

WEEK TWO

—Sunday—

In him we are complete — in every area of life we are furnished unto every good work. Open my thinking as I bow before you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Complete. How could we better describe yourself? There is nothing you lack — you are whole in every sense. It would help me to worship you if I listed just two areas where all men can find you perfect: (1) Complete in knowledge — there is no branch of science in which you do not have absolute, complete information. It will be a part of the joy of heaven to investigate this total body of information. (2) Complete in sympathetic understanding love. My love and the love of all men is so inadequate — alloyed with our own selfishness. How glorious to worship and praise and know you; to commit myself, and for all men to do likewise is no effort, it is a privilege!

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

Complete for me. What all men find in you I now find personally and intimately. I want to enter into a secret pact. In you I am whole for you are wholeness itself! I can pause any time of any day and cast myself upon you. I *know* you care for me, you love me, forgive me, chasten me, have specific plans for me — bless your wonderful name! I find *no* help, *no* hope, *no* fulfillment in anyone or anything else! You have made my life so full, so meaningful — I want to reaffirm my wholeness in you! I am really anxious to enter into the larger part of my life right on the other side of my last heart beat!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

If you are so complete for every area of my life, how is it I seek fulfillment outside yourself? It would be easy to say with Paul, "It is not I who do it, but sin which lives in me," or "so then it is no longer I that

do it, but sin which dwells within me" (Rom. 7:17, RSV). Jesus *can* and *does* deliver me from this bondage of separation. I live by my response to the environment. My largest need then is to so condition my reflexes that I will always (by habit) respond to your sweet will and not that of Satan, the deceiver. I have lived so long in Satan's world (with all that is in his [the] world), that I am like the Israelites who didn't recognize the deliverer. Oh, dear God, dear Savior, I do want out!

What personal sins do you want to confess? There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

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

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

HIS WORD

¹⁶Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

¹⁷When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor.

¹⁸Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. ¹⁹A number who had practiced brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.

²⁰In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. —Acts 19:16-20, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Father, I am sure you must smile as I do when

we find out who cast whom out! The seven men were all cast out of the house by the one poor demon-possessed man. I am impressed and warned when I see what super human strength this man had. I do not underestimate the power or strength of the enemy. I am no more able to overcome than the sons of Sceva. This but points up negatively my need of you! Satan can and will hurt me. It is more than interesting that the devil leaves us naked and bleeding. Oh, oh, my Lord, when will I ever learn that I cannot do anything without you and with you I can do all things. Teach me — I am listening, I am waiting, I am yielding.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Dear Lord, I want this text to penetrate the deepest recesses of my heart! When something truly divine — truly significant — happens, word of it spreads and it is known! How many Jews and Greeks were living in Ephesus at this time? Were there as many as 100,000 or even 200,000? This is not at all impossible. How I want to examine this phenomenon *carefully*: (1) It was so obviously supernatural that no one even thought of denying it. (2) The standard of truth was very clear — no question about morality — the source of right and wrong was very plain. “Jesus, whom Paul preached” gave peace and deliverance.

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 clear definition of repentance. We cannot mix sin and righteousness; superstition and prayer. We cannot, we must not, we dare not serve God and mammon. (2) Thank you for the example of open confession of sin. (3) Thank you for the final full break with sin — it was burned up! (4) Thank you for the shocking (?) revelation that Christians in Ephesus were not at all as mature as we have at times imagined them to be. (5) Thank you for the public participation in the life of the church — everyone knew! (6) Thank you that Christians were willing to spend thousands and thousands of dollars to show their faith and commitment. (7) Thank you for a demonstration of how faith can spread as widely today as then.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.” In this day of emphasis on church growth we surely do want to know just how “the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.” Notice: (1) It was through an open confession of personal sins. (2) It was through a public declaration of their break with sorcery and idolatry. (3) It was when men and women began to “put their money where their mouth was.” As large as the congregation was in

Ephesus, as influential as some of the people were, these actions and attitudes had a strong impact on the city.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

A good number of petitions must have been raised in the homes of the Ephesian Christians: (1) May Jesus be Lord of all in my life. (2) Help me to fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. (3) Lord, I want to learn from the tragic experiences of those who have disobeyed you. (4) Somehow may I see just how exalted is the name of my Lord, even in the world of demons. (5) Give me the humility necessary to confess my sins to my brothers. (6) Keep me aware that the spirit world is the real world. (7) Burn up all that is false in my worship.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In these verses you can reach my conscience: (1) “You are no match for Satan without me.” (2) “Honor me in your thoughts.” (3) “If I cannot rule your spirit I cannot rule you at all.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

North Yemen — Points for prayer: (1) The nation’s stability and social structure are threatened by external attack, internal feuding, and the widespread use of the narcotic qat. The latter debilitating habit has diverted much valuable agricultural land into the cultivation of its leaves. Pray for spiritual liberation; as yet very few Yemenis have ever heard the gospel. May they, like their illustrious ancestor, the Queen of Sheba, seek for wisdom — from the One greater than Solomon! (2) For 1,300 years the land was tightly closed to the gospel. The government invited Christian agencies to initiate health and educational projects in 1964. At one time a number of agencies were involved, but conditions have become more restrictive and only a few remain. Pray that, despite all present trends, this land may be opened wide for the gospel, and also for the calling and entry of intrepid pioneer workers with the right professional skills.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

So precious is Jesus, my Savior, my King,
His praise all the day long with rapture I sing;
To Him in my weakness for strength I can cling,
For He is so precious to me.
For He is so precious to me,
For He is so precious to me;
'Tis Heaven below, My Redeemer to know,
For He is so precious to me.

WEEK TWO

—Monday—

The capacities of seeing — hearing — speaking — thinking — are all capacities of my spirit through my body. These are but the expression of your image. Give these words light and life!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Spirit — what a profound thought! You are an all powerful spirit being! Spirit is the real essence of being — for yourself or man. I am full of wonder as I try to contemplate just what this means. An all-pervasive intelligent divine being — as a spirit being you see, hear, speak, think. I know so much more about you in the Person of Jesus. Just now I want to pause before you in silent wonder, to praise and thank you for all you are, to sense — at least to some extent — your presence with me and in me. Out of my spirit — your likeness, I bless your holy name!

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

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Spirit to me. What I have said so far could be, and should be, said by all men who love you, but I want to be very personal in my acceptance of you as Spirit. As Spirit you are seeking or looking, searching for my worship of you — so said your Son (John 4:23). To know you are more eager to have my praise and joy than I am to give it moves me to tears — to true humility. Oh, Divine One, how can I ever love you enough? Dear Lord, I want to cultivate the habit of practicing your presence. This is far more than quietness — it is that — but it is *work*: to wrench, subdue my mind until it takes the track of your thoughts. To focus my total attention on your blessed self, or on one or two qualities of your Being. Dear God, help me. May I not lose the sense I now have of your presence with me and in me!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

That I should ever forget you or neglect your presence, or ignore your promptings in my conscience

to sin against your essential Being is to repeat surely the original sin of Adam. How can I forget you see me? How can I think and not think your thoughts? speak and not speak your words? work and ignore your work? Dear God, may I in you live and move and have my being. This seems but the illusive dream of the poet. Forgive me. It is the most gut-level reality. I am blind; open my eyes!

“*Greed.*” This is but the misdirected natural desire. This is “the lust for other things” which does indeed choke out the word. Forgive me! May my insatiable desire be for you.

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

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Break Thou the bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves,
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee, O living Word.

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

HIS WORD

²¹After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. “After I have been there,” he said, “I must visit Rome also.” ²²He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer. —Acts 19:21,22, NIV
⁵After I go to Macedonia, I will come to you . . .
—I Cor. 16:5a, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Just how was it that Paul made his decision to leave Ephesus? What caused him to delay his departure? No doubt the events just described related to his deci-

sion, but how? Why did Paul decide to go through Macedonia and Achaia? The love Paul had for each Christian is such a boon for me. I want to notice your wonderful influence in Paul's life: (1) He wanted to share again and again with those who had heard and those who had not. (2) The excitement of travel, new places and new people, was a part of Paul. (3) Paul had a dominant leadership motivation — others were "his helpers." (4) Paul was not at all hesitant to ask for help from those who knew him. (5) All of Paul's plans were subject to your change. (6) Paul took advantage of opportunities as they arose. (7) Paul was protective of the weak or inexperienced — such as Timothy with the Corinthians.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Indeed, indeed! I do like the use of names in this text! The names of places: (1) Macedonia, (2) Jerusalem, (3) Achaia, (4) Rome, (5) Corinth, (6) Asia, (7) Ephesus. The names of the people: (1) Timothy, (2) Erastus, (3) Apollos, (4) "the brothers." I want to think through and pray through each of these eleven names. Every one is saying something to me.

(1) Macedonia means Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea and all for which these churches stand. (2) Jerusalem — oh, how precious and beautiful where my Lord died, was buried and rose again! (3) Achaia — how many lessons can I learn from these Greeks? (4) Rome — the letter to these people has lifted me to heaven. (5) Corinth — I read the two letters as if they were mine! (6) Asia — the seven churches — Colossae, Ephesus — so full of memories. (7) Ephesus — the message of Paul to the elders — here is a message to 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 the trails out of which a door opened. (2) Thank you for the dear human interest Paul had with the saints of Macedonia and Achaia. (3) Thank you that Paul was fascinated or captivated with the thought of seeing the imperial city of Rome. (4) Thank you that Paul needed helpers and loved and accepted helpers. (5) Thank you that plans can be changed and still be in your will. (6) Thank you for long winters we can spend with friends in mutual interests. (7) Thank you for timid Timothy — he represents many of us.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

(1) "Be on your guard; (2) stand firm in the faith; (3) be men of courage; (4) be strong; (5) do everything in love." What good words for all Christians everywhere! Our adversary is full of wily deceit, therefore, we must be on guard. When we know sin in clear

definition, we are forearmed against him. When we know what to believe, we can stand firm in it. Paul does not ask us to argue about it, but to stand firm in it. All of us are characterized by some term. There are men of timidity, men of change, men of complaint. With our Lord as example, we can be and want to be, men of courage! It is a remarkable fact that our strength comes both from him and from ourselves! Can we be as inclusive as Paul? *Everything* in love? Yes, everything!

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As Paul plans his future we can see reasons for prayer: (1) Help me to decide and know it is your decision. (2) May I have the same purpose as Paul for my plans. (3) Keep me aware that your work depends on many servants. (4) Give me the time and interest to write to some of your servants. (5) Keep me aware that nothing happens apart from your permission. (6) I want to be on guard against Satan. (7) Give me firmness in the faith.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Surely there is much to hear from you in these verses: (1) "Be a man of courage." (2) "Be a man with my strength." (3) "Do everything in love."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

North Yemen — Points for prayer: (1) *Several dozen Christian workers* in aid agencies live under discouraging restrictions. Earlier permission for them to share their faith and hand out literature to individuals has been withdrawn. Pray for the maintenance of their spiritual glow in the face of many attacks from the enemy of souls through discouragement, sickness, isolation from the wider Christian family and constant threats to their presence in the land. (2) *Yemeni believers* may number no more than a few dozen. The only little fellowship of believers was stopped by the authorities in 1974. Since then believers have been lonely and isolated, and some have suffered much. Pray that they may maintain their spiritual life and grow in grace and boldness. Pray that they might find adequate fellowship, and opportunities to share their faith. (3) *Christian radio programs* from FEBA-Seychelles are clearly received. Many listen. Pray for lasting fruit and fellowships of believers to result.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

WEEK TWO

—Tuesday—

Without this quality of yourself in me I shall not see you here or hereafter. Gladly do I worship you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Sanctifier. This is surely one of the essential qualities of yourself. Indeed it would seem to me your primary work among men was to set this one aside — to set aside a nation, to set aside a half-tent half-house for worship called a tabernacle, and to set aside or sanctify all the utensils of the tabernacle for use in worship. *The Separator* would be a good description of yourself. Bless your name — sanctify, set aside your name, your person from all else. To consider in wonder and praise, in absolute adoration, the Great Sanctifier or The Sanctified would be so appropriate designation! It is so good to know someone who is totally distinct from everyone else, from everything else, even yourself!

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

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Sanctifier for me and of me. It is great to contemplate and adore you as such a “set apart One,” but quite something else to realize I have been also “set apart” as a clearly distinct person to worship and serve you. “In any large house there are not only gold and silver dishes but also wooden and earthen ones, some for great occasions and some for ordinary uses. So if a man will cleanse himself from these things, he will be put to great uses, consecrated (sanctified) and used by the master of the house himself, and ready for any good use” (Goodspeed). How poignantly does this text speak to me of my part and your part in my sanctification. What a high honor and privilege to be used by the master of the house himself (even your blessed self).

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

That I have been unwilling to set myself apart

prevents the fulfillment of your intention to do so. It is so, so *good* to know that sanctification is like salvation: (1) I have been sanctified at Calvary. (2) I am being sanctified by my willingness and your power. (3) I will be eternally sanctified in heaven. Right now I want to cleanse myself and be cleansed. Dear God, dear God, forgive me and make me clean! “*Foolish talk.*” How very much of it I have heard and expressed — foolish in the sense that it has no sense and its ultimate purpose is empty and meaningless. Stop me, shock me, put a guard on my lips. 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

Ere you left your room this morning,
Did you think to pray?
In the name of Christ our Savior,
Did you sue for loving favor,
As a shield today?
Oh, how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day;
So in sorrow and in gladness,
Don't forget to pray.

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

HIS WORD

²³About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way. ²⁴A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. ²⁵He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: “Men, you know we receive a good income from this business.” —Acts 19:23-25, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How good to meet Demetrius again! Was he ever

converted? Perhaps he was and I will meet him in heaven. You know, I do not. But I would like to think he reconsidered his motives and actions. I want to reconsider his motives and actions with you as my co-reader and silent guide. It was "the Way" in Ephesus. Not "a way," but "the Way." If Paul had only offered one more god among the many already there, Demetrius would not have been so upset. I was in Ephesus, I stood in the streets, I visited the theater. How near was I to the house of Demetrius? Income for his business more important than anything else. Had Demetrius heard Paul preach? He only heard one thing out of all Paul said: "my business is threatened"! How easy it is to filter all we hear through the sieve of our personal interests.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How soon is "a great disturbance" left behind. At the same time, how great was the disturbance? (1) Great in the number of people involved — somehow we can fit into the city of Diana and never cause a ripple. (2) Great in the issues involved — who is God? We are not willing to let the god of mammon go unchallenged. (3) Great in the results — many, many would never have seriously considered the one God if Paul had not challenged Diana or Artemis. We do not have these results because we do not offer a similar challenge.

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 adversaries who make us aware of the open door. (2) Thank you for the confirmation of archaeology in the city of Ephesus for the Acts record. (3) Thank you for the long record of the working principle for a gainful occupation. (4) Thank you for the ability of Paul to communicate to all men. What an example for me. (5) Thank you for the epistle to the Ephesians. It means so much more when I read it in the light of this account. (6) Thank you for the additional information of Phil. 2:19-24. (7) Thank you for your motivation within me to worship you amid every changing circumstance of my life.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... we receive a good income from this business." How often in human history has this been the motive for either opposing or pursuing religion? When our god becomes a source of income, when we are using him we are not worshiping him. Whatever becomes the focus of our interest is our source of worship. Dear God, deliver me from using you in any way to promote my own welfare. Whenever service to God becomes a lucrative business, or our motive is to make it so, we need to be on guard — our friend

Demetrius has come to life again!

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In opposition there is always a place for prayer: (1) In all my relationships today may I seek for "the Way." (2) Give me the same bold humility as Paul in the face of men like Demetrius. (3) Keep me aware that today there are men who plot the overthrow of your cause. May I use the freedom we have for you. (4) Deliver me from the love of money. (5) It is so easy to mistake greed for zeal — help me. (6) Help me to know more fully than ever all who live godly will suffer persecution. (7) Deliver me from provoking persecution in order to parade my righteousness.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You can indeed speak to me through these verses: (1) "Never underestimate the power of the love of money." (2) "Never underestimate my power to overcome." (3) "The worship of Artemis is not dead."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

South Yemen — Points for prayer: (1) *All mission work in the country was terminated in 1972 with the nationalization of all mission and church property.* For years a few missionaries suffered and witnessed in this land but with very little fruit. Pray that the land may again be opened for the gospel. (2) *Communism is breaking down many traditional and Islamic barriers to the gospel.* Pray that Yemenis may seek the Prince of Peace in their ideological confusion. (3) *The literature distributed and witness given before 1972 and present radio broadcasts by FEBA-Seychelles will bear fruit as prayer is made.* There is a small, but steady response by letter to the broadcasts. Pray for secret listeners. (4) *The few national believers still meet where and when they can, though lack of a legal place in which to gather makes it hard to maintain fellowship.* They are under considerable pressure from both atheists and Muslims. Pray that they may not give way and compromise their faith or testimony. Pray that they may be used to win others to the Lord.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

When I see the cleansing fountain
Open wide for all my sin,
I obeyed the Spirit's wooing,
When he said, Wilt thou be clean?
I will praise Him! I will praise Him!
Praise the Lamb for sinners slain;
Give Him glory, all ye people,
For His blood can wash away each stain.

WEEK TWO

—Wednesday—

What a joy to be perfectly clean — to be cleansed from the inside out. This I find in worship with you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Cleanser. Surely this describes your work for mankind. The parallels in nature and in revelation are most interesting. You must constantly cleanse this earth to keep it alive. We must wash away impurities or our daily life would be unbearable. A very large function of the human body is cleansing itself. How glad I am you are the grand original source for all that is clean. Man and your other creation truly is “fouled up” when cleansing does not happen. It is more than good to be clean — it is absolutely essential! Bless your name for being so adequate in every area of life.

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

Cleanser for me. Dear God, I have a constant need of being renewed from within. I do not consider sin and failure inevitable, but I do know I must seek your forgiveness each day. I am neither intelligent enough nor morally strong enough to be saved any other way. I love to think of you as the Cleanser in the figures of speech (or literary devices) you have given in your word: (1) “A Fountain for sin and uncleanness” is my blessed Lord and his blood. (2) The laver of regeneration, or “the bath of the new birth” (Titus 3:5). (3) The burnt offering — fire is a great purifier — so all our sins are gone in the consuming fire of his love. Bless your name!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

All my praise has been for the forgiveness I have from confession of sin. Dear God, help me to hold back nothing in naming my sin that I might be wholly forgiven. How sad to learn that the very expression of

your self is to cleanse and then fail to recognize I am dirty. “There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.” Oh, indeed, indeed I do!

“*Course jokes.*” Sin is no joke. Satan wants us to believe it is. Sin has the potential of a joke since humor is based on incongruity, but the sad tragic fact is such is but a testimony of man’s moral failure. His conduct is so far away from what God expected it appears ludicrous. Dear God, forgive.

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

From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes.
There is a calm, a sure retreat:
’Tis found beneath the mercy seat.

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

HIS WORD

²⁶“And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. ²⁷There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.”

²⁸When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”
—Acts 19:26-28, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How convincing was Paul! How very many people

were taught and led by him! This incident at Ephesus could be only representative of what he did in so many places. Dear Lord, I want to express my wonder and praise for what I see and hear before you. When the world begins to testify as to the power and influence of the good news we have reason to rejoice. I see here that Demetrius was worried not only about money, but status — “our trade will lose its good name.” Perhaps money and a good name are the same thing here. Thank you for showing me what one man could do — rather what you could do through one man.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Oh, how I want to hear these verses; burn them into my conscience: “large numbers of people here at Ephesus — practically the whole province of Asia”! “The temple of . . . Artemis will be discredited.” When I consider the dimension of the work here described, I am just nonplused! How could it happen that one of the seven wonders of the ancient world would be threatened by one man? But then it was no wonder to you or to Paul.

Why am I impressed with the works and claims and standing of men? Dear God, deliver me from such! Show me where I can influence as many men and women for you!

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 desire to convince all that there is just one God. (2) Thank you for the truth for today — we worship false gods if we worship anything but you. (3) Thank you for the lesson in the temporariness of earthly glory. (4) Thank you for the excitement of opposition — out of it can come eternal good. (5) Thank you for your divine majesty in a stark contrast to Artemis. (6) Thank you that I can read a record two thousand years old and feel the conflict and heart-beat of those in it. (7) Thank you for the multiple applications I see in this incident for my life today.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . robbed of her divine majesty.” Just how was this done? (1) By challenging the claims of Diana — what possible evidence could be presented for the claim that she fell down out of heaven? (2) By offering a far more meaningful explanation of the world and all in it. (3) By credentialing or supporting the claims of Jesus with miracles. (4) By the example of confidence and happiness as seen in the lives of the followers of the Way.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In the words of Demetrius there is much occasion for prayer: (1) May I remember the zeal of those against you is as great or greater than those who are for you. (2) Thank you for the wide influence of Paul. May I follow his example. (3) How I need to remember and teach that “man-made gods are no gods at all.” (4) Keep me aware the temple of Artemis was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world — how empty is her glory! (5) Help me to discredit false gods of my day. (6) Impress upon me again that the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God. (7) Give me the zeal and wisdom to know how to reach my generation as Paul reached his.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I know you can speak to me in these verses: (1) “You can lead many away from false gods today.” (2) “Be careful when you touch men’s pocketbooks.” (3) “Great is Jesus, King of Glory.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Yugoslavia — Points for prayer: (1) *There has been considerable liberty for Christians since the '60s.* Pray for continued and greater freedom for the gospel. Yugoslavia is one of Europe’s most spiritually needy lands, and few Yugoslavs have ever heard a clear presentation of the good news in Jesus. It would be tragic if Christians do not use to the full present liberty to reach out to the uncovered; there is a definite increase in hunger after God. (2) *The Church is one of the most formal in Europe* — this includes Orthodox, Catholic and most Protestant denominations, though renewal movements among Romanian Orthodox and Catholics are significant. A recent increase in religious fervor is little more than a reinforcement of ethnic prejudices. Most denominations are restricted to one or two peoples. The renewal movement in the older churches is very small. Evangelical believers are variously estimated at between 10,000 and 20,000. Pray for an outpouring of the Spirit that will halt the decline, enliven formal congregations, replace liberal theology with fervent biblical preaching and bring unity to the body of Christ. (3) *Help from other lands.* It is not practicable for missionaries to enter as such. A number of Christians assist the Yugoslav Church in itinerant ministry, Bible teaching, etc. Pray for more assistance to be given. The Christians are so few and of limited means that any help is appreciated.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

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

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

WEEK TWO

—Thursday—

Beauty is a relative term — but everyone will find you the total essence of beauty! I do so now in the closet!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Beautiful. I'm so glad to have this word to describe yourself! In every way you are beautiful! How many ways shall I describe your beauty? (1) Beautiful in your creative genius. I think of the bud of a red rose — words fail to describe the color, the fragile design, the lovely fragrance. Yet this is only one example of ten thousand that could be produced. (2) Beautiful in your management of history. If beauty is seen in purpose and design, if beauty is seen in infinite patience and unending love, then you are yourself the essence of beauty. (3) Beautiful in your plans for the future — “the land that is fairer than day” — even the brightest of days. Most of us live on the the promise of something better and are disappointed when it arrives — not so with you. What beauty I will find in the world to come! It will not be a comparison but a contrast with the anticipations of our wildest imaginations! Bless your name!

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Beautiful to me. Your greatest expression of beauty is in your development of your own image in man — in myself. “We all with unveiled face behold in a mirror the character (glory) of yourself (in the Person of your Son) are changed into the same image — or likeness from character to character. This happens from yourself in the Person of the Holy Spirit.” (This is a paraphrase of II Cor. 3:18.) This is also a testimony of whatever change has happened in me. I believe the key or the power to this change is in the little word “behold.” It is a word of amazement or shock or wonder. It is only when I clear the veils from my face to stand face to face with your Beauty that I am changed. I need to stand mind-to-mind, spirit-to-spirit. I shall always fall down and cry with Isaiah or Peter “depart from me I am an unclean man” — but I will be changed!

How do you personally relate to the beauty of God, and God who is Beautiful?

CONFESSION OF SIN

To refuse to live in the presence of beauty — to prefer and choose to live in squalor and dirt. What a loss! Dear Lord, I have made such a tragic choice. But once I see your beautiful self, I shall never be the same. Forgive me for the sin of second best.

“*Their glory is their shame.*” This seems to have sensual overtones, i.e., what we take pleasure in of sexual excesses should really be an embarrassment to us. It could refer to all the money we spent to own this trinket or that, this possession or that. We are proud of it when we should be ashamed of our lust for things. It could refer to where we are on the top of the status pile of people in our little mad scramble. Dear God, in all these areas I repent. I now change my mind and goals. Forgive me and change me.

What personal sins do you want to confess? There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.

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

HIS WORD

²⁸Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. ³⁰Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. ³¹Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater. —Acts 19:29-31, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

What a record of man's vain efforts to defeat your work! I want to share the violence of the crowd with Gaius and Aristarchus. Can I hear them shout the name of Paul? What else are they shouting? I'm sure this incident did not happen in the past on your time table. There is no time with you. This incident is still clear and every man is identified — all of them are long gone from the earthly scene, but not from your mind or record. Dear Lord, I do gladly share the abuse of men if that will advance your cause. I say this with apprehension — for I know you hear it.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Paul was ready to give his life if necessary. He was not afraid of the mob. Paul wanted to defend the name of the body of your Son. Paul knew the officials of the province would stand behind his words. Paul had endeared himself to these important men. How? By life and words. Undoubtedly Paul had shared with them in conversation. He had captivated the minds and hearts of these Greeks. Dear Lord, I do want to follow his example. Whom can I influence for my Lord today? Lead me to some life where your light can shine through me! At the same time, help me to remember that sometimes it is not wise to address those who do not want to hear. In Paul's case it was not even safe.

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 Gaius and Aristarchus. I confidently expect to meet them and appreciate more fully all they did for our Lord. (2) Thank you for every Christian in Ephesus. What a jarring experience Paul's persecution must have been to them. (3) Thank you for the beautiful letter of Ephesians written to these people. (4) Thank you for the officials of the province who possibly saved Paul's life. (5) Thank you for your wonderful superintending providence that works something good out of this strange circumstance. (6) Thank you for the wonderful archaeological research done in Ephesus which serves to confirm this account by Dr. Luke. (7) Thank you for the confident joy of salvation which no persecution could stop.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

They "begged him not to venture into the theater." We can almost hear their voices as they pled with the apostle. We can, in our imagination, see them taking hold of Paul and gesturing wildly as they repeated their entreaties. Why did they do this? (1) Paul was a valuable man. His voice must not be silenced by a senseless mob. (2) They had not heard all they wanted to about the Way. Paul must be kept alive long

enough to tell them. (3) These men knew the men who opposed Paul, there was no reasoning or meaning to their actions. There was but one motive — *money*. The people were but pawns of these powerful leaders.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Two men were seized because they were friends of Paul. Did Paul and others pray for them? We are sure they did. We can find petitions in this incident: (1) How can I arouse the whole city in which I live? (2) May I remember when people are aroused all of them will not be friendly. (3) Keep me aware that men will do almost anything to keep their money. (4) Remind me again that public sentiment is usually wrong. (5) Speak to me in these words — even Paul was not always right in his personal decisions, or is this saying there are several *right* options? (6) Help me to make friends of those with influence. (7) May I remember that one leader is worth many followers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You were speaking in various ways in the middle of this confusion: (1) "The whole city can be wrong." (2) "To travel with me will produce a real adventure." (3) "Listen to your friends — they are sometimes right."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Yugoslavia — Points for prayer: (1) *Christian literature* is relatively freely available, especially in Croatia, Serbian and Slovenian, less so in other languages; There are Christian bookstores and presses in Zagreb and several other cities, with plans for bookstores in other centers too. There is a Bible Society depot in Belgrade. Censorship exists, but is not a major problem; but the availability of printing supplies and distribution are. Much remains to be done to provide an adequate range and quantity of tracts, books, Bibles, etc., in all languages. The greatest need is for Macedonian and Albanian literature. Both these have only a NT; the OT is in preparation. Between 1975 and 1980 about 150,000 Scripture portions in 9 languages were printed in the country. (2) *Christian radio programs* are broadcast daily by TWR and IBRA in Croatian, seven times a week in Albanian, and weekly in Macedonian, Slovenian and Serbian. Pray for additional staff and air time.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

A Friend I have, called Jesus,
Whose love is strong and true,
And never fails howe'er 'tis tried,
No matter what I do;
I've sinned against this love of His,
But when I knelt to pray,
Confessing all my guilt to Him,
The sin-clouds rolled away.

WEEK TWO

—Friday—

I have taught students for more than 40 years — it is not easy — but it is a most fulfilling task. Teach me in the depths of my being just now!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Teacher. I wonder why I did not think of this name earlier? It is the name often used of your dear Son. All that all men know is from you as their teacher. Oh, how well you do instruct us. Not all who sit in class learn the lesson. Not all who have passed through the classroom called life learn the sweet, dear, beautiful lessons you have to teach them. It is not that you are not teaching; it is but that they are so dull of hearing. What powerful visual aids you use. What an inexhaustible textbook you have given us in your word. In it are *all things* that relate to this life and the life to come. How long lasting are your lessons! Dear Lord, how I want to learn from 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

Teacher to me! Speak into my deepest consciousness: "Take my yoke upon you and *learn* from me." Only when my head is bowed, and I willingly receive your total Lordship can I really learn anything. Dear God, I am such a slow learner! But you are such a great teacher! I simply revel at the variety and depth of your instruction! Bless your name! I love to trace every word of your book. I see and absorb something new and fresh every day! I confidently expect to keep right on learning from you in the world (classroom?) to come. I am sure there are lessons to learn our poor minds could not even begin to appreciate. Glory, Hallelujah! I am eager to enroll!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

At the same time, I am eager to admit my unwillingness to learn. I know the meaning, but I do not want it! Some of your lessons are in discipline. I "*learn* obedience by the things that I suffer." Am I

then different or above my Master "who with *strong cries and tears*" so learned from you? Dear Lord, forgive me! How often do you need to repeat some lessons? Just until you see the truth reproduced in my character. What an infinitely patient teacher you are! "*Hollow philosophy.*" How could we better choose a sin that relates to you as a teacher? The words of men are empty without nourishment, clouds without water. Forgive me, that I should at any time be impressed with their philosophy of empty pretense.

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!

HIS WORD

³²The assembly was in confusion. Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. ³³The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. ³⁴But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" —Acts 19:32-34, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How the mob in the theater of Ephesus typifies all mankind in this theater of life. "The assembly was in

confusion: some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there." It is more than interesting that the term "*ecclesia*" is used of this crowd. We are either in your "assembly" or church or we are in the "assembly" or "church" of Demetrius. How true it is that the world is "in confusion." Why? Because one shouts and insists and supports and enforces "one thing" and someone else, something else. Most poor people are like sheep with no shepherd, or truth; with many shepherds who do not themselves know why they are here! Have I represented things as they are? Dear Lord, I want to!

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

We all have at times felt like poor Alexander. He could have said something significant if he had ever been heard! How many men and women have been just like this man? How we would like to have heard them, but because he or she was this or that they were never heard. How more than sad that a confused mob can drown out the voice of one who can make sense out of confusion if he were only given a chance. Alexander only wanted to defend the Jews and exonerate them in the light of the opposition to Paul who was a Jew, but even in this he was never heard. Praise you, oh, praise you that some people are being heard today!

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 use of the term "assembly" — translated many times "church" — it lets me know that the church is your "called out ones." (2) Thank you that we need not be in confusion — we *know* why we are here. (3) Thank you for the courage of Alexander. (4) Thank you for the "called out ones" of Ephesus and all they mean to you. (5) Thank you for the cry of the human heart that can never be satisfied with anything but yourself. (6) Thank you for the record which we can follow today. (7) Thank you for the desire to learn and know.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"*The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another.*" Isn't this typical of a religious meeting? How sad it is that the followers of Paul have become more like Demetrius than the apostle. Even someone who could offer an explanation is shouted down by the babble of confusion. Is there no answer? Perhaps the answer we want is not what we will get. It could be God has a town clerk in the form of international terrorism ready to tell us to settle it in the court of God with his word or prepare for destruction.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

The confusion of the assembly at Ephesus reminds me of some other times and places — at the same time there are areas for prayer: (1) Help me to be used of you to bring meaning out of confusion for a number of assemblies. (2) How tragic that upon this earth there are so many people who do not know why they are here. Help me to help them. (3) How sad are the efforts of men to explain the chaos in which man finds himself — help me to send the light! (4) May I appreciate the difficulties of other people to the extent of being patient with them. (5) Show me more than ever the greatness of my Lord. (6) Open my heart to the deeds of the darkened world in which I live. (7) Deliver me from the blindness of religious form.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I am glad to receive messages from Someone who knows the end from the beginning. (1) "The confused assembly represents the needs of men." (2) "There are times when men will not listen." (3) "Let everyone know of my greatness."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zaire — Point for prayer: *The church of Christ in Zaire (ECZ)* came into being through both government edict and pressure from some unscrupulous church leaders, though many evangelical leaders are now in favor of their membership in the ECZ. There have been positive benefits; the divisiveness of tribalism has been diminished, unnecessary competition reduced, administration rationalized and cooperation in training schemes and media increased. However the negatives must be prayerfully counteracted. a) *The centralization of leadership* has harmed the development of effective lay leadership and congregational initiative. Hierarchical leadership structures have been encouraged — even to the extent of each community being encouraged to set up life-bishops. Christian leaders need wisdom and discernment in knowing where to draw the line on those who want authoritarian measures on doctrine, finance and leadership structures. b) *Worldly standards* among some leaders — power politics, pride of position, misuse of funds have frequently compromised the prophetic role of the Church.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus is all the world to me,
My life, my joy, my all;
He is my strength from day to day,
Without Him I would fall.
When I am sad, to Him I go,
No other one can cheer me so;
When I am sad He makes me glad,
He's my Friend.

WEEK TWO

—Saturday—

You are my Father — yea more you are my papa — my daddy — as if you had only one child and I am that child! Gladly do I talk with you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Abba (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). What a lovely, poignant, personal name this is! It is the name used by the Son and the Holy Spirit as they became intimate and very personal in their conversation with you. It is indeed the designation you would like all men to use when addressing you. The household term such as what we mean when we call our father “papa” or “daddy.” How humbling it is to think that you the Almighty Ruler wish to establish a very personal relationship with all men. And when I say “all men” I think of some who would be very poor close-up members of the family. Perhaps an appreciation of yourself would be essential to this expression. Surely a love for you would be an essential prerequisite to calling you “Abba.”

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

“Abba” for me. As I follow your dear Son and my Savior into the garden and see him there prostrate before you and hear him cry “Abba, Father,” I am overcome with amazement that you have sent forth the Holy Spirit into my heart to prompt the same cry from me! Oh, I do want to say this word, but I want to mean it. It must come from the warm depths of emotion, but it must come from the knowledgable grasp of your total Being — most of all it must come (and *does* come) from a spontaneous willingness to establish and hold this intimacy with you! I know you, I want you, I love you — “Abba,” Father!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

Whereas the above expression is an open, happy expression of praise and adoration — there are times

(too many of them) when I am too involved with other things to sustain or maintain this nearness. Forgive me! I am the loser. I can think of times when I was totally immersed in a project and my earthly father dropped in all unexpected — I looked into his dear face — and all my childhood attachments flooded back and in a surprised and delighted tone, I said: “Daddy”! or “Dad”! Dear God, break through today — surprise me often!

“Tradition for truth.” Tradition is good and precious but when it contradicts truth it must be changed! A tradition is a habit repeated so often in a meaningful environment that it becomes a part of our emotional nature. We all have them — is our Savior a part of them? Does God have a place in them? Is the Holy Spirit welcome? Dear Lord, help me to establish new traditions for myself and my children.

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

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus!
Trusting only Thee!
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

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

HIS WORD

³⁵The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: “Men of Ephesus, doesn’t all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven?

³⁶Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. ³⁷You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess.

³⁸If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and

there are proconsuls. They can press charges. ³⁹If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. ⁴⁰As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." ⁴¹After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the **20** disciples and, after encouraging them, said goodbye and set out for Macedonia. ²He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people. — *Acts 19:35-20:2a, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How gladly do I enter into this experience! We can hear the word of the city clerk all over again! Did he really believe what he said? Wasn't he only repeating what he knew men expected and wanted to hear? Do we do the same today with no more power with you than he had? The temple of Diana was indeed one of the wonders of the world of that day. How absurd that claim must have sounded to you!

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

"The courts are open." Indeed they are! The courts of the world, as recorded in human history, are open. I want to be one of the "proconsuls" for the case of Paul and his friends. Let the record show that the "goodness from heaven" is in every way far superior to Artemis who supposedly fell from heaven. Indeed the myth of Artemis is but a distortion of the truth. Someone *did* come from heaven of his own choice — but it wasn't Artemis.

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

There is indeed so much in this text for which we can thank you. (1) Thank you for "law and order," i.e., the ministers of yourself in government. (2) Thank you for the strong desire of man to worship. (3) Thank you for the wisdom you gave to the city clerk. (4) Thank you for Gaius and Aristarchus — the released hostages. (5) Thank you for the honesty of this man — there really were no charges against Paul. (6) Thank you for the dedication of Paul who let nothing stop him from his purpose of preaching.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... speaking many words of encouragement to the people." I wonder just what thoughts were in these words. We can surely find an answer in Paul's letters to some of these very churches. He could have spoken as he wrote: "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now

much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Phil. 2:12,13). Or he could have said, "Be joyful always; pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thess. 5:16ff.).

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In the words of the city clerk, there are areas for prayer: (1) Move me to make it true that all the world knows who Jesus is — at least to do my part. (2) Grant me the wisdom I need to quiet the chaos in the hearts of those to whom I speak. (3) Keep me responsible as your spokesman. (4) May I be ready if today you call me to give an account before your judgment seat. (5) Protect me from the wrath of unreasonable men. (6) Dear Lord, help me to have words of encouragement — men need this so much. (7) Move me to Paul's kind of compassionate concern.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

What a great work Paul did in Ephesus! Speak to me from it: (1) "I have persons through whom I work that you could not even imagine." (2) "There is a time to leave a field of service." (3) "Even Paul was so burdened he could not speak — read II Cor. 2:12,13."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Zaire — Points for prayer: (1) *Leadership training* at every level must be emphasized. a) *Lay leadership training* has not been given enough priority. It is hard to implement due to expense and the lack of both transport and personnel. b) *Bible Schools*. There are large numbers of primary local-language and trade-language Bible Schools, and a similar number of French ones. They often function with slender resources and inadequate staff. (2) *The problem of nominalism has become acute*. The Church could experience decline, division and heresies unless the problems are squarely faced. Cultures must be transformed by the power of the gospel. Many areas are Christianized, but most are little more than baptized heathen.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered,
From the curse to set me free.
Sing, oh, sing of my Redeemer,
With His blood He purchased me,
On the cross He sealed my pardon,
Paid the debt, and made me free.