



THREE MONTH
DAILY
DEVOTIONAL

VOLUME TWO / SERIES ONE

Three Month

Daily Devotional

Volume two – Series One

These brief messages are offered to the reader as “starters” for meditation before the Lord and introductions to a time of prayer. We encourage the reader to take one daily message at a time, leaving tomorrow’s message in tomorrow’s hands. Reading each section more than once may be helpful.

A PRAYER

O eternal God, though Thou art not such as I can see with my eyes or touch with my hands, yet grant me this day a clear conviction of Thy reality and power. Let me not go forth to my work believing only in the world of sense and time, but give me grace to understand that the world I cannot see or touch is the most real world of all. My life today will be lived in time, but eternal issues will be concerned in it.

The needs of my body will be clamant, but it is for the needs of my soul that I must care most. My business will be with things material, but behind them let me be aware of things spiritual. Let me keep steadily in mind that the things that matter are not money or possessions, not houses or lands, not bodily comfort or bodily pleasure; but truth and honor and meekness and helpfulness and a pure love of Thyself.

For the power Thou hast given me to lay hold of things unseen:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

For the strong sense I have that this is not my home:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

For my restless heart which nothing finite can satisfy:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

For the invasion of my soul by Thy Holy Spirit:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

For all human love and goodness that speak to me of Thee:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

For the fullness of Thy glory outpoured in Jesus Christ:

I give Thee thanks, O God.

I, a pilgrim of eternity, stand before Thee, O eternal One. Let me not seek to deaden or destroy the desire for Thee that disturbs my heart. Let me rather yield myself to its constraint and go where it leads me. Make me wise to see all things today under the form of eternity, and make me brave to face all the changes in my life which such a vision may entail: through the grace of Christ my Savior. Amen.

From the booklet "A Dairy of Private Prayer" by John Baillie, Charles Scribner's Sons , 1949

DAY 1 – MIND SET

We may not have control over all the crazy thoughts that flit across our minds.

But we do have control over which direction we choose to set our minds.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 8:5-6

Flesh = all the things that gratify the ego.

Spirit = the Spirit of God in whose presence you live, if you are a follower of Jesus.

For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; and

those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Romans 8:7-9

Every day, every hour, we set our minds where we choose.

Our minds absorb what they hear and see, for better or for worse.

The mind which is constantly directed toward the Light absorbs the Light.

The mind which is fascinated by the Darkness is drawn into Darkness, and ultimately overwhelmed by it.

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2

.....and do.

DAY 2 – HEY LORD, OPEN UP!

I'm knocking on your door.

How long are you going to keep me waiting out here?

Bring me into your presence, Lord!

Give me a fresh taste of your peace!

“And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you he will vindicate them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?” Luke 18:7-8

And who are “the elect?”

Those who cry out to God day and night.

They will be vindicated.

Their prayers will be answered.

.....Because they know how to take off their shoes when they pray; they hallow God's name.

They never give up.

They trust the heavenly Father.

Faith begins when our shoes come off, and we learn to worship.

Faith humbles itself before God like a child.

Faith trusts that the Father knows what he's doing.

Faith lets God talk first...and listens.

Faith hears the Master's words... and does them.

“Ask and it will be given you.

Seek and you will find.

Knock, and it will be opened to you.

For every one who asks receives,

And he who seeks finds,

And to him who knocks it will be opened.”

Luke 11:9-10

DAY 3 – MERCY

Two men went up into the Temple to pray....

When they went home,

one came down with a heart at peace,

the other came down with a frozen soul.

The man with the frozen soul found relief by comparing himself with others.

“God I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector....”

“And, by the way, take notice that I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.”

The man with the frozen soul desperately needed mercy.

He needed the fire of God to warm his cold, brittle heart.

He needed light to help him see his hopeless state.

He needed Truth to disperse his self-delusion.

But what can the mercy of the living God do for a man who is certain of his own righteousness?

No follower of Jesus ever reaches a point in this life where he/she no longer needs to pray, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

Our only claim on God is his mercy.

Not our piety, nor our generosity... only his mercy.

Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you.

Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:5-7

DAY 4 – A STRANGE COMMAND

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray

therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:36-38

So if the Lord of the harvest knows that it's short on laborers, why doesn't he raise up some laborers and send them out?

Why does he need our prayers?

Is Jesus telling us that if we don't pray, it won't happen?

Is he tying the redemptive activity of God to our prayers?

“Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

---What a strange command!

Yet, if it were not necessary, our Lord Jesus would not command it.

Before the Lord ever tells us to go out and witness, he commands us to pray---for laborers.

So let's do it!

Let's take our Lord at his word and pray to the heavenly

Father to send out laborers into his harvest.

Daily.

Consistently.

Until we see it happen.

In the process we may begin to see where we fit in all this.

We may find ourselves among the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Proclaiming the Kingdom.

Healing the sick.

Freely giving what we have received.

DAY 5 – CALLED

You did not choose Jesus, he chose you.

You did not decide to walk by faith, you were called.

What you do with your call is up to you, but you can never escape its reach.

Your call will follow you for the rest of your life, whether you respond to it or not.

“Follow me.”

He said it to Peter.

He said it to Paul.

He said it to Mary Magdalene.

He keeps saying it to you.

“My sheep hear my voice,

and I know them, and they follow me;

and I give them eternal life,

and they shall never perish,

and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.”

To answer his call.....to follow Jesus....is to keep looking to him for light

—which he will give to any one who seeks.....

....and then to walk in that light.

So we draw near to hear what Jesus has to say.

When we understand the step he wants us to take, we take it.

“Go, get reconciled.”

“Love them with my love.”

“Those people are hungry.”

“Change your attitude.”

“Pray for laborers in the harvest.”

“Be my witness.”

“Stay in fellowship.”

Jesus’ call is your doorway to freedom.

DAY 6 – DON’T JUST “MEDITATE,” CONCENTRATE

“I don’t seem to be getting anywhere with prayer.”

“How do you pray?”

“Well, I meditate.”

“You mean you sit there with your mind in neutral?”

“More or less. I really don’t know what else to do. I think I’m trying to wait on God.”

“While you’re ‘waiting on God’ do you find that your mind tends to wander?”

“Why yes, I suppose it does.”

For those who are alive in God, waiting on God in perfect stillness is a wonderful way to begin to pray. But for anyone just getting started the greatest need is to concentrate, to focus on exactly why you are drawing near to God in prayer.

We may think that time is being wasted as we pray like that, but you will know that you are being heard!

“And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to

those who ask him?” Luke 11: 9-13

DAY 7 – SHOW ME THE WAY, LORD!

Why am I having such a hard time figuring out which road the Lord wants me to travel?

He knows I'm willing to go anywhere, do anything....

.....if he'd only make it clear.

Didn't he promise to make the way clear?

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures

He leadeth me beside the still waters,

He restoreth my soul.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness

for his name sake

Yet here I sit, waiting for light.

.....We tell the Lord that we're willing to go anywhere, do anything. And we are certain that we mean it.

But what if the first lesson we need to learn from the Lord Jesus is to sit still and wait on him?

We may think that time is being wasted as we sit here waiting for our orders.

Yet if we have not learned how to be still and wait on the Lord in the place where we now are, how will we know how to receive guidance out there in the harvest field?

During those “waiting days” in Antioch Saul and Barnabas were not “sitting around waiting for light,” they were worshiping the Lord---ministering to the Lord. What better service could they render?

As they worshiped, guidance came.

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13: 2-3

DAY 8 – THE GLORY ROAD

Piercing the darkness of this world is a single path that

shines with the glory of the living God.

People who walk this path have lost all desire to seek their own glory.

Their joy is to pursue the glory of God.

To worship him.

To please him.

To move in his will.

To live in his power.

To walk in his love.

To the natural eye this glory road is rather dull.

It is traveled by a strange mix of unimpressive souls.

No glitter.

No celebrities.

No fanfare.

And yet they're singing!

Men in tattered clothing.

Women with tired faces.

Children with empty lunch pails.

Singing praises to the living God!

How did they get this way?

They have been taught by the Master to cease seeking glory from one another and to seek the glory that comes from the only God.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10

DAY 9 – THERE IS A RIVER....

...the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God.

It's invisible.

It flows wherever it chooses.

It conveys life from the throne of heaven.

It opens the eyes of the blind.

makes the deaf to hear.

Wash in this river and your soul is cleansed.

Drink from this river and you connect with the living God.

So how do we get to this river?

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive.

John 7:37-39

And how do we come to him and drink?

Start by listening to his word.

Listen with an open heart.

Listen with a receptive mind.

What you hear will be living water for your soul.

“It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.”

John 6:63

The sovereign God has preserved the words of the crucified and risen Messiah so that even a child can understand them.

All we need to do is go to them and let them speak.

There you will find the River, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God

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DAY 10 – UNDER OBSERVATION

“Big Brother” is not fiction.

Someone has a camera on you when you approach the ATM.

Your e-mails from the office are being monitored.

Your insurance company knows more about your health than you do.

You are being watched in more places and by more eyes than you will ever know.

And if “Big Brother” decides he doesn’t like you, life could take a bad turn.

But don’t panic.

No matter how big “Big Brother” gets, he’s no match for your Heavenly Father.

Your Heavenly Father is watching too.....for your good.

He doesn’t need hidden mikes and cameras.

He doesn’t need informers.

He’s with you.

Paying attention.

Sustaining you.

Without his sustaining presence, you would cease to exist.

Loving you with unspeakable love.

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.” Luke 12:6-7

“Big Brother watches, and tells you nothing.

Your heavenly Father speaks whenever you open your heart and listen.

He gives you a Word which is Spirit and Life.

DAY 1 1 – YOU MEAN I’M NOT THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE?

Infants take it for granted.

Spoiled brats drag it a step farther.

Adolescents do their best to keep the illusion alive.

But when we grow up it’s time to face the shocking truth:

I am not the center of the universe.

Many people know this intellectually.

But in their hearts they cannot accept it.

Why shouldn't things go my way?

I'm a decent human being!

I have rights!

Every disappointment,

Every set-back,

**Every devastating blast that invades my "space,"
is a sign,**

**pointing to the One who is in fact the Center of the
Universe:**

***Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all
generations.***

Before the mountains were brought forth,

Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,

Even from everlasting to everlasting,

Thou art God. Psalm 90

Our Lord Jesus taught us a prayer that puts us in touch with the Center of the Universe, even while it helps us to assume our proper place on this troubled planet.

Pray it.

Live it.

And the Spirit of God will deliver you from all illusions.

Our Father, who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.....

DAY 12 – BE STILL AND KNOW.....

How does a person really get to know God?

How can the puny human mind possibly connect with

the Eternal One?

Jesus once made an awesome claim:

“All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” Matthew 11:27

So if the Son chooses to reveal God, you’ll know him.

If the Son chooses not to reveal God, you won’t.

And what does it take to persuade the Son to reveal to us the living God?

To open our eyes to behold glory....

To open our ears to hear the voice of Truth.....

To bring our troubled spirits into communion with Holy

Peace...

What do we have to do?

Nothing.

Nothing? What do you mean, nothing?

“Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” Mark 10:15

The child does nothing.

It simply receives.

It trusts.

It doesn't strive to get in.

It doesn't worry its way in.

It simply opens it's heart and believes.

Begin by asking the Spirit of God to show you what this means:

Be still and know that I am God

DAY 13 – HE LET ME DOWN AGAIN!

I'm trying to live right.

I pray.

I believe in God.

But what good does it do?

I was really hoping that God would answer my prayer this time.

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and thou wilt not hear? Or cry to thee "Violence!" and thou wilt not save?

Why dost thou make me see wrongs and look upon trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. Habakkuk 1:2-3

The real issue:

Am I serious about fitting into God's program,

Or am I still trying to convince God to fit into my program?

If God's program is my first priority, an answer will come---as it did for Habakkuk:

And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it

plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its time; if it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, But the just shall live by faith.

Habakkuk 2:2-4

No prayer we pray in good faith is ever wasted.

But the answer is rarely on our terms.

Once we have a vision of God's kingdom,

"Thy kingdom come" precedes

"Give us this day our daily bread."

And in a mystery, the heavenly Father answers both petitions....and much, much more!

DAY 14 – NOT READY FOR A HAIR SHIRT

Why are we so afraid of getting close to Jesus?

Because we suspect that the closer we come to Jesus,

the more restricted and boring our lives will be.

Look at those pious ones who claim to be his front rank followers, and ask yourself, "Would you really like to be in their shoes?"

Who told you that Jesus wants you to wear sackcloth and ashes?

Go to the source.

Find out from the Lord Jesus himself.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

Life, not long-faced piety!

Freedom, not a thousand man-made rules!

Power to walk the only walk that makes sense.

Eyes that can behold the glory of God through the smoke and ashes of this warring world.

All these things become yours when you draw near to him, when you call on him in your need.

The issue is not,

How much do you know about Jesus?

The issue is,

Do you *know him*?

In the power of his resurrection.

In the fellowship of his sufferings.

Dying and rising with him to a new life.

“All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out.” John 6:37

DAY 15 – THE AWAKENED EAR

To hear from God the ear has to be awakened.....awakened by God himself.

Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward. Isaiah 50:4b-5.

So what do I have to do to enable the living God to give me ears to hear?

Start by listening to the words of Jesus.

Listen with your mind alert.

Listen with your heart open.

Listen with your body bent toward obedience.

Here's what the Lord Jesus says to those who pay attention to his words:

*Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
Matthew 13:16-17*

Those words will be fulfilled in any man or woman who submits to their authority.

Don't say to yourself, "I heard those words many times. There's nothing new in them for me."

Say rather, "Lord open my ears to hear your voice as I read and listen to words from your mouth which your

apostles faithfully passed on to us.”

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

DAY 16 – IF HE’S THERE, WHY DOESN’T HE SPEAK?

Why should God speak to you, until you have ears to hear?

You’d be amazed how many messages God has sent your way, only to have you walk by without hearing.

Words spoken to you by a loved one.

A crisis which should have awakened your heart.

A thought that rose up in your soul only to be choked.

God is not silent.

He speaks.

The One who once said “Let there be light,” is still turning on the light in human hearts.

But.....

To hear God speak,

To recognize Jesus of Nazareth for who he is,

To have ears for the still small voice of the Holy Spirit,

the heart has to relinquish its vanity.

For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite." Isaiah 57:15

**If you are having trouble hearing the voice of God,
don't blame it on God.**

Search your own heart.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,

A broken and a contrite heart, O God,

Thou wilt not despise.

DAY 17 – CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, O GOD!

**“Well yes, David needed to pray for a clean heart,
....after stealing another man’s wife, and then
arranging his murder.**

But me...

What have I done?

Why should I pray for a clean heart?”

Then one day the Lord turns on the light.

**Something happens that causes my heart to spill out
what’s in it.**

**I fly into a rage, and venom spews from my
mouth.**

I’m caught in a lie.

I’m exposed as a coward.

My old friend needs money---which I have---but

I'm too miserly to help.

Then the Spirit of God causes me to see my heart for what it is.

I'm exposed to the Light.

And I'm ashamed.

This is my heart.

My heart.

My unclean heart.

DAY 18 – THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

We're not talking about knowledge.

We're not talking about intelligence.

Or brain power.

Or mental skill.

Wisdom.

**To know who you are,
and where you're going,
and what it's all about.**

To discern the difference between Truth and Delusion.

Wisdom is found where the elite of earth never look.

It is available to the simplest soul.

**Wisdom comes to those who discover the HOLY, who
know how to take off their shoes at the burning bush.**

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psalm
111:10*

True wisdom does not come from this earth.

It comes from above.

**And only those who know how to bow before the
HOLY come under its power.**

*“.....The hour is coming, and now is, when the true
worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,
for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is Spirit,*

and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

...And to these is given wisdom
to know who they are,
and where they're going.

DAY 19 – SPIRIT LED.....OR MARKET DRIVEN?

When our Lord Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets, he put the responsibility on us to discern the difference between a false prophet and a true.

We will not be able to excuse ourselves by bleating,
“But I didn't realize!”

False prophets are clever.

They are inspired by the Prince of this World, who knows how to “get results.”

They take the truth of God and, with an imperceptible twist, exploit it for their own ends.

They harness the Kingdom of God for the creation of a personal kingdom, always designated as “The Lord’s Work.”

The test: Is this “Ministry” Spirit led or Market Driven?

Does it revolve around Jesus Christ and him crucified?

Are its leaders nailed to the cross?

Does it inspire you to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus all the way?

Are the misfits of the world found at its banquet table?

Or are we looking at another “Christian Enterprise?”

—driven by the market.

—utilizing the latest marketing techniques.

—with plenty of money changing hands.

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.” Matthew 7:15-16

For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word; but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ. II Corinthians 2:17

DAY 20 – THE NEXT MOVE IS YOURS

**Once you have heard a word which has come directly from the Lord Jesus to you,
the next move is yours.**

Don't sit around waiting for "more light."

You have received light.

Do something with it.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. John 1:9-10

I may be waiting for the Lord Jesus to show me my work assignment.

But Jesus is waiting for me to forgive my brother.

I may be waiting for the Lord Jesus to give me a vision of my destiny.

But Jesus is waiting for me to get reconciled with my sister.

I may be crying out for the Spirit of the Lord to bring judgment on my enemy.

But Jesus is waiting for me to pray blessings on him.

I may be pleading for more power from the Spirit.

But Jesus is waiting for me to do something for Lazarus who is lying at my gate.

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,'

and not do what I tell you?"

DAY 21 – UNDISTRACTED IN A DISTRACTING WORLD

**To be undistracted in a distracting world,
you don't have to walk with blinders on.**

you don't have to have your head in the clouds.

Just keep your heart focused on the goal of the journey:

The God of all glory.

The One for whom you were made.

The Light at the end of this dark tunnel.

When our heart is focused on the light at the end of the tunnel, that light comes near and guides our steps.

“I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you.”

The Lord Jesus himself draws near and helps us to stay focused.

His Spirit awakens us when our minds begin to drift.

He empowers us to walk through chaos with a clear mind.

If my will is to do his will, he will guide me.

If my hidden motive is to bend God's will to serve my

will, I'm on my own!

If my heart is set to fit into the Master's program, I will have vision.

If my heart is scheming to exploit the Master's program,

I will be forever distracted.

The Lord calls me to yield to him as he yielded to the Father in all things.

"I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me." John 5:30

DAY 22 – WHY CAN'T LIFE BE SIMPLE?

**Every time I get to a Rest Area in this rat race,
something else goes wrong.**

I was counting on a little peace.

A break from the battle.

A time to relax and recover.

But no, down comes another landslide of trouble!

The boss is in a snit.

War breaks out at the dinner table.

Car trouble.

The flu.

Lord, what's going on?

Why are you letting me get clobbered like this?

But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful.”

i.e. Get focused.

Look beyond the present confusion to the one thing that matters:

The Kingdom of God, and where you fit in it.

And how do I do that?

1. Pray the prayer the Master taught us:

***Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven.....***

2. In spite of it all, rejoice in the Lord.

***Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
Let all men know your forbearance.***

***The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything,
but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with
thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.
And the peace of God, which passes all understanding,
will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.***

Philippians 4:4-7

DAY 23 – THE REDEEMED TONGUE

There was only one sign to the outside world that something supernatural had happened to the believers on Pentecost:

They spoke with new tongues.

This was a sign, that the most unruly member of the human body had come under the power of the Holy Spirit.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:4

Perhaps we do not “speak in other languages as the Spirit gives us utterance.”

But the clearest sign to the world around us that something supernatural has happened to our hearts

.....is that our tongues have undergone a radical change.

They are more patient.

They are more trustworthy.

They know how to “sustain with a word him that is weary.”

If the heart is “baptized in the Holy Spirit,” the tongue will show it.

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

One of the surest signs that the Spirit of God is at work in your heart, is the way the Spirit convicts you every time your tongue gets out-of-line.

Criticisms that before flowed freely from your mouth are now “checked” by a strange discomfort each time you utter them.

Complaints, gossip, demeaning humor, no longer “feel right.”

You are beginning to speak with a new tongue.

DAY 24 – WHY DOESN'T GOD PICK ON SOMEBODY ELSE?

Seems like I'm getting clobbered incessantly.

Maybe I deserve it.

But I know plenty of people who deserve it more.

Their life is a bowl of cherries.

While mine is one crisis after another.

I need a break!

A little relief!

Don't complain to the Darkness,

Cry out to the Light!

Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.
Psalm 88

There is only one person in the universe who understands the mystery of your suffering.

Look to his cross and appeal for his help.

As surely as he hung there for you, he suffers with you and holds you now with his nail-scarred hands.

He will sustain you

in ways beyond all knowing.

Lord Jesus, help me!

I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. Psalm 42

DAY 25 – WE’VE FOUND IT! A SHORTCUT TO GLORY!

Jesus tells us that the road to glory leads to....and through....a cross.

No wonder so few of us choose to take that road!

Who wants to be “crucified with Christ!”

Yet Jesus made no apology as he described the road that leads to the glory of God:

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. For whoever

would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” Matthew 16:24-25

Lately, however, they’ve discovered an easier way.

And folks are flocking to this new teaching in record numbers.

It’s a very simple gospel:

It puts YOU in the center.

It aims the spotlight on YOU.

“Learning to love yourself”

“Restoring your self-esteem”

“Getting in touch with your feelings”

“Letting God’s grace work for you.”

----All this in the name of “our loving God” who wants you “to arrive at your full potential.”

Beware of those who confuse the glory of God with the “glory” of human approval.

“How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and seek not the glory that comes from the only God?” John 5:24

DAY 26 – WHAT WE KNOW WE KNOW

No matter how hard we try to avoid this knowledge.....

We know that we will answer for what we did with the light we were given.

We know it.

No wonder we spend so much time trying to justify ourselves.

No wonder death scares us.

We will give an account.

This knowledge is written in our bones.

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW:

God sends light into our lives, not to condemn us, but to save us from ourselves.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become sons and daughters of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:9-13

When we hear Jesus speak,

We hear truth,

We see light,

We receive power to walk in the light of God.

All we have to do is receive him.

Open our hearts to him.

Believe what he tells us enough to act on it.

But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it

may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God. John 3:21

DAY 27 – WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

He had left his Father's house with a light heart and a bag full of money.

He was glad to get as far from home as possible.

Times were good.

He was having fun.

Lots of friends to help him spend his gold.

But now he's broke.

Feeding swine for money to barely stay alive.

.....Until he says to himself, "What am I doing here?"

It's the turning point, the beginning of his homeward journey.

"But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of

my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger!"

The first step in our journey from Darkness into Light is the question, "What am I doing here?"

Some of us never ask that question until everything falls apart.

Some of us read the signs and begin to worry.

Sooner or later the question strikes us in the heart....

How did I get into this situation?

What am I doing here?

"I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.'

And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against

heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to the servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet.....’” Luke 15

DAY 28 – CELEBRITY CHRISTIANITY

AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The closest our Lord Jesus ever came to being a celebrity was Palm Sunday.

**Crowds surrounded him as he rode into the city.
“Hosanna to the Son of David!” they shouted.**

How long did it last?

Before the week was out he was on a cross.

Jesus never sought to be the “Israeli Idol.”

He never played to the crowds.

He never pursued numbers.

Jesus’ one focus was his Father’s will.

So the multitudes were always sifted to a handful.

To this day, Jesus deals with us one-at-a-time.

Calls us by name.

Delivers us from the powers of darkness.

Offers us life from God---the Holy Spirit.

Invites us to follow him to a cross of his choosing.

If you are serious about following Jesus, then follow Jesus....

....not the celebrities of the “Christian” world.

....not the crowds that mob the darlings of the “Christian” media.

Jesus only.

*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
Matthew 13:44*

DAY 29 – GIVE ME PROOF!

You say Jesus is the Son of God.

You say Jesus is the Incarnate Word.

You say Jesus rose from the dead.

You say Jesus can deliver me from the hell I'm in.

Prove it!

I can't prove it to you, but Jesus will.

If you truly want to know who Jesus is, he will reveal it to you.

It's the only way you will ever know.

But this will never happen so long as you're sitting in the "judgment seat."

It will only happen when you draw near with a true heart and ask for his help.

When you come to the end of your own strength and cry out to the Lord Jesus to redeem you from your private hell, you will meet the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

"Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed..."

And when those who had been sent returned to the

house, they found the slave healed.

Luke 7

Those who look for “proof” get nothing.

Those who cry out for help receive more than they could ask or think.

“Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 18

DAY 30 – PROPHETS----FALSE AND TRUE

This man speaks with authority.

He rivets your mind to his message.

He searches your face with piercing eyes.

Try to walk away from him, and something inside you collapses, and you return for more.

How else can you describe this man but to call him a

prophet?

Nor are you his only follower.

Many are drawn under the spell of his voice.

But is this prophet from God or the Pit?

Is his message True, or is it a convincing Lie?

“Then if any one says to you, ‘Lo, here is the Messiah!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Messiahs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Lo, I have told you before hand.” Matthew 24:23-25

There is only one Messiah. All others beside him are false Messiahs.

And there is only one kind of prophet that can be trusted: the prophet sent by the one true Messiah. All other prophets are false.

And there is only one way to recognize the Messiah:

Does this Messiah fit the classic description of him in Isaiah 53?

He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hid their faces. He was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

DAY 31 – WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE THE PHARISEES?

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:20

Those Pharisees were no slouches.

They fasted twice a week.

They tithed their incomes.

They were the epitome of moral behavior.

And they're not going to make it?

Where does that leave us?

Don't give me some jargon about "imputed righteousness."

Jesus isn't talking about "imputed righteousness."

Jesus is talking to believers.

He's dealing with the way we think, speak, act.

"Love your enemies."

"Pray for those who persecute you."

"Keep your eye single."

"Judge not."

Where does a person get the power to live like that?

From him.

From the Lord Jesus himself.

"If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He

who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” John 7:37-38

“Unless your righteousness.....”

The righteousness Jesus is calling for is not a theological concept, it is a way of life.

He alone gives us the power to live it.....if we take the trouble to draw near to him and ask.

DAY 32 – I LIKE MYSELF THE WAY I AM

Why should I change?

Well of course, if you’re content, stay as you are, and make the best of it.

But those of us who are dissatisfied with “the way we are” keep looking for the missing link, the “thing” to fill a vacuum within.

We’re spiritual discontents, on a search for Reality.

We’re willing to pay any price to get closer to God.

To hear his voice.

To live in his presence.

To know his peace.

Jesus claims to be the way to all this.

“Follow me, and you won’t be walking in darkness any more. You will have the light of life.”

“But Master, how can I be sure that this is true?”

“You will never know until you follow.”

DAY 33 – IDOLATRY

There are idols of wood and stone.

There are idols of money and power and sex.

An idol is anything we serve in place of the living God.

An idol is a god which we create.

An idol is a god which we manipulate to serve us.

When we try to manipulate the living God to serve us, instead of serving him, we have set up a dangerous idol.

We are no longer worshiping God, we are engaged in idolatry.

The true and living God cannot be manipulated, used, or controlled by man.

The minute we try to make him do our bidding, the living God withdraws.

The Lord Jesus teaches us to begin our prayer with,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

When we hallow God's name, we would not dare to try to use him for our own ends.

Of course we can ask the Father for help.

We can cry out for protection and healing.

We can pray for wisdom.

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more with your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

But we approach the heavenly Father with our shoes off.

We humble ourselves before him.

He is the Potter, we are the clay.

Know ye that the Lord, he is God.

It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves.

DAY 34 – GOD-SENT?

If you are a follower of Jesus, his call on your life is bound to be “complicated” by people who are totally unlike your Master.

The neighbor who is forever critical.

The woman who distorts every word you speak to her.

The friend who takes, but never gives.

The relative who blames you for her sad life.

What did I do to deserve this burden?

How can I fulfill my calling when I have to deal with all this static?

The miracle begins when you view this unsettling person....

---not as an interruption,

---or an irritant,

---or an obstacle in your path,

....but as God-sent.

It is no accident that this person has stumbled into your life.

This person is part of your training as a disciple.

You prayed for patience, here is your chance to practice it.

You wanted a ministry, here is a ministry to the ungrateful.

You invited the Lord to search your heart; the Master is searching your heart through your response to this person.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same....But love your enemies, and do good, and lend expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” Luke 6:32-36.

DAY 35 – JESUS DID NOT BRING US A NEW RELIGION

Jesus did not come to establish Christianity.

He did not come to set up a new religious system.

Jesus came to open the way into God's World.

Don't get sidetracked into religion!

Follow Jesus into the kingdom of God!

Jesus then said to the Judeans who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8:31-32

Don't confuse the church as a religious institution with the Church which Jesus creates and rules.

These two realities may interpenetrate each other.

But they are not the same.

There is only one Vine.

But there are two kinds of branches:

Those that bear fruit.

And those that don't.

"He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a

man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.” John 15:5-8

DAY 36 – DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU’RE GETTING INTO?

And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

They didn’t join a church.

They didn’t sign up for volunteer duty.

They didn’t fill out a financial pledge.

All they did was adopt Jesus as their Teacher and start following him as pupils in his informal school.

Their lives were never the same again.

It was impossible for them to return to their old ways.

Joining a church is one thing.

Following Jesus is another.

If you say, “Lord Jesus, I want to be your disciple,” he will take you at your word.

You will begin to experience changes within and without.

Jesus’ words will come alive to you.

The Spirit will open your eyes and your ears.

You will be drawn to others who are on the same journey---the authentic Body of Christ.

You will taste the fellowship of the kingdom of God.

But your former life will be gone forever.

Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:61-62

DAY 37 – KEEP IT SIMPLE

If you want to know the living God,

**If you want to walk with the crucified and risen
Jesus,**

**If you want the Holy Spirit to make his dwelling
in you,**

keep it simple!

Peel off the thick layers of religion.

Strip away the encrusted “doctrinal positions,”

**Back away from those customs which blurred the
voice of God,**

and get to know Jesus!

**Enough of Jesus' words have been preserved to us by
those who walked with him, that we know exactly what
he promises to those who follow him, and what he
expects of those who answer his call.**

“If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink.

He who believes in me, as the scripture has said,

“Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.”

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love on another; even as I have loved you, that you love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if your have love for one another.”

Jesus himself took care of the hard part.

He made himself responsible for all your pains and sins, and took them down with him into death.

He promises to flood your life with the Spirit of the living God, if you will draw near to him and ask.

Your part is to keep it simple:

Let him direct your life.

Let him live his life within you.

Let him teach you from within to love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and your neighbor as yourself.

DAY 38 – ONE THING

The things we worry about.

The things we can't control.

Decisions made by others that affect our lives.

Uncertain tomorrows stretching out to the horizon.

***“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.”
Luke 10:41***

One thing is needful.

If we choose it,

pursue it,

find it,

cling to it,

all those things we worry about will cease to distract us.

One thing:

A living relationship with the living God.

There is only one person in the universe who can give us this one thing.

Mary understood this.

Martha did not.

Do you?

DAY 39 – WHEN HIS WORDS BEGIN TO HOUND YOU....

It happens.

Certain words of Jesus rise up in your memory and won't quit.

They keep following you wherever you go.

They visit when you awaken in the night.

“Why won’t they go away and leave me alone!”

Because they’re calling you personally, and they won’t leave you alone until you decide what you’re going to do with them.

“Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock.....”

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

“It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoke to you are Spirit and life.”

No one can decide for you. You have to decide for yourself:

Are these the words of a madman or the words of the Incarnate God?

They were preserved to us by those who knew him as their Messiah.

They followed him with no regrets.

But now these awesome words address themselves to you.

They speak to your heart.

They call you to rise up and follow.

They invite you to commit yourself in faith.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

DAY 40 – THE “TWO LEVEL” MYTH

Many people in Christendom subscribe to the “Two Level Myth.”

Level #1:

You get saved, and now you’re in.

You go to church and stay out of gross sin.

But you continue to live a life that centers on you.

Level #1 Christians may not receive many rewards at the end of the journey, but they're "in" by the skin of their teeth.

Level #2:

You become a disciple of Jesus by denying yourself, taking up your cross daily and following him.

Your life is centered, not on you, but on him.

Level #2 Christians receive rewards at the end of the journey, but they share salvation with Level #1s.

Here's the problem:

Our Lord Jesus never taught two levels of faith; only one:

"He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters."

Matthew 12:30

"He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it." Matthew 10:37-39

DAY 41 – HIGH-PRESSURE EVANGELISM

AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST

One thing about Jesus, he never pushed anybody.

He never turned down the lights and dangled people over hell.

He never begged anyone to become a disciple.

He said, “Follow me,” and you could take it or leave it.

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.”

To this day, the Lord Jesus wants you to have a clear mind when you make your commitment.

“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish.’”

Luke 14:28-30

When his call reaches you heart, stay focused on what

he calls you to.

It's much more than "joining a church."

It's more than making "a decision for Christ."

To follow Jesus means giving up your right to yourself.

"For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

To follow Jesus means letting go of your past.

"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

To follow Jesus involves a crucifixion---yours!

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

DAY 42 – WITNESSING ISN'T MY THING

Some believers are good at witnessing.

To them it comes naturally.

They just open their mouths and talk about Jesus.

But me, I'd rather just live the life and let somebody else do the talking.

Mind you, I can talk about God in certain places.

And I don't mind openly giving credit to my "higher power."

But if I start talking about Jesus, people will peg me for a fanatic (which I'm not!).

And yet, what does one do with Jesus' own words:

And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and

of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Luke 8:34-38

Start with prayer:

Lord, you know I'm scared to open my mouth and speak of you to my friends. So I'm asking that you give me boldness to be willing, and wisdom to know when. How can I take up my cross and follow you, if I'm afraid to be your witness?

DAY 43 – MARY MAGDALENE WAS A CHANGED WOMAN

....after Jesus delivered her from seven devils.

So she began to follow him.

She couldn't thank him enough for her healing.

But the change that made the eternal difference in Mary's life was not when Jesus delivered her from those demons.

**The change that transformed her forever,
that ignited a flame in her heart which is still burning,
took place outside the tomb as dawn was
breaking,
when Mary Magdalene met Jesus alive from the
dead.**

It's one thing to know Jesus as a figure of history.

**It's quite another to know Jesus, alive from the dead,
as your personal living Lord.**

How do you know Jesus?

**Do you know him from a distance as a figure of
history?**

Or do you know him as your living Lord?

Who knows you.

Who speaks words of life to your heart.

His promise to all his followers who still languish on the

other side of the resurrection:

“I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you.”

He came to Mary Magdalene.

He came to Saul of Tarsus.

And, if you seek him, he will come to you,

make himself known to you,

tell you what he wants you to do,

and give you the power to do it.

“He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” John 14:21

DAY 44 – NO RELIGION CAN SAVE YOU

(From Yourself)

Christianity can't save you.

Judaism can't save you.

Islam can't save you.

Buddhism can't save you.

New Age can't save you.

Communing with nature won't do it.

Only God can save you from yourself.

No religious system can substitute for God.

Find God and you have found salvation.

Jesus of Nazareth did not come to establish a new religion.

He came to give you what no religion can give.

He came to open the way to the living God.

He is the way to God.

Listen carefully to the words of Jesus.

Stand before the horrific cross where Jesus died.

.....until the Spirit that raised him alive reveals

to you who Jesus is.

Once your eyes are open to him, you will discover the step of faith that will set you free.

Then it's up to you.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.” Matthew 23:15

Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.” John 18:38

DAY 45 – EVERYBODY WORSHIPS

.....Even those who don't think they do.

Whatever we serve...

Whatever holds our mind's attention, our heart's love...

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Matthew 6:24

It could be

God,

Mammon,

Sensual pleasure,

A loved-one who has become our life,

Our dazzling career,

The dream we live for.

To worship anything less than God is to worship a lie.

The day will come when that lie will be revealed.

It will evaporate before our eyes, leaving us with empty hands.

The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.” John 4:19-24

To worship the Father in Spirit and in truth is to serve him alone.....with all our heart, soul, strength and mind.

Those who worship him alone are assisted in all they do by the Spirit of the Lord.

DAY 46 – WHO OWES YOU AN EXPLANATION?

God owes me an explanation.....

Why does he allow the suffering to fester across the earth?

Why are tyrants and thugs permitted to intimidate the meek?

Why do lies prosper, while truth is strangely suppressed?

Is God a tyrant?

Is he indifferent?

Is he preoccupied with other things?

Has he left the scene?

The living God will never defend himself in the court of human arrogance.

But don't trifle with him. Don't get too cocky.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

He will let his critics rave on.

He will allow them to pass their judgments (though in

his presence they would burn to a crisp).

Until they come to the end of themselves, and discover that God owes them nothing.

They owe him everything.

Then their spiritual eyes will open, and they will see glory, glory that will bring them to their knees before the crucified and risen Lamb.

And if they refuse to join in the Song of Moses, they will at least hear it....

“Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!

Just and true are thy ways, O King of the ages! Who shall not

fear and glorify thy name, O Lord? For thou alone art holy. All

nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed.” Revelation 15:3-4

No---you didn't use your mind.

You failed to think.

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.”

Matthew 7:15-16

The most dangerous false prophets of the 21st Century are not the wild-eyed spellbinders using mass hypnosis.....

The most dangerous false prophets of our day are the “Christian” marketing wizards.

They study the “market”----us.

They analyze our “needs.”

They know what “works.”

Then they sell.....and we buy.

It's easy for them to market their “Christian” thing.

Because we don't think, we just buy.

“Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

....Meaning, think. Is the Lord Jesus speaking through this person, or is this a wolf in sheep's clothing?

What kind of fruit is coming from his life?

Out of her mouth?

Do I recognize the power of the cross?

Is this a committed disciple, calling me to discipleship?

“Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.”

Matthew 7:16-20

There wasn't a doubt in his mind.

Jonah knew God was calling him to go to Nineveh.

If I knew I'd been called the way Jonah knew, I'd go.

No matter where.

No matter what.

Anything.

Just make it clear, Lord.

I'm ready!

Really?

So how come you're hiding in this ship to Tarshish?

How come your life is immersed in "things"?

We tell ourselves we're waiting for our orders from God, when actually, we're busy burying our heads in the sand.

Deep within is that faint voice, which we once heard

quite clearly, calling us to come out of the darkness and start following the light.

But the longer we flee, the fainter that voice becomes.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

The Word of God is never just “information.”

It’s a personal word to you.

It’s a call.

Always.

“Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest....”

“If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink.”

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.”

God help us to say, “Here I am, Lord. Lead on!”

DAY 49 – TWO COMPARTMENTS

I divide my life into two compartments:

Compartment #1: My normal, practical everyday life.

Compartment #2: My spiritual life.

I find it so much easier to function in the real world, if I don't have to drag God along with me.

When I feel a need for God, I go into my room and shut the door and pray.

But how can I think about God out there in the rat race?

It's called *Spiritual Schizophrenia* and renders us useless to the purposes of God.

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24

If the Kingdom of God comes first in our life, it goes

with us wherever we go.

If Jesus comes first in our life, he is with us in our prayers, in our confusion, in the rat race, in everything we do.

When we answer the call to follow Jesus, it's all or nothing.

No compartments.

It all belongs to him---everything we have and are.

“If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 16:24-25

DAY 50 – WASTED PRAYER??

My prayers don't seem to be going anywhere.

Nothing's happening.

Seems like I'm wasting my time and God's.

If you've been putting your confidence in your prayers, you may well be wasting your time.

People who have "faith in prayer" *are* wasting their time.

Also, people who trust their "how to" knowledge of prayer.

But if you are putting your trust in the heavenly Father---only in him, no prayer which you pray is ever wasted.

The heavenly Father never fails to pay attention to your cry.

He delights in every effort you make to open your heart to him.

And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart..... Luke 18:1

Just make sure your spirit's eye is focused on the Father, and not on your own piety.

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised

others: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector, I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get,’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.” Luke 18:9-14

If you ask, you will receive.

If you seek, you will find.

If you knock, it will be opened to you.

No prayer lifted to the Father is ever wasted.

DAY 51 – HIGHWAY 42

What do I do when I feel like I’ve lost my way?

Once God was real to me.

Once I found it easy to pray.

But my faith has dried up.

How do I find my way back?

Take HIGHWAY 42 (better known as Psalm 42) and it will lead you right to the door of heaven:

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;

When shall I come and appear before God?

My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say to me, Where is thy God?.....

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?

And why art thou disquieted in me?

Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

It is impossible to pretend to have faith when it is not

there.

But it is possible to cry out to God in our need.

Lord help me!

Lord show me the way!

I'm lost without you!

“For every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

Don't sit there and wallow in your despair.

Cry to the Lord with all your heart.

.....And you will be heard.

DAY 52 – THE NEED IS NOT THE CALL

Fifteen needs are crying for my attention!

How can God expect me to meet them all!

What makes you think God expects you to meet them

all?

Not every need that cries for attention is a call from God.

To know which need God wants you to answer as a call, you need to be in touch with him.

Our Lord's first priority was not human need, but the Father's will. Our Lord took his cues from his Father, not from the cries of men.

As the Lord Jesus obeyed his Father,

the blind received their sight.

the lame walked,

lepers were cleansed,

the deaf heard,

the dead were raised,

and the poor received the good news.

And when it was day he departed and went into a lonely place. And the people sought him and came to him, and

would have kept him from leaving them; but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.”

Luke 4:42-43

If you try to be amateur providence to the needs that surround you,

you will burn out.

If you begin your days with God,

If you walk with Jesus in daily life,

If you rely on the Spirit to guide your steps,

God will accomplish through you what you could never do on your own.

“If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.”

John 15:7-8

DAY 53 – BUT WILL HE ACCEPT ME?

He can see into my heart.

He “understands my thought afar off.”

My past is an open book to him.

When I cry out to him in my need,

will he accept me?

“I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.....All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out.” John 6:35-37

No one has ever thrown himself/herself at Jesus' feet and been forsaken.

No one has ever cried out to Jesus, the Incarnate Love of God, and been rejected.

No need is too small, no anxiety too trivial to receive his attention.

No problem is too immense, no barrier too high to prevent him from coming to your aid.

“Ask and it will be given you;

Seek and you will find;

Knock, and it will be opened to you.

For every one who asks receive,

And he who seeks, finds,

And to him who knocks it will be opened.”

Luke 11:8-10

---Those words will be true long after heaven and earth have passed away.

But you will only know their truth when you act on them.

DAY 54 – WHAT DOES GOD DO

WHEN I GET INTO A SPIRITUAL SNIT?

He waits for you to get over it.

It can happen to his best servants.

Take Elijah, for instance.....

...Elijah came to a cave, and lodged there; and the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the people of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

I Kings 19:9-10

Elijah is depressed. Does he get sympathy?

No. He doesn't need sympathy.

He needs to get his eyes off the "situation" and back on the glory of God.

Once Elijah opens his heart again to God, he soon hears a restoring word.

.....And so will you.

Many of us are walking around in a low-grade spiritual depression.

Things have not been working out as we had hoped. People have let us down. Our efforts have come to nothing.

So we withdraw from the battle and lick our wounds, miffed that God should allow this to happen.

Then comes that still small voice:

“What are you doing here?”

The minute you turn your attention from your disappointment to the Lord who speaks to you, you will begin to recover.

DAY 55 – WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

It seems like all my options have disappeared.

Plan A didn't work.

Plan B failed.

Plan C was a disaster.

Now what?

They reel to and fro ,and stagger like a drunken man,

And are at their wit's end.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,

And he bringeth them out of their distresses.

Psalm 107:27-28

Lord, I know you have a universe to run, but I could surely use some help!

Where do I go from here?

...You may not hear a voice.

...You may not behold an angel.

But your cry will be heard by One who loves you more and understands you better than any soul on earth.

Your cry will be answered.

I cried to the Lord with my voice,

And he heard me out of his holy hill.

I laid me down and slept;

I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.

Psalm 3:4-5

Our Lord promises that everyone who asks receives,

And he who seeks finds,

And to him who knocks it will be opened.

Just keep knocking.

Don't give up after the first ten minutes.

If you're serious, you'll get a serious answer.

DAY 56 – WORDS THAT ARE MORE THAN WORDS

In the “information chaos” which surrounds us, words

come at us from all directions.

Cheap words.

Words of half-truth.

Words of vain promise.

Words of false hope.

Words of shallow love.

It's enough to make one cynical.

Yet even in this word jungle, there are words that are more than words....

Words that ring with the authority of heaven.

When they penetrate our hearts, those words...

Raise us from the dead.....

“Little girl, I say to you, arise.”

Flood us with life.....

“Lazarus, come out!”

Open our blind eyes.....

“Receive your sight, your faith has made you whole.”

Energize our weary bodies.....

“If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink.”

Lord, give us discerning ears!

“Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.”
John 5:25

DAY 57 – WHATIFITIS

Even people who have been walking by faith for a long time will occasionally come down with a case of Whatifitis.

What if my plans fall through?

What if I fail?

What if my health breaks?

This infection usually sets in when we lose our focus...

Instead of keeping my eye on the Master, and my ear tuned to his voice, I become preoccupied with ME.

I begin to wonder what's going to happen to ME.

I'm "inspired" to think of all the things that could go wrong.

Suddenly I'm down again with Whatifitis.

Our Lord trusted the Father for everything.

Why should he concern himself with things that are in the Father's hands?

And he teaches us to follow his example.

"Do not be anxious...

....about your life.

....about your body.

....about tomorrow."

(Matthew 6) The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by

prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:5-7

DAY 58 – GIVE ME A BREAK!

Promises, promises, promises!

You tell me that God will provide,

God will heal,

God will change my luck.

Well, here I am. When's all this good stuff going to happen?

When you start asking.

When you become humble enough to say, "Lord, I'm lost, I need you to show me the way."

God makes his sun to shine on the just and the unjust. But his redemptive power comes only to those who humble themselves

and ask for help.

Come with an attitude, and nothing happens. Come with a contrite heart, and the door of heaven swings open.

Start by asking for wisdom.

"If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask God, who

gives to all men generously and without reproaching,

and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with

no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave

of the sea

that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person

must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable

in all his ways, will receive anything from the Lord." James 1:3-8

Or be like the man who cried out to Jesus, "Lord, I believe! Help my unbelief!"

Jesus helped that man,

and he will help you.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

Revelation 3:20

DAY 59 – OVERWHELMED

Who hasn't experienced it?

An avalanche of events that crush all hope.

Multiplied problems with no solution.

Anger and mistrust on all sides.

Why is God allowing this to happen?

If he cares about the sparrow, what about my stressed-out life?

O my God, my soul is cast down within me.....

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts:

All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

Lord, where are you in all this confusion?

Help me, before I sink beyond reach!

Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day time,

And in the night his song shall be with me,

And the prayer unto the God of my life.

I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me?

Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

As with a sword in my bones, my enemies reproach me;

While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?

And why art thou disquieted within me?

Hope thou in God:

For I shall yet praise him,

Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 42

It is often when we are overwhelmed and begin crying out to God, that we find the treasure of his kingdom.

Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to stumble into this valley, for it is here that I have come to know you as never before.

“Do not fear; only believe....”

DAY 60 – PATCHING DOESN'T WORK

The latest Christian craze is still a patch job.

“How can I find meaning for my life?”

“How can I acquire a sense of purpose?”

“Where can I discover true direction?”

Jesus says the only thing to do with your life is lose it.

“Lose it for my sake.”

“Lose it in the Father’s will.”

“Lose it at my cross and yours.”

“For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?” Matthew 16:25-26

Losing your life for the Master’s sake is not a once-and-done proposition.....It’s a daily discipline.

And he said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Luke 9:23

Daily giving up my right to myself to the Holy One of God.

Hourly yielding my “rights” to the Kingdom.

Submitting to the living Word in all matters. All.

Acting on every command of heaven that reaches my heart.

The issue is not “my life” or “my spiritual state.”

The issue is the glory of the Holy and Living God.

Will I abandon my life to that glory by following Jesus in all matters of daily life to whatever cross he chooses for me?

Will I trust him enough to obey his command to lose my life in his will?

DAY 61 – WHO WILL PULL DOWN THE WALL?

You know....the wall between us and God.

The wall that makes it so hard to “connect.”

Well, who put it there?

Was it the angel with the flaming sword guarding the way to the tree of life?

Was it Satan, throwing dust in our eyes to keep us from finding our way back to God?

Or was it we ourselves?

For although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts.....

Romans 1:21-24

“Claiming to be wise....”---that’s the wall.

And we put it there.

And only we can pull it down.

By humbling ourselves.

By admitting that we are in great need.

By repenting of our arrogance.

By becoming children before the Heavenly Father.

Deep within, we know what we have to do, if we want to connect with God. And the minute we take that first faltering step, help comes from above.

***“Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me.”
Revelation 3:19-20***

DAY 62 – THOSE WHO FIND IT ARE FEW

The Road that leads to Life....

The gate in is narrow.

To stay on the road itself takes determination.

It isn't highly traveled.

Multitudes in Christendom are attracted to an easier road.

They say it's been blessed by God.

They say it's purpose-driven.

They say it “really works.”

Observe the success of those who “sell” it.

Note the massive numbers of those who travel it.

How could they be wrong?

This road has been declared “scripturally sound.”

“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

Matthew 7:13-14

The narrow gate: Jesus

Not teachings about him, but Jesus himself.

The road: Radical commitment to Jesus alone

Commitment that results in obedience on all points.

“...He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

DAY 63 – SO WHO ARE YOU PRAYING TO?

He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” And he said to them, “When you pray say:

“Father.....”

Father.

One who knows you and loves you.

One who longs to bring you fully into his kingdom.

Our Father:

He isn't just MY Father, he's OUR Father.

The human mind cannot get around the concept of God.

But the human heart can know its true Father.

So we begin by calling out to him.

As we do, we receive help from above.

The Father sends his Spirit into our hearts to help us pray.

Our teacher is the One who lived by prayer as no one else on earth ever did:

Jesus.

All the books on prayer that have ever been written are worth less than one sentence from the mouth of Jesus of Nazareth.

Seek out what Jesus has to teach on prayer.

Practice faithfully the kind of prayer he teaches.

Live what you pray.

He told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart....

“And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily.”

DAY 64 – SPIRITUAL TIME BOMBS

Not one prayer of intercession that we pray is wasted.

The Father never fails to hear and act.

We see nothing.

We feel nothing.

The one we are praying for appears to be unchanged.

Yet each prayer moves the Father to plant a spiritual time bomb in that person's heart.

The Father decides when it is to explode.

The one we pray for decides which way to respond.

But that person was visited by the living God through our prayer.

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have (the group of) you, that he might sift you (all) as wheat, but I have prayed for you (Peter) that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."

Luke 22:31-32

Whether we preach or teach or feed the hungry or heal the sick, prayer for others is our basic ministry.

No one is excluded.

No one is excused.

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; and pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak.

Colossians 4:2-4

DAY 65 – WHAT NEXT?

Anxiety: the fear that tomorrow will not be safe.

And who isn't anxious these days?

As we look at our own lives...

As we watch history unfold before our eyes...

It's like sitting on the rim of a volcano.

The volcano is rumbling

It's boiling.

When will it blow?

And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, "Save, Lord; we are perishing." And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. Matthew 8:24-26

Life in this world is uncertain.

We are surrounded by danger, seen and unseen.

Death waits to meet us, and the path beyond death melts in mist.

Yet the Master has no sympathy with our anxiety.

He says, "Why are you afraid, O people of little faith?"

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:35-39

DAY 66 – THE DAYS OF NOAH

Who do you expect us to believe? That crazy guy with his monster boat? Or the track record of history?

The people of Noah's day were not stupid.

They had brains.

There had never been a rain like the rain Noah predicted.

Why should there be one now?

... "until the flood came, and swept them all away."

Two certainties:

1. Our life in flesh-and-blood has a time limit. It will end.
2. This world, as we know it, has a time limit. It will end.

Two options:

1. We can live for the moment and hope for the best.
2. We can live with our eye on the "horizon of existence."

"As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man." Matthew 24:37-38

Meanwhile, each of us is moving toward a moment when life as we know it will end.

The life we now live is determined by what we believe is waiting for us at that end.

Annihilation?

Clouds, crackers and cream cheese?

A day of accounting?

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:20-21

DAY 67 – WHAT PLATEAU?

“In my spiritual journey I’ve passed through difficult valleys and endured some exhausting climbs. What a blessing that I’ve finally reached a plateau, where I can coast for a while!”

Plateau?

Coast?

There is no such thing in the walk of faith.

At any given moment, we are either rising up toward the City of God, or we’re sinking toward the Abyss.

“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.” Matthew 12:30

“I AM the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

John 15:1-2

Many of us are living in the illusion that we are in “maintenance mode.” Coasting. Enjoying the plateau for a while.

Jesus makes clear that there is no “maintenance mode.” We are either with him or against him. We are either abiding in him in a vital way or we are withering on the vine.

He uses the word, “Watch,” meaning, “Stay Awake!”

So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. I Thessalonians 5:6-10

DAY 68 – CRISIS RELIGION

Nothing like a crisis to inspire folks to turn to religion.

When we feel powerless and bewildered,
“Maybe there is a God.”

“Perhaps if I get religion I won’t feel so lost.”

Of course when the crisis is over, we shift quickly back to “normal.”

After all, life goes on.

There are things to do, opportunities to seize.

Two facts:

1. The real Crisis never ends.

We live on the edge of the abyss every day of our lives. Apart from the mercy of God we are all lost.

2. Religion is never the answer.

We can be religious in the extreme and never know God.

Jesus is not calling us to be religious. He's calling us to follow him.

“I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

Following Jesus is not a religion, it is a life lived in fellowship with him.

He speaks, we listen.

He commands, we obey.

He promises, we believe.

He calls, we answer.

He sends, we go.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch

them out of my hand.”

John 10:27-28

DAY 69 – SERIOUS BUSINESS

Religion is often fluffy.

Piety is often self-absorbed.

Righteousness is often skin-deep.

Hence Jesus said,

“Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Because God is looking for something more....

Jesus, by his bloody death and his grave-shattering resurrection has opened the way for us to live our daily lives as sons and daughters of God.

By the power of his Spirit (which he gives to all who ask)

We can walk by faith.

We can love our enemies.

We can speak the truth in love.

We can trust the Father to provide for us.

We can pray to him with confidence.

We can wash one another's feet.

This is more than "religion."

This is serious business.

...Living in God's world even while we walk this earth.

"He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation 3:5-6

DAY 70 – HOW CAN I BELIEVE IN THAT KIND OF GOD?

What kind of God?

A God who allows evil to thrive.

Innocent children suffer in senseless wars.

The weak in this world are exploited by the strong.

.....and God fails to intervene.

How can I believe in such a God?

You will never know what God is like by passing judgment on his “shortcomings.”

You will only know what God is like when you get to know him---up close and personal.

Once you know God, you will never doubt his love for you, for every sparrow that falls, for every hungry child on earth.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have

eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

John 3:16-17

God's love for you, and for all people, is closer to you than your breath.

He took all the evil in this sin-sick world and gathered it into his own heart at the Cross of Calvary---died the death it deserved.

Every wrong will be made right.

Every pain will be removed.

And evil, and those who love evil, will dwell in their separate, self-chosen world.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

DAY 71 – SECOND-HAND GUIDANCE CAN BE DANGEROUS

One of the worst mistakes we can make in seeking guidance from God is to rely on another human being to get the message for us.

“I’ve laid out my problem to you. Is God showing you anything?”

The person who asks you such a question has probably been under the control of a spiritual manipulator at some time in his or her past.

When any man or woman comes to you with a “message from the Lord,” it is your responsibility to test it before the Lord.

Does it conform to your word, Lord?

Do I discern your love in this, Lord?

Do I discern your Spirit, your humility?

There are people with an addictive dependency on “spiritual guides” who are all too willing to play a role which belongs only to the Lord Jesus himself.

It is normal and good that, as members of the Body of Christ, we “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all

wisdom...” (Colossians 3)

And there are believers with a genuine “gift of knowledge” from the Spirit, who edify the Body with living words from God.

But beware of the man or woman who gives the impression of having a unique private line to the Father’s throne.

But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood....

Galatians 1:12-13

Why get your guidance second-hand, when the Lord Jesus is pleased to show you the way himself?

DAY 72 – IF GOD SPEAKS.....

How come I can't hear him?

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Psalm 32

How does the Living God instruct us and teach us which way to go?

Does he throw a Bible at us, and say “Figure it out!”?

Does he expect us to decide which preacher to believe?

Do we have to wait around for visions and revelations?

God chooses the means.

God decides the time and place.

Our job is to prove to ourselves and to God that we're ready to hear what he has to tell us.

Am I open?

Am I acting on what I already know to be his

will?

Where is my heart?

Step One: Draw near to the Incarnate Word---Jesus.

Listen to his words.

Observe the way he deals with people.

Watch him die.

Meet him alive from the dead.

“I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you.”

“He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” John 14:18 & 21

DAY 73 – A SOUND EYE

“The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full

of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”

Matthew 6:22-23

How do we see people?

How do we view the celebrity, the politician, the neighborhood drunk, our gullible cousin, our impossible Aunt Jane?

A sound eye:

---free of covetousness

---free of lust

---passes no judgment

---beholds each human soul with high honor

An unsound eye:

---sees with an agenda...

covetous

lustful

opportunistic

---judgmental

---cynical

"I HAVE made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I look upon a virgin?"

Job 31:1

If I am a disciple of the Lord Jesus, my eye must receive his touch, so that it no longer is unsound.

The Lord Jesus will give a sound eye to any man or woman who asks him. He came to open our blind eyes.

But once we have received new eyes, it is up to us to keep them sound---with the daily, hourly help of his Spirit.

So that our bodies may be filled with light instead of darkness.

DAY 74 – RUNNING ON EMPTY

That's how I feel right now: like I'm running on empty.

Seems like there's nothing left inside.

Nothing more to give.

I'm drained.

So now what?

Time for a break from people and their problems?

Time for a vacation?

The Samaritan Woman came to the well for water.

She came at high noon, when the well us usually deserted.

She was taking a break---from people.

So what's this Jew doing here?

“Give me a drink.”

“How is it that you a Jew, ask a drink of me,

a Samaritan woman?”

“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

Sometimes when we’re running on empty, we encounter the One who can flood our souls with living water.

When we’re empty, we’re more willing to listen to what he has to offer.

The truth is that we’re never really alive until we too receive his living water.....which is ours for the taking.

“If any one thirst let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’”

John 7:37-38

DAY 75 – I NEED MY PRIVACY

Didn't Jesus tell us to go into our room and shut the door and pray to our Father who is in secret?

Didn't the Master go off by himself to pray?

So why all this stress on the need for "fellowship"?

Every time I try to get "fellowship" I get burned.

Other believers may be all right at a distance, but close up they can be a real pain!

So I'm one of those "private" disciples. I don't mind going to church once in a while, but don't expect me to start getting chummy with the folks. That's where I draw the line!

I prefer to walk with Jesus without the "help" of other believers.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another;

Even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

By this all men will know that you are my disciples,

If you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35

When God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, the first place where we learn to practice that love is in the company of other saints--

---especially the ones who turn out to be “a real pain.”

It’s the only way.

And it’s worth the discomfort.

God’s love is neither received nor practiced in a vacuum.

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I Corinthians 1:9

Get used to it, fellowship with the Lord Jesus means fellowship with his struggling saints. Only there do we experience the foretaste of glory.

DAY 76 – GOD CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT MY PRAYERS

Absolutely!

The Father can indeed get along without our prayers.

He’s been running the universe for quite a while without our prayers.

So why does Jesus, the Messiah, make it sound so urgent when he commands us to pray for laborers?

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:36-38

God is sovereign.

God can do anything he wants to.

So what’s the need of our prayers?

Why doesn't the Father just raise up laborers and send them out?

In our Lord's command he is giving us a glimpse into the mystery of the Kingdom of God.

It is indeed necessary for us to pray for laborers in the harvest because the Father has chosen to tie this awesome task to our prayers.

So we have a choice:

We can take Jesus at his word and do what he commands us to do.

Or we can "let God get along without our prayers."

And how will God get along without our prayers?

By answering the prayers of those who *do* take the Master at his word.

DAY 77 – INTO THE FUTURE

If the year ahead turns out to be like the year behind

us,

who knows what will happen?

No matter where we live, or how big our bank account,

what guarantee do we have that tomorrow will be safe?

The essential question:

Am I equipped to pass through this world's turmoil with the serenity of heaven?

i.e. Is my life anchored in eternity,

or in the fleeting moment?

Against the backdrop of uncertain “weather,” words from Emmanuel’s mouth ring with authority---and hope:

Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

---no storm can shake such a life.

And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

---no shelter can protect such a life.

Once we hear the Master's words and understand them, they become the Rock of our life.

To live, is to keep building on the Rock.

Anchored in Eternity, what storm can destroy us?

DAY 78 – LEST YOUR HEARTS BE WEIGHED DOWN

But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a snare; for it will come upon all who dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

Luke 21:34-35

Easier said than done.

Whose heart isn't weighed down these days?

How can you watch the news and not have a heavy heart?

How can you walk down the street and ignore the pain in those faces?

How can you look into your own heart and still be at ease?

Dissipation: wasted strength

Drunkenness: wasted mind

Cares: wasted worry

And yet.....it can be done.

By the power of the Spirit of God we can walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, fearing no evil.

For thou art with me.

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

I need to know this in my soul.

I need to carry this in my heart.

To discipline my mind to renew itself in his presence.

But watch at all times,

*Praying that you may have the strength to pass
safely through the things that will take place,*

And to stand before the Son of Man.

The Lord cannot do my praying for me.

But he will help me when I start to pray.

**I will know this to be true once I take the one step
within my power:**

To open my heart and call upon his name.

**DAY 79 – THE BIGGEST SURPRISE OF YOUR
LIFE**

....will come at the moment of your death.

Whether you're a Sadducee believing that "when you're dead you're dead,"

Whether you're a Pharisee believing "I deserve my reward,"

Whether you're a solid Evangelical who's "standing on the promises,"

it will be an experience like no other.

The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus (the poor man) in his bosom.

Luke 16 22-23

Lazarus was totally surprised.

So was the rich man.

So will we be.

What?... I'm able to think without a brain?

See without eyes?

Hear without ears?

And this place where I find myself: how did I get here?

Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him.

Luke 20:38

Eternal life---life with God---begins on this side of the grave.

Eternal life is simply a relationship with the Risen One.

Walk with him now and you walk into the next world with him.

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall chose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. (Paul, in

Philippians 1:21-24)

DAY 80 – JESUS NEVER BEGGED FOR MONEY

He pursued his Father’s will, and the Father provided.

Mary Magdalene and her friends “ministered to him of their substance” without being asked.

There was even enough money in the bag to help others.

...Seek first (God’s) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Matthew 6:33

But Jesus was very careful to teach his disciples the difference between token giving and the giving of faith.

He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury; and he saw a poor widow put in two copper coins. And he said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the living that she had.”

Luke 21:1-4

Jesus could have told them not to waste their money, giving to a corrupt religious system.

He could have suggested better ways to give to God.

But he did not.

His focus was on the giver's need to give---not as a token gift but as a gift of thanks to God.

The widow reached heaven with her two copper coins.

Zacchaeus: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I will now give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I will restore it fourfold"

Jesus: "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:8-10

DAY 81 – MY POINT OF VIEW

And this is the judgment, that the light has come into

the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.....John 3: 19

What is darkness?

My point of view.

As long as I insist on seeing everything from my point of view, I remain in darkness.

Truly, I say to you, unless you repent and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

To repent and become like a child is to lay aside your own point of view and listen to the Master with no preconceived ideas and opinions.

How many of us have really listened to what Jesus has to say---without filtering his words through a screen of personal opinion?

Amazing things begin to happen when we listen to the words of Jesus with a child-like heart, and a clear, uncluttered mind.

What we need is not more “information.”

We need revelation.

We need to hear directly from the Spirit of the Lord.

And we will---when we have learned to surrender our arrogant and distorted “point of view.”

I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will. Matthew 11: 25-26

DAY 82 – FILLING THE BIG GAP

There’s a big gap between saying it and living it.

i.e. “Yes indeed! I’ll come to the Banquet. Call me when it’s ready.”

.....“Oh, please excuse me; I forgot all about it. I now have other plans.”

“I’ll follow you even to death, Master!”

.....“I do not know the man!”

“Not every one who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 7:24

Yet how often we seem to feel that because we’ve spoken words of commitment, they count as deeds.

The Big Gap appears the minute our worship ends and the living begins.

--the minute our prayers are over and our “day” begins.

--the second after we have “expressed concern” for those suffering souls.

**Our Lord Jesus not only calls us to walk in love,
he gives us the power to walk in love.**

If we open our hearts to him,

he floods them with his Spirit

who is the source of all genuine love on this earth.

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses.....”

You will be the light he has declared you to be.

And people will see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

DAY 83 – OVER THE EDGE

“He’s over the edge.”

Meaning?

He’s lost his mind?

He’s out of touch with reality?

He’ll never be what he once was?

He’s to be pitied!

But what if the life you’re looking for is out there---

over the edge?

What if you're spiritually a corpse until you take the leap?

If anyone wants to come after me, let him say 'No' to himself, take up his execution-stake, and keep following me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?

Notice the "If."

He does not press.

He does not manipulate.

He does not deceive.

He does not entice.

But if you're looking for the life from God, you will take the leap from your world to his.

And that will put you over the edge.

And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth

you will be catching men.” And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Luke 5:10-11

DAY 84 – THE RENEWED MIND

We are bombarded day and night by the message of the Prince of this World:

You only go around once!

Get all the gusto you can!

Look after Number One!

...this message soaks into our pores, pounds at our brains, pulls us into the rat race.

Without a definite effort to renew our minds in the Spirit of God, we soon succumb to the Mammon Mentality.

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2

**As a glass of cold water on a hot day renews the body,
so a deep draft of the Spirit of God renews the mind.**

How?

Hold still.

Focus on a word from the Lord which you already know:

“Follow me.”

“Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

“Seek first the kingdom of God.”

“You cannot serve God and Mammon.”

“I will not leave you desolate.”

Ask him to fulfill his word in your life.

Start giving thanks.

Go forth and live the will of God.

*I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth.
John 17:15-17*

DAY 85 – V.I.P. PRAYERS

“After all, I live a good clean, upright life.

I give to charity.

I try to help people.

I’m active in church.

So why shouldn’t I have a more valid claim on God than those flea market dudes?”

V.I.P. prayers are the occupational hazard of the pious.

---When we feel that God owes us an answer to our

prayers “because we’ve earned it.”

When we approach God in this way, we are so full of ourselves that we cannot possibly connect with God.

No matter how worthy we may think we are, our worthiness is a delusion.

Our only claim on God is his mercy.

God owes us nothing, we owe him everything.

“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get,’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”
Luke 18:10-14

Even as reborn sons and daughters of God,

washed in the blood,

filled with the Spirit,

our only claim on God is his mercy.

Calvary is our doorway to God.

Not our piety.

DAY 86 – THE VIEW FROM THE BOTTOM

We “hit bottom” in a thousand ways....

Financial disaster.

Rejection by a loved one.

Broken health.

Becoming a loser in the rat race.

Or by our own choice in service to God.

Hitting bottom can lead to despair, or it can bring us to our senses.

The view from the bottom is always more accurate than the view from the top.

It encourages us to face reality.

It helps us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Regardless of outward appearances, our Lord Jesus lived “on the bottom” throughout his life in flesh and blood.

From the “bottom” Jesus was in constant touch with his Father, and also with the forgotten ones of this world who also inhabit the “bottom” throughout their earthly lives.

If you intend to follow Jesus, the “bottom” is the place to meet him and walk with him.

For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity,

whose name is Holy:

“I dwell in the high and holy place,

*and also with him who is of a contrite and
humble spirit,*

to revive the spirit of the humble,

and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

Isaiah 57:17

DAY 87 – THE MYSTERY OF RESULTS

**Didn't Jesus promise that if we abide in him, as
branches in the Vine, there will be fruit?**

**And didn't he promise that if we ask in prayer, we will
receive?**

I'm abiding in the Vine---but where's the fruit?

**I'm asking in prayer with all my heart---but where's
the answer?**

**So who will we trust---the Master, or our own
perception?**

In the Kingdom of God it is impossible to measure results as we do in this world.

The workings of the Spirit are beyond the reach of any instrument of human measurement.

Yet there is no such thing as living in the Spirit without results.

Results are God's department, and he never fails.

To live by faith is to:

take the words of the Master into our hearts,

live them by the power of the Spirit,

and trust the results to God.

“The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.” Mark 4:26-29

DAY 88 – THE ONLY PROOF THERE IS

How can they know that we are disciple of Jesus?

Because we heal the sick?

Because we cast out demons?

Because we prophesy?

Because we speak in tongues?

There are folks who can do all these things, indeed they seem to sincerely call Jesus, “Lord”---yet the day will come when he will declare, “I never knew you.” (Matthew 7:23)

There is only one proof that any one is a disciple of Jesus:

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:35

There is nothing wrong with desiring spiritual gifts.

But our chief aim, our great need, is to love the way our Lord loves.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” John 13:34

Who of us can deny that, in ourselves, we lack this love?

Who of us can claim that God’s love is flowing out of us toward our neighbor as it flowed from the Master?

But if we take Brother Paul’s admonition to “make love your aim,” surely we can trust the Spirit to help us.

After all, the first fruit of the Spirit is love!

If we open our hearts to receive it, the Father will pour it in.

If we open our hearts to express it, we will pour it out....

In prayers of intercession

In words of encouragement.

In simple service.

In generous hospitality.

In joyful sharing.

DAY 89 – BUT REACHING OUT IS NOT MY GIFT!

Look, I'll try to follow Jesus.

I'll pray.

I'll soak up the Word.

I'll make an effort to love my neighbor.

But don't ask me to “reach out” to people with the gospel.

That's not my gift!

Of course, if “reaching out” means grabbing them by the collar and ramming it down their throats, better none of us should have the “gift.”

But if “reaching out” means spending some time with

that lonely man in the nursing home,

**having coffee with the grouchy lady in apartment 303,
visiting that old classmate in the hospital,**

**always with prayer for the Spirit's direction, then all
believers have the gift, and the power to use it.**

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Matthew 9:36-38

Begin by reaching out with intercession for people you know.

Soon the Master will direct you to one or two who need a visit or a letter or a phone call.

If the Shepherd cares so much about that one lost sheep that he leaves the 99 in the wilderness, while he searches, what choice do we have but to follow his example?

“Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

“Feed my sheep.”

DAY 90 – THE COAT TAILS OF GLORY

With our mouths we give God the glory.

**But in our hearts we keep seeking ways to scoop
off some of the glory for ourselves.**

It’s such a temptation!

After all, we need a little recognition too!

But it’s a trap.

**Satan rubs his hands together waiting for us to stumble
in.**

**If we are to do God’s will as it is done in heaven, we
begin by entering heaven’s worship:**

Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the

living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein saying,

“To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!”

And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Revelation 5:11-14

Better our names should be lost in God so that all the glory goes to him.

Better our hearts should be fixed on God, so that we lose interest in “how we’re doing” in the eyes of men.

Freedom in the Spirit comes to those who abandon themselves to the Lord Jesus and concentrate on doing his will.

DAY 91 – IT’S HARD, GIVING UP CONTROL!

I’ve always been in charge of my own life and (if you really want the truth) in charge of a few other lives as well.

They tell me I’m a control freak.

And now I’m supposed to let go of it all and give it up to God?

I’m supposed to let him be the Center instead of me?

Scary!

I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to graven images. Isaiah 42:8

The truth is, that we are ill-equipped to take God’s

place.

Our lives are crushed under the impossible “burden of deity.”

We pronounce judgment on others.

We make decisions for others.

We work ourselves into a lather when they don’t “cooperate.”

It’s hard trying to make the world go our way!

And who are we?

In his mercy, the Messiah invites us to quit playing God, and bring this “burden of deity” to him.

“Come to me all you who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:28-29

What a relief to discover that God knows what he’s doing, that we can give up trying to grab the controls!

DAY 92 – THE PATIENCE OF GOD

Where would we be without it?

**Like the Children of Israel in the Sinai
Wilderness,**

we have spurned his mercy,

complained,

rebelled,

pursued our own agendas.

Is there hope for us?

The good news:

**For all their antics, God somehow sustained the
Children of Israel, and brought them to the
Promised Land.**

The bad news:

Those who presumed on God's patience fell in

the wilderness. They never made it.

When we behold the patience of God, and repent,

He restores us to life.

Where we behold the patience of God and continue to pursue our own way,

He abandons us to our self-chosen darkness.

And this is judgment, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God. John 3

DAY 93 – HOLY OBSCURITY

Facebook and You Tube offer the limelight to everybody.

Who can resist?

Here's our chance to be seen and heard.

But once we choose to live our life before the eye of God...

....the limelight is a distraction.

The Spirit of the Lord moves in us with greatest freedom when we choose to walk in holy obscurity.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on things on the earth. For you have died, you life is hid with Christ in God so that when Christ who is our life appears, you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3

Settle for holy obscurity in this age,

so that God's glory may glow through you with redemptive power.

Glory belongs to God alone.

**When that glory is revealed,
you will be vindicated.**