thank you for the loving concern of Priscilla and Aquila. (7) Thank you for a humble heart in an eloquent man — a rare combination only our Lord could produce.

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Explained to him the way of God more accurately." How good to find a preacher who will listen to two "laymen" explain the scriptures to him. Most especially when they are pointing out his deficiencies. But perhaps we are assuming something that didn't exist, i.e., the distinction between "the clergy" and "the laity." Perhaps Priscilla and Aquila were on the same level as Apollos as a brother and sister in the Lord. Perhaps it was the scriptures themselves that became the authority for right and wrong.

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

The record of Apollos is a cause for prayer. (There are so many like him today.) (1) I do not know what prompted Paul's third journey — give me courage to strengthen whatever disciples I can. (2) Thank you for men like Apollos who have become true students of the scripture — I want to be one of them. (3) Thank you for whoever it was that instructed Apollos — may I be patient with those who disagree with me. (4) Give me the fervor of Apollos. (5) I need more boldness. (6) Send men and women like Priscilla and Aquila into my acquaintance. (7) Help me to find the time and thought to speak one-on-one with those whom I consider limited in their understanding.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

From 18:23-26 I want to hear your messages to me: (1) "There are yet some who would make human merit a part of salvation." (2) "Knowledge of the scriptures does not always mean a man cannot be taught more." (3) "There are humble disciples like Priscilla and Aquila who could teach you much if you would listen."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Venezuela — Points for prayer: (1) *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. (2) *The political stability* of the nation is threatened by the combined effects of the decline in the value of oil exports, inflation, the Central American confrontations and the narcotics traffic that has so effected neighboring Colombia. Pray for all in authority, and for wise handling of the growing economic crisis. (3) *The Evangelicals* are growing steadily, though progress has not been spectacular. The encouragements: a) *The increased fellowship* between some Venezuelan leaders of different denominations, and their desire to cooperate in evangelizing the many unchurched areas. b) *The first missions congress* ever was held in 1985, giving a new sense of thrust and vision to the churches.

### 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 ONE

## —Wednesday—

*In this time of worship teach me the meaning of this mortal putting on immortality — this corruptible putting on incorruption.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Immortal* (II Tim. 1:10). How good to find someone over whom death holds no sway. The whole source of a deathless existence is found in you! Wonder and praise and joy and hope! All these and much more are in yourself? Man was not created to die, but to live — death is a result of failure — and itself is the ultimate failure. Would not all men be delighted to discover there is a Being — the Being over whom death has no influence at all? Created in your image, i.e., sharing your nature, death does not affect us any more than yourself — only our bodies — it is the body that is mortal. We will be given an immortal body and live in the land of endless day! Amen! Amen!

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Immortal to me.* Endless life — a deathless body — what astounding thoughts are these! My body gives me no end of problems: two operations on organs that do not function as they should; repair of a major kind — all testify that this body is wearing out. I'm so, so glad I am not the body — as fearfully and wonderfully as I am made it is still made out of dust and to dust shall it return. What a joy — what tingling anticipation is mine for the new body! Not only for myself, but for my dear father whom I miss greatly — and one day we shall live in the New Jerusalem in the new body. It is all because of Calvary "all who are in the grave (the only thing that comes out of the grave is what went into it — the body) will come out."

*How do you personally relate to the immortality of God, and God who is Immortal? Speak it out or write it out.*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

If the body is doomed to death — and we know it is — how is it we spend so much time with it? It is the only tool or instrument we have until the resurrection! Yet it should be buffeted, brought into subjection,

made a servant. Dear God, this is my sin! If I do not beat my body it will beat me. I do not, I will not be a body slave. You do not want me to; your Son was no such slave — forgive me for pampering the flesh. The sin of *orgies* seems particularly appropriate in light of a discussion of the proper and improper use of the house you have given us. Any excessive, selfish, indulgent use of the senses is an orgy — particularly in self. Dear God, from such bondage deliver 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

<sup>27</sup>When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. <sup>28</sup>For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. — *Acts 18:27,28, NIV*

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Why did Apollos want to go to Achaia? (to Corinth?) Was it because Priscilla and Aquila had just come from there and had shared the joys and needs of Corinth with him? Was it because he felt some embarrassment at returning to the synagogue in Ephesus to tell



of his new found faith? What did "the brothers" at Ephesus say to him as words of encouragement in his desire to go to Achaia? What was written in the letter to the disciples in Achaia? I ask these questions because I know you know the answers and I will too one day. What a charming expression: "those who by grace had believed"! Paul or someone else had told them of how the grace of God appeared in the person of his Son (Titus 2:11). From this hearing and grace came belief!

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

## READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It does bother me greatly that I am so complacent about the religious people around me who are inadequate in some areas of their belief. I have not "vigorously refuted" them in public debate. Some say today that no good can come of this. If Apollos would have asked those who believed in Corinth, he would have received the same discouraging response. This could have been true in days gone by when public debate became a great source of education. Are the scriptures given as a riddle or a revelation? Would public debate help clarify this? Dear God, speak to my heart!

*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 desire of Apollos to speak in an area he did not know — and where he was not known. (2) Thank you for brothers who encourage us — without them we might never go. (3) Thank you for the example here of what we might call "a church letter," i.e., a letter of recommendation from one congregation to another. (4) Thank you for the vigorous manner of Apollos — wherever and with whomsoever he was. (5) Thank you for those who listened to the debate and were helped — the participants perhaps were not convinced, but others were. (6) Thank you that it is possible to prove from the Old Testament scriptures that Jesus is the Anointed One. (7) Thank you for the wide acceptance this man found in Corinth. Cf. I Cor. 1:12.

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

## READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"The brothers wrote to the disciples to welcome him." It would seem "the brothers" were running the church in Ephesus. The elders were not yet a part in the church here. Literacy was assumed in the congregations of those days. The term disciples was used with more frequency than "Christians." Hospitality was a large part of the life of the body. All of these facts speak to us right now. We need to feel that every member is a vital working part of the body of Christ. Genuine hospitality can be a blessed part of our mutual life for each other.

## READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a good man was Apollos — he moves us all to prayer: (1) Help me to remember how very much we all influence each other for good or bad. (2) There are so many letters I could write to encourage — help me to write one today. (3) Give me the openness to be an encouragement to others. (4) May I always remember that it is by grace I have believed. (5) I want to be known as a helper of my brothers. (6) What kind of debate can I use today to help men to believe? (7) Thank you for the overwhelming evidence that Jesus was the Christ.

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

## READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me from these verses: (1) "Others depend on you to help them in my service." (2) "You depend on others for your service to me." (3) "Argument can be very helpful or harmful — it depends on the attitude of those involved."

## INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Venezuela* — Points for prayer: (1) *Opposition to the evangelization of the Amerindian tribes has been intense.* Some areas assigned to Catholic missions are closed to Evangelicals. In recent years there has been a vicious campaign launched by anthropologists, leftist politicians and some Catholic priests against evangelical missionaries. Pray for: a) *The defeat of slanderous attacks* on missions for harming the cultures of the indigenous people. Only a few thousand Indians still live in the old traditional ways. b) *The opening up of the few remaining unevangelized tribes* for evangelical missionaries — possibly Venezuelan missionaries would be preferable. c) *The continued ingathering* of Amerindians among the Guajiro, Maquiritare, Yanomano, Panare, Motilone, etc. Most of the larger tribes have now significant and growing churches. d) *Bible translation work* which continues in 20 languages. Translation work may only be needed in a few languages. Pray for the impact of God's Word to be such that these peoples may be spiritually mature enough to cope with the inevitable encroachment of Spanish culture and all of the trappings of civilization. (2) *Leadership training* is fundamental if present growth rates are to be maintained and urban areas evangelized. There are three seminaries in the country.

## SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Face to face with Christ, my Savior,  
Face to face — what will it be?  
When with rapture I behold Him,  
Jesus Christ who died for me.  
Face to face I shall behold Him,  
Far beyond the starry sky;  
Face to face in all His glory,  
I shall see Him by and by!



# WEEK ONE

## —Thursday—

*To say that I honor you is really an understatement. You are more precious to me than life. Reinforce these truths just now.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Precious or held in honor, reverence (Psa. 8:5; Isa. 28:16).* There could be no more appropriate title or name. You are precious to all men — the sad fact is they do not even know. How can I pray this prayer, express this thought before you and not do more about it? The whole world could know today like no other time in human history. If somehow the preciousness of yourself could be broadcast on all TV networks and held before the world for just 24 hours thousands would believe — thousands would not believe and many more thousands would not understand. Personal teaching as done by your Son is the way to tell of your preciousness.

*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

*Precious to me.* Dear, dear Lord, you are precious to me. I want to hold you up before me in honor, majesty, power, beauty, holiness — all this and ten thousand times more. I purpose to so honor you today before men that others will want to share your honor with all they meet. This is no substitute for my personal witness and teaching — but you do receive the recognition that you so richly deserve — I love you! To pause before your throne and accumulate all the names of yourself and but read them overwhelms my mind and heart!

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

### CONFESSION OF SIN

I have read that you will not share your honor with another. This disturbs me greatly because I have accepted praise that truly, truly belongs to you. Forgive me, rebuke me even more deeply than I presently feel the conviction of your Spirit. Surely this is a basic sin.

When we are so ready and anxious to spend time and money and so much energy to promote anything but the beauty of yourself we are sinners! Forgive me! “Hardening of the heart.” This seems to be my occupation! Dear God, how often I have repressed or resisted or hesitated to open my mouth or show compassion and the end result was hardening, or shutting up of my heart. I hardly knew what to do but confess it and ask for forgiveness. I truly want to repent, but I know not how.

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

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Holy, Holy, Holy,  
Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our songs shall rise to Thee;  
Holy, Holy, Holy!  
Merciful and Mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

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

### HIS WORD

**19** While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is in Jesus.” — Acts 19:1-4, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

The term *Achaia* now becomes a synonym for *Corinth*. Was it because of the time of the year, i.e.,

when the mountain passes were open that Paul makes this long trek to Ephesus? It is easy enough for Luke to cover hundreds of miles and days and days of weary walking in only one verse. But then, I know you were with him and shared every step. Dear Lord, I do want to know if the disciples Paul met in Ephesus were converts of Apollos? Their knowledge had the same limitations. It would seem as clear as words can make it that the Holy Spirit was expected when they became Christians. Was it because of some lack in their attitudes that Paul asked the question, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" I believe it was. But you know and I only surmise. Christian baptism gives us the Holy Spirit seems to be the point of Paul's question: "Then what baptism did you receive?"

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Read this word for *myself*! Indeed I shall! Did I receive the Holy Spirit when I became a Christian? Yea, and amen! He came as a gift at my new birth — indeed he was involved in my new birth. I "came out of" the water and the Spirit at the time I became a Christian. He is present as an unseen guest in my body now. My physical home is his holy tabernacle. Sad to say, at times I am so unresponsive to his presence, to his word that my attitudes belie his presence in me. I want to repent, from the inside out, to change my mind. Is there some way I can consciously identify the Holy Spirit's presence in my body, i.e., apart from the plain statement of the text that it is so? If there were, of what help would this be?

*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 tremendous amount of energy Paul gave in walking from place to place in your service. (2) Thank you for the twelve disciples of John — they were so transparently sincere, ready to learn and grow. (3) Thank you for the blessed Holy Spirit all of us receive when we become Christians. (4) Thank you for the various designations for becoming a Christian — here it is "when you believed." (5) Thank you for the clear examples in the Acts accounts of men and women becoming Christians. (6) Thank you again for the good man, John the Baptist. (7) Thank you so much for repentance — how often I need it — I want to grow!

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"A baptism of repentance"! Was baptism the important emphasis or repentance? John let us know as he spoke to some who came to be baptized. "Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance." He actually refused to

baptize some people. Actions and attitudes would be the fruit of repentance. Deep, genuine, personal sorrow for sin was the preparation for repentance. The volitional choice to do what is right is repentance. In such a frame of mind men and women were prepared for John's baptism and the reign of the Messiah in their lives. We need to be told again and again that repentance was an essential prerequisite to Christian baptism.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a *long* walk it is from Antioch to Ephesus. Paul must have prayed much on this journey. We too can find petitions in the text: (1) Keep me aware that others work for you each day in their field as I do in my field. (2) Keep me sensitive to the task of making disciples. (3) Why did Paul ask about the Holy Spirit? (4) Dear Lord, give me wisdom as I seek your answers to questions raised in this text. (5) What relation does baptism have with the Holy Spirit? (6) Give me courage to repent. (7) Dear Lord, may I baptize people today for the same reason Paul did in Ephesus.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In these four verses you can speak to me: (1) "All disciples have not learned the same lesson." (2) "The Holy Spirit is your birthright." (3) "The baptism of Christ gives you the Holy Spirit."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Vietnam* — Points for prayer: (1) *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. Many who had links with the former government were sent to re-education camps, and about 1.5 million fled to other lands. Pray that the suffering Vietnamese may find solace in trusting in the Savior. (2) *All open missionary work ceased in 1975*. Pray that the years of sowing the Word may now bring forth abundant fruit. (3) *The Catholic Church has long had a big influence*. Restrictions and persecutions have reduced the number of congregations and priests, but not the number of Catholics.

### 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!

# WEEK ONE

## —Friday—

*If there is one quality I admire it is kindness — I enter the closet for help.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

**Kindness.** To contemplate yourself as total kindness is such a beautiful thought! Kindness is much like mercy — it is meeting human need wherever you find it. How fully does this describe what you do everyday for everyone! Your thoughtful kindness is giving rain, fruitful seasons, the beauty of flowers, birds and butterflies, the compassion of a mother, the warmth of the sunshine. Then when the kindness of God our Savior appeared in the person of your Son, we all knew the ultimate of thoughtful mercy.

*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

**Kind to me** — such a surprise and delight is your kindness. When I deserve justice, you offer me kindness. Praise your glorious name. Your goodness is to give me opportunity to recognize the source of all those good gifts and begin to live soberly, righteously, and in the presence of yourself. Dear God, I so respond. May I be as kind to others as you are to me.

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

### CONFESSION OF SIN

Of all my sins, the sin of unkindness is at the same time both the easiest and the most difficult to confess. It is easy to admit I have been thoughtlessly, selfishly unkind; it is more difficult to tell why. My life has been cast in the midst of those who love me — in the center of an abundance of good things — why, oh why, should I ever be selfish and mean? Forgive me, but open my eyes to a deeper need — to stay humble-minded.

“Continual lust” is a sin — not only for sex — although this is true — but of “status” and “things.” Break this bondage by my happy marriage, by my

understanding of how you see me in society, by “things” of eternal beauty and value.

*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

<sup>5</sup>On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. <sup>7</sup>There were about twelve men in all.

<sup>8</sup>Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. <sup>9</sup>But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup>This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord. —Acts 19:5-10, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What unusual and moving words these are! These twelve men were baptized in the name (or by the authority) of your dear Son. Did they not at that time and in that act receive the Holy Spirit? Is not the expression, “the Holy Spirit came on them” to be associated with his supernatural coming? The very same words are used in reference to the hands of Peter and John in Acts 8:16,17. Dear Lord, I want to

be right in my understanding. But then I know you are right and I am sincere in my desire to know and this is enough! If I am to define the word "tongues" from the day of Pentecost (and where else will I look for a definition?) then these men are given the ability to speak in languages they never learned. In the multi-lingual city of Ephesus they would need this ability in their teaching and preaching.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

What an example for me! Speaking boldly in the synagogue is equal to what in my experience? Boldness is almost equated with confidence. I cannot avoid the fact that I think of several denominational bodies of people of several cults in the same category. What have I done about it? Almost nothing! Dear God, forgive me and move me!

*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 the text is so clear about believing — they could if they would. (2) Thank you for that beautiful description of "the Way" — oh, how I want to walk in it. (3) Thank you that even Paul could not stay with some people. (4) Thank you that Paul did not run away but stayed to work and win. (5) Thank you that Paul's discussions (was this preaching? teaching?) were with the disciples, and happened every day — when? how? (6) Thank you for daily discussions for two years that produced self-starters that shared their faith with thousands of others. (7) Thank you for the "one body" — neither Jew nor Greek — and through it you reached out to the many cities of Asia (Turkey today). Dear God, where is our faith today?

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

*"So that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord."* We do not believe it was possible for all the Jews and Greeks of Asia to gather in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. It was rather that those who heard the daily discussions fanned out into the whole province of Asia with the glad tidings. Was this the seven churches of Asia? There was something wonderfully solid about the life and witness of these early Christians. There are 43 million people living in the whole country of Turkey. How many thousands lived in the province of Asia? It can happen again, even in the same district where it happened before. In the Aegean region of Turkey today there are 4 million eight hundred thousand people. This is much of the same area where Paul worked. Dear God, I lift these people up to you!

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

It is so good to pray directly from your word: (1) Help me to help disciples today who know nothing about the Holy Spirit. (2) How good it is to baptize people into the name of the Lord Jesus — help me to promise them all you have promised. (3) Why did Paul lay his hands on these men? (4) What were the "tongues" spoken by these men? (5) Why the gift of prophecy here? (6) I claim your wisdom as I search your word for the answers to these questions. (7) May I live as a citizen of the kingdom of heaven — right here and right now.

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

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

How much you can say to me through these verses: (1) "Be as helpful and bold as Paul in meeting the needs of men." (2) "If Paul could succeed in Asia you can where you are." (3) "Ephesus offers an example in so many ways — read the letter to this church."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Vietnam* — Points for prayer: (1) *The suffering church today* has been largely forgotten in the West. News is sparse, mail censorship strict, and memories sad. May Christians in the rest of the world not forget their brothers and sisters, but pray for them. (2) *The Protestant Church grew steadily* in the midst of war, despite massive movements of population, intimidation, terror, and the murder of pastors. Almost half the Christians were in minority tribal groups among whom people movements to Christ have occurred. Praise God that this growth has continued despite Communist attempts to prevent it, and despite the flight of many believers from the country. There is a widespread hunger for God with many young people crowding into any church services that are permitted. (3) *The mountain tribes have long been hated and despised*. For years their fields have been confiscated, their harvests stolen, and their numbers decreasing because of starvation and disease. The Hrey and Jeh became Christian in large numbers before Communism came. These Christians have suffered particularly severely.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Down at the cross where my Savior died,  
Down where for cleansing from sin I cried,  
There to my heart was the blood applied;  
Glory to His name.  
Glory to His name,  
Glory to His name;  
There to my heart was the blood applied;  
Glory to His name.

# WEEK ONE

## —Saturday—

*Personal worship is a time and place to practice an awareness of your presence in me — above me — around me. Gladly do I now bow before you.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*Presence.* What an amazing quality to discuss! How much I want to enter fully into this attribute of yourself and appreciate more than ever before the fact that you are now present with me — in me, above me, before me, behind me, ahead of me — and what is true for me is true for all men. What a startling, awesome fact! I want you to permeate all the atmosphere, all my being. As an invisible Person you could be present and no one would know it — only those who sense, or are sensitive, who are made aware of this reality, appreciate 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

*Present for me.* Dear God, this is one mind-staggering concept! That you as the almighty God are here present. I fall down like John of old — that you can see and hear and knew totally all about me and be at the same time in me is such information I cannot assimilate. Will you make your presence known? Yes, yes, I could not write these words if you had not already told me you were present. I read it in your book. At the same time I want to practice your presence. I want to ask you to share my thoughts every minute of this day. It can be done. I have thought that often about other things or people. Oh, Present One, I love you!

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

### CONFESSION OF SIN

The sin of all sins! To ignore your presence — to live and talk and think just as if you were not always present. To not include you in my conversation, to not look your way to gain your nod of approval or frown of disapproval. To talk on and on to others and fail to talk with you. I know, I know you are interested in

all I say and do and want to help (in ways I so much need your help), but I fail to ask or seek your face. Dear God, forgive me, forgive me!

*Deceit.* This sin strikes so close to my heart. Dear God, I want to be open and transparent before men (I know I am always open and known to you). I fear men and their frown more than yours. Forgive me. Penetrate my conscience deeply.

*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

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!

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

### HIS WORD

<sup>11</sup>God did extraordinary miracles through Paul.

<sup>12</sup>Handkerchiefs and aprons that touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

<sup>13</sup>Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, “In the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.” <sup>14</sup>Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. <sup>15</sup>The evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know and Paul I know about, but who are you?” —Acts 19:11-15, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord, how unusual, how indeed “extraordinary” is the description I read here of your work through Paul. Was it because there were so many persons in Ephesus who needed such confirmation of your word before they would believe? From

what we know of the religious background of these worshipers of Diana, and many other gods such seems to be the case. Are we to expect the same "extraordinary" miracles in a similar situation today? Surely we do as to people and their circumstance. But we also have today the record in written form of your confirming word. This those of Ephesus did not have. Does this make a large difference? Why was it written and preserved through two thousand years if it did not? Open my mind, dear Lord, I *want* to know.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I know you can do such work today! I would be much closer to accepting the account here and elsewhere as normative if someone like myself instead of Paul, the apostle, did such signs. I know that such signs were to follow "believers" (Mark 16:17), but the "believers" according to the Acts are the apostles and those upon whom they laid their hands. Since Paul spent at least two years in Corinth on one occasion and visited there at least twice afterward, it could have been that all the signs described in I Cor. 12:1ff. could be from this same source. I am sure there must have been hundreds of prophets spread over the Roman Empire (if not thousands). Could the twelve or Paul have laid their hands on each one of them? It is possible.

*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 miraculous works that galvanized the attention of the Ephesians so they could hear with their inner ear the message of salvation. (2) Thank you that as strong as Satan is Jesus is stronger. (3) Thank you that we are protected from pretenders, i.e., if we want to be. (4) Thank you that you cannot be deceived. (5) Thank you for the clear difference between religion and Christianity. (6) Thank you for the reminder that the spirit world is the real world. (7) Thank you for the possessed man from whom we can learn so many things.

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

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

*"Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?"* These are the words of a demon through the lips of a man. This is a mind-challenging thought! There are yet demons in the world. Here are several questions I have asked myself and my Lord about them: (1) Are demons in me? Am I to associate my stubborn sins with demons? i.e., am I to conclude because I cannot, or will not, stop this sin or that one that such is the work of a demon or demons? I would be glad to thus interpret my sinning if such were Biblical. The only reference to stubborn resistance of demons has reference to a son who had some physical, emotional,

mental problem not a stubborn unyielding sin problem. The possessed was but a child — not a Christian because salvation through his blood was yet a promise. (2) How do I recognize demons in myself or others? By discerning spirits. What a large claim to make! How was the presence of demons determined in the city of Ephesus? Paul and those upon whom he laid his hands had such powers. Perhaps the efforts of these seven sons were done on those who had no demons until they met one who did. If they identified demons someone had the gift of discernment.

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

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There is something wonderfully extraordinary about this whole text (19:11-15): (1) Why did you do the unusual things you did in Ephesus? (2) Why were the miracles performed in this city? (3) Dear Lord, I am expecting real wisdom in answering these questions as I search your word. (4) Deliver me from deciding truth from experience — good or bad. (5) Protect me from the attacks of demons today. (6) May I want your Son in such a personal manner that he will be Lord of all my life.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

What can I hear from this text especially for my life? (1) "Evil spirits are nothing to treat lightly." (2) "Evil spirits were not in Christians." (3) "Evil spirits know and respect Jesus as one of all authority."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Wallis and Futuna Islands (French Territory in the South Pacific) — Points for prayer: (1) There are no known evangelical believers on these isolated islands. No definite effort has been made by Protestants to establish a presence there. (2) Over half the population works abroad in New Caledonia or in Vanuatu. Pray that some may hear the gospel, believe and return with the message to their homeland.*

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

"Man of Sorrows," what a name  
For the Son of God who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim!  
Hallelujah! what a Savior!