

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

FRIDAY

“NARROW GATES”

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 7:13, 14

If you have a choice between a narrow door and a wide one, between a narrow road and a broad one, chances are you will choose the wide one, and the broad. Human will craves freedom and “elbow room.” It also likes the security of other people, and usually the more, the better.

This is true in spiritual journeying, too. That narrow road seems so confining, so threatening somehow . . . and so many more people are thronging through the wide gates of humanism, agnosticism, and all the varying, diverse cults of philosophy that open everywhere today: the mainstream of traffic – the intellectualist, proud and self-made; the bohemian, fickle in his fad, independent of responsibility, free of any law. We want to be where the people are.

And Christ knew this. In his typically realistic way, he warned that there would never be many who would go in at the narrow gate, whereas a gate that was wide and easy would always be crowded.

Yet we know what it is we search for, and where it is we go. God has promised us the very things which the world is frantically seeking today . . . peace of mind, motivation, a reason for living, and confidence in the midst of chaos. Only those traveling the narrow road know how easy it really is with Christ beside them.

Prayer: Lord, it is a temptation to go where the multitudes are going. Yet I know that they are not finding peace, or assurance. O God, I thank you for your Son and for the way you have given to us. AMEN

SATURDAY

“PLAYING BY EAR”

SCRIPTURE:
Philippians 4:11-13

The man who directed a brilliant and one of the most successful political campaigns ever waged, was asked how he had learned to do so many different tasks so well.

He said, “I was one of several children and both my parents worked hard. We children were often left to do jobs we had never done before and when we asked ‘How?’, we would hear the same answer: ‘Play it by ear. It will come if you listen. Just think it through before you do it.’ And this was probably the most important lesson I ever learned. I learned not only to think and be amazed at my own ability to do things I thought were impossible, but I began to understand that ‘still small voice’ of God within me and to be guided by it. It has made life challenging and exciting.”

This is something we all need to learn. There is nothing more exciting than to test our God-given abilities, our untried talents, those resources which we have so lavishly been given. The ingenuity, imagination and mind of man are beautifully and wonderfully made by a magnificent and loving Creator.

Prayer: Lord, forgive us for the timidity and fear with which we face a new or challenging task. You have given us abilities we have not begun to use, and with your guidance, power and presence, all things are possible through you. Lord, give me the confidence of your presence that I may do whatever you ask of me. AMEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2025

“PRAYER: WHEN WE GROPE BLINDLY”

SCRIPTURE:
Romans 8:26, 27;
Psalm 91

How many times have you been asked to pray for someone – and felt totally at a loss as to *how* to pray? Perhaps the person for whom you are to pray is going through an experience you cannot even begin to fathom. Perhaps he faces death, or life-long illness or the loss of a child. What do you do? How do you pray?

Prayer need not necessarily always be specific. By that we mean there will be times when we do not know exactly how to pray – or what to pray for. But it is at times like these, perhaps, that the greatest power can be released, for at these times, we simply open the floodgates of our hearts and ask God to make us channels through which his divine comfort and strength and power will flow.

Many times, only the heart of God knows what is needed. Even those closest to the stricken can be blind to the real need and the person himself often is so overwhelmed by bewilderment and agony, he cannot ask.

Learn this deepest kind of prayer: where the Spirit of God flows through you to the person for whom you pray. When you have finished that prayer – you will rise to find that part of this same power and presence has become yours as well. This truly is intercessory praying.

Prayer: O God, how merciful you are to give us this marvelous healing of prayer for one another, to give each of us a part in one another's grief. Thank you, Father. AMEN

TUESDAY

“WHEN ENERGY DESERTS US”

SCRIPTURE:

Galatians 6:9, 10;
Hebrews 6:10-12

The mother of a teenage boy began to notice a change in her son’s attitude. Once a boy who had been quick to obey a request, the first to jump up when something was needed, he now seemed drained of all energy when he was asked to do the slightest thing, no matter how animated he may have been a moment before.

His father was less concerned. One day, observing this sudden weakness which seemed to overcome the boy, he said, “All the strength seems to go out of your legs, doesn’t it, son?”

The boy looked surprised, and then he sheepishly agreed it was true. “I had the same problem,” his father said . . . “My father suggested that when I was asked to do something, I try beating the weakness by moving faster, before it could settle in. It worked. Maybe it will work for you.”

The next few days, the boy tried responding automatically, before he had time to dread it. The moment he was asked to do something, he jumped up, did it as fast and well as possible, and returned to what he was doing. He discovered that the time it took was always less than he had anticipated, that doing it gave him a feeling of relief, and that the nagging and scolding stopped.

This sudden inertia is not unique with young people. It continues through life and unless we can learn to conquer it early, it robs us of peace – time, and inner release.

Prayer: Lord, help me to take the first step in being quick to do those things I must do, then you will bless them. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“LOOK BEFORE YOU ASK”

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 50:4a;
Galatians 6:1-6

Most of us ask for – and receive – help in day-to-day tasks: employers in an office, teachers in a school, parents in the home. And sometimes these requests become – not a favor requested thoughtfully – but an act we either take for granted . . . or come to expect. And it is at this point that the joy can go out of it.

So often in our own hurry, immersed as we are in our own problems, we fail to take into account what the other person may be doing. Perhaps your child has just settled down to his first moment of quiet after an extremely painful, battering day at school. To you it seems unimportant. To him it may be a moment he has anticipated all day. Do you think, and weigh your request before you ask . . . ?

Perhaps your assistant has been frantically rushing to put your work out in time, has found a moment now to gather strength or fight that headache. Have you been aware of the pace during the morning?

There are times when we do need help immediately; emergencies always arise. But for things that can wait for a time, let us always take an extra moment to ask, “Have I the right at this moment, to intrude . . . ?”

Thoughtfulness is one of the most rewarding of all human traits. How many ragged moments it has averted!

Prayer: Lord, let me never take for granted the help of others, but may I consider their needs first, before my own. Give me a selfless heart, God, that I may serve my loved ones better. AMEN

THURSDAY

“THE CAST OF YOUR MOOD”

SCRIPTURE:

Psalms 119:160-165;
Proverbs 17:22; 18:14

It has been said that our attitudes and moods are like stage lights; they set the mood for the entire scene.

And just as colors have a subtle, powerful effect on the dramatic mood so our emotional and spiritual moods can color our surroundings, affect those we meet – actually mold our day.

People in love, or fresh from an exhilarating success, or on the brink of an exciting adventure carry with them enough enthusiasm and joy to affect everyone around them. This kind of mood is infectious and delightful and vital.

But the reverse is true, too. And so often we can blot out the sun for others with our gloom and moodiness. “Wet blanket” is perfectly descriptive of such moods, for they not only smother whatever fire and warmth is present, but they tend to be heavy and cumbersome, clinging, unpleasant, almost impossible to shrug off.

The Spirit of Christ is never one of gloom. His realism was always tempered with love and trust in Almighty God’s Plan.

The more realistic a person you may be, the more you need Christ’s indomitable spirit of hope and joy, in God’s ability to bring order out of chaos. He saw depravation – yet never lost sight of the potential in and in spite of the depravation.

Prayer: Lord, I excuse my moods some days by pointing to the world, or to my own present failures. Help me to rise above these to see my responsibility to those around me and to you. Make me patient. Lord. AMEN

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FRIDAY

“HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN SPITE OF”

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 14:18

I Corinthians 6:18-20 & 10:31

Unfortunately, life is not always tailored to our specifications. Often we find ourselves doing something we do not like in a place we don't want to be, with people we don't love very much. Can we attain success under conditions like these?

Yes, if we decide first what it is we are trying to accomplish. Are our goals self-motivated – or God-motivated? When we think in terms of success it is usually in terms of things that we want to do, in places we choose or with people we are most at ease with. With this measuring stick, it takes a very small upset to blind us to “success” in God's sight.

If we live to glorify (exemplify or express) God in *all* things, then no matter how unfamiliar or awkward that situation, we can be successful if we bear in mind that we are always serving him. It is astonishing how we can have the same feeling of exhilaration and fulfillment, the same peace within us that we find when we are doing what *we* wanted to do. And we find as much satisfaction by putting God first in all things.

Try it – and watch success come in all things – big and little. Life can be so full, for you take each opportunity as a way to serve God, instead of waiting for a single “big moment” that may never come as you expect it . . .

Prayer: Lord, teach me to measure my life by its value to you and not merely by man's standards. Thank you, God, for using all I offer you. AMEN

SATURDAY

“HOW TO HAVE POWER”

SCRIPTURE:

Acts 1:8 8:18-24

Psalm 139:23, 24

We all want to be something, to do something well. Without power – we are as useless as a car without a motor. We can go nowhere.

Some toy electric trains work only when all four wheels are directly on the tracks. If even one wheel is off, or something lies across the track at anyplace, the engine buzzes and that train goes nowhere.

It is the same with the Christian life. Sometimes one significant area in our lives can be blocked by some habit or attitude. One small part of us can be “off the track” spiritually and no matter how much juice we give it, our lives just seem to buzz – and go nowhere.

If your life seems to be standing still while making a great deal of effort, check your life. Is there something that should be lifted out? Check your attitudes. Is one of your goals out of line?

God's current is always available; the trouble is not there. It is with the conductivity or in the obstruction in our lives that the secret can be found.

Ask God to show you where your particular problem lies. Then as it is removed, watch your life take off with real power!

Prayer: Father, we know that your power is always sufficient and never-faltering. Please help me to line up my life in such a way that that power can be used to the fullest. AMEN

MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026

“THAT INNER THIRST”

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 42:1-5; John 4:7-15

Have you ever been so thirsty, nothing seemed to satisfy the craving?

There are people today so thirsty for God that they are nearly frantic. They have tried everything to satisfy this thirst – “fast” living, fanatic philosophies, drugs, drinking and other substitutes – but the thirst and craving, the emptiness remains.

This is not an imaginary thing; it is very real, for the spirit of man is real – a living entity created by God in his image to be filled by him. Nothing else will satisfy.

When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well, he knew her many marriages were an indication of this inner hidden thirst and he offered her a “living” water. And how quickly she responded – not fully understanding at first – yet perhaps hoping secretly that this was what she had been looking for for so long.

You know people like this. Do you know your Lord and the well-spring of his love so that you can bring those to him? He is the answer to every human quest for fulfillment. Read some of the passages (John 3:16, 17; I John 1:9; 4:15; 5:11, 12.)

Prayer: Dear Lord, make me sensitive to the need, the thirst and hunger around me for you. Give me compassion and love and let me be an instrument by which men find you. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“HOW TO LIVE FOREVER”

SCRIPTURE:

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9
(John 3:16-18)

Most of us dislike the thought of death being the end. We prefer to go on living – somehow, somewhere. Christ knew this. It is part of man’s being made in God’s image, this natural desire of the spirit to live forever.

We fear dying because we fear loss of life. Yet the spirit was born for eternity and if the spirit remains alive and healthy under the guidance of our Lord, then death is simply emerging from the earthly “chrysalis”, to enter a new dimension of living. To a man wholly believing as Paul believed death is leaving the imperfect for the perfect, if we are Christ’s here.

How does one secure eternal life? God has given us the way. It is never the perfection of your life, not the extent of your “doing good” – but if you are able or unable to accept what God has done through his Son. If you can believe God cares enough to accomplish the resurrection of his Son, then you can believe he will – and does – offer you the same kind of love. Whatever he did for Christ, he will do for you – if you will let him.

God’s incredible love as we see it in the life of his Son, is ours, too. Christ is the blue print of The Divine Plan for us. Once you trust him to do the same for you, you have already begun your metamorphosis into eternity.

Prayer: Lord, help us to trust in your love for us, even through death and into that which you have prepared for those who trust you with their lives. Forgive us for our fear. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“HOW TO GET RID OF GUILT”

SCRIPTURE:

I John 1:8-10
Luke 7:40-49
Hebrews 10:1-25

Guilt is such a subtle destroyer. It can eat away emotional stability, fester the mind, and give birth to hostility of every kind.

Yet strangely the human mind seems to have no way of absorbing or assimilating guilt. It always remains a corrosive sediment that keeps building up through the years – a foreign element in a spirit never meant to handle it.

Still, through civilizations we are aware that man has been trying to dissolve this guilt through extreme methods of sacrificing someone or something very dear to him. Somehow knowing that sin is separation of himself from God which leaves him vulnerable and alone, he offers innocent life in his frenzy to be reunited.

And God, again with unprecedented love, does for man what we could not do for ourselves. He offers once and for all – for every man, for any sin, at any time in the universe – the only perfect sacrifice. The Son willingly gave himself for this – and God willingly raised him again. (John 10:17-18)

Your guilt for anything can be totally wiped out if you can accept divine love such as this and believe. Some are too proud; some too ashamed and others too skeptical. But it is there for those who have come to the end of their own strength.

Prayer: Lord, you know the things in my life which can never be undone. In your mercy, grant me forgiveness, and let me know the wonder of your presence with me, I pray. AMEN

THURSDAY

“WHEN YOU NEED NEW LIFE”

SCRIPTURE:

John 1:12, 13; 3:1-15
II Corinthians 5:17-20

Jesus, knowing he was soon to die, and leave his physical relationship with the disciples, promised them he would not leave them alone. He said, “The comforter, the Holy Spirit will be with you.”

(John 14:16-21, 25, 26)

Who is the Holy Spirit? It is for us what electricity is to a lamp, what a hand is to a glove. It is God in us and through us. One is the vehicle, while the other is the power – the reason – the meaning to life.

This is not weird or unnatural. It is the way we were created to function at our best. It is man giving himself over to what he was originally meant to be – the perfect, visible expression of God in love, obedience, harmony, intelligence and adoration. It is being the glove for his hand, letting his current light up your life.

It is also called “new life” since it is new life. Everything takes on a new perspective, new dimension. You begin to see things from a different or higher level, God’s viewpoint.

It is called being born of the Spirit, being born again for there is a rebirth of the man. No ritual or mystical rites. Simply an invitation to a powerful, loving God to come into you and make you complete. . . . Once you’ve tasted this new life, you will never be content with the old.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for being afraid to trust you with my life. You who made me and all that I love here on this earth. Thank you for life. AMEN

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FRIDAY

“WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A HURT?”

SCRIPTURE: Luke 23:32-34; Acts 7:58-60

Possibly one of the hardest things which a Christian must learn to do is to face injury or undeserved hurt objectively: leaving self out of it.

Our first reaction when we are betrayed or injured in some way is to be angry, resentful, hostile. This is natural – the natural reaction of a person who is not familiar with the divine dynamics of setting self aside as secondary to others.

People seldom hurt us because of something we have done to them. As a rule, their hostility often stems from another strictly personal source – or it may be the result of a chain reaction – someone hurts them, they lash out at you; something goes wrong, they take it out in irritation.

Christ’s way of reacting will accomplish three things: it asks “why?” and by focusing our attention on the needs of the other person – in seeing the hurt and trouble there, we forget self for the moment; it reverses negative action into positive, loving action, for we seldom can see another’s problem without wanting to reach out to help; and when we reach out a helping hand, anger will drop away from us like a loose cape . . .

The old adages – “Two wrongs don’t make a right . . . turn the other cheek . . . heap coals of fire on their head” are deep psychological, spiritual insights into human relationships.

Prayer: Lord, only love like yours can turn hot anger into the warmth of love. Teach me the secret of this divine alchemy, I pray. AMEN

SATURDAY

“WHEN GRIEF TURNS RANCID”

SCRIPTURE:
II Samuel 19:1-8
Matthew 6:16-18

Grief is a natural emotion in anyone who loves and suffers a loss. But grief – like many good things – can become rancid and wrong if we hold it too long.

In this passage, David is grieving over the loss of his son, Absalom – a son who had never brought anything but rebellion and injury to his father’s household. But David’s grief has become selfish; so immersed is he that he thinks only of himself while his people – who have just risked their lives to win a battle his own son had started against him – wait for their king’s thanks. Weary and spent, they see only his self-pity for himself.

God always stoops to us when our grief is fresh and pure; he, too, has lost a son. But grief held too long becomes self-pity and – like rancid oil – becomes offensive to both people and God.

Is your grief still eating like acid in your heart? What is the specific point of your grief – a loss which cannot be replaced? Anger that it should have happened to you? Anger toward God for letting it happen? Or simply a masochistic desire to go on suffering?

Be honest. Take a good look. Give it to God and begin to make something of the life you still have.

Prayer: O Father, it is so easy to enclose myself in a capsule of solitary self-pity. Teach me that all of my life is in your keeping and only as I surrender it all, can I know peace. AMEN

MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026

“WHEN IS IT WRONG?”

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 23:23-28

A teenage girl was apprehended by the police for stealing a valuable piece of jewelry from a friend of her mother. When her parents were informed that she was being held for theft, they were outraged . . . “She is not a thief! She didn’t need the jewelry – she has all the money she can possibly need.”

What constitutes wrong? Is an act any less wrong because the person accused of it is “nice”? What is a nice person – one who is popular, wealthy, educated?

A drunkard in skid row is looked on with disgust – but tolerated with amusement at a “nice” party. The same act of immorality which brings looks of distaste in a tenement, suddenly loses its coarseness in “polite” society. Lying, infidelity, godlessness and dishonesty are never taken lightly by God, nor weighed according to who commits them – for these are indications of a person’s spiritual or inner state. Jesus was looking through the rich robes of the Pharisees when he condemned their hypocrisy – straight to the heart of the matter, to the soul, which was dying of spiritual malnutrition.

How much of your conduct is being excused because you are a “nice person”? If you stood in rags – or before Christ – how would it appear then?

Prayer: Father, teach me that you always look at the heart, and that men, too, soon learn to know what lies beneath the niceties of life. Grant me purity and honesty before you. AMEN

TUESDAY

“COALS OF FIRE TO WARM YOU”

SCRIPTURE:
Romans 12:17-21

In certain middle-eastern countries, especially in Jesus’ time, the women would arise before light to begin to bake their flat loaves of bread. In every village, a young boy was chosen to distribute the live coals – one to each woman – to ignite her individual fire. The container of coals was carried on a turban on his head, and since the mornings were often chilly and he had little else to warm him, the task was held to be an honor and much sought after, and only the most deserving boys were selected.

But there was another reason this was held to be an honor. It was believed that the seat of wisdom and spiritual grace was in the head, and so the boy was doubly blessed since the warmth of the coals stimulated not only his physical well-being but his spiritual and mental as well.

So when Paul quotes, “Heap coals of fire on their heads – ”*, he was not referring to vengeance. He was talking of the unexpected warmth of love in a cold world, of stimulating forgiveness and quietness, wisdom, and understanding where there is only human anger and bitterness. Such an act is not easily forgotten . . .

**Proverbs 25:22*

Prayer: God, help me to be such a person, who can make an enemy feel the kind of love that melts anger and bitterness. Make my love spontaneous, not self-righteous; help me really to feel the love that leads to release of all enmity and hate. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“YOUR IMAGE AS AN IDOL”

SCRIPTURE:
Luke 19:35-42, 45-46

In this passage, Christ had just finished entering Jerusalem as the king of the Jews. If ever it was a time to guard the people’s image of him, it was now.

Yet the first act he did on dismounting was to go into the temple, overturn the tables of the money changers, and drive the dealers out of the court. Why should Jesus turn against his own people? Why did he not take a whip to the Roman slave traders in the marketplace?

Because Jesus had been sent first to his own people, as their ruler – to make them an example of purity, Godliness and obedience in a world that was anything but this. He had the right to chastise his own, for they had been told of his coming – they alone had been prepared for a Messiah. Yet they had forgotten it was for this spiritual leadership, for this unique role he had come.

In acting as he did, he remained true to the image God desired him to present; yet how easy it would have been for him to have bowed to the ambitions of a restless people! How easily he could have become another social revolutionary.

Are we falling to this temptation today – afraid of ruining our popular image before the crowd, rather than uphold God’s will for us?

Prayer: O God, please make your will clear to me that I may always serve you first and not men’s whims. AMEN

THURSDAY

“WOULD YOU TRADE IT?”

SCRIPTURE:
Hebrews 12:1-11

Have you ever put yourself in the position of Christian martyrs – and wondered what you would have done in their place? Could you have held up – would you have *wanted* to? How easily would you have traded your faith for “safety” or “life”?

Perhaps you are already answering that question today without knowing it. Those Christians who died in the Roman arenas were not “instant heroes.” All great struggles are first waged in the heart before they are proven on the battleground, and so their battles had already been won or lost in those tense, lonely weeks before the gates were opened to the lions.

The courage Christ displayed before the crowds on Golgotha was forged on his knees the night before as he agonized with God, and wrestled – as you wrestle, with your fears.

Today, those agonizing decisions you are having to make are giving you already the strength you never thought you would have, making you the kind of person you once looked at with awe.

For each small victory you win is taking you closer to the “cloud of witnesses” who surround you now, or who have gone on before – people who did not trade their faith, their God for popularity, wealth or safety. The more you fight to keep your Christ – the closer he will keep you.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me to realize that courage comes from conviction – and that strength comes with daily, faithful exercise of trust in you. I want to be one of the strong ones. AMEN

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FRIDAY

“EVEN IN DEATH”

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 23:39-43;

John 14:1-7; I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Is there any real comfort in death?

The early Christians soon learned the answer to this. Many of their people died in martyrdom. Homes were broken, families split apart. They needed reassurance desperately.

In this powerful, touching passage to the Christians at Thessalonica, we sense not only Paul's compassion for their grief and uncertainty, but also his own absolute assurance in the after-life of those who believe in Jesus Christ.

We are reminded that we will meet again in a resurrection in which we shall actually know and communicate with each other as we are, individually. For forty days, our Lord continued to appear to people so they might believe in this. (Acts 1:3)

It is more difficult today for us perhaps to believe what Jesus said – and yet because he is The Christ, the Son of God, we must believe his words.

When death does come to us or the ones we love, we have the assurance, then, that this is not the end but rather the beginning of a life we do not as yet understand. This eternal, on-going life is perhaps the most incredible, the most precious gift God could give to us. How well he knows our longing not to be separated forever from those we love. How merciful he is to grant us Life.

Prayer: O Father, in our grief, help us to see more clearly the light of your salvation and love.
AMEN

SATURDAY

“MORE THINGS ARE WROUGHT BY
PRAYER THAN THIS WORLD DREAMS OF”

SCRIPTURE:

I Timothy 2:1-5;

II Timothy 3:1-8; 4:1-5

Drugs, immorality, violence, war, crime . . . we who are Christians say, “We should pray –” and then mentally we shrug our shoulders helplessly and think, “What good is one prayer?”

What has happened to us today? Are God's people afraid to pray? Do we think God has changed, has lost his power overnight? Time after time in the Bible, God used the prayers of men like Elijah, Moses, David – ordinary men – to do breath-taking, miraculous things. Do we think we have to be geniuses, generals, presidents in order for God to work through us? Not one of the great men of the Bible we mentioned could be called famous for anything except *their trust in God's power to accomplish his Plan*. They simply believed in a God with unlimited ability – and they believed in prayer.

Scripture tells us that evil will sweep over the land in the last days but that in the midst of it, people will continue to search for and find God. If ever the power of prayer was needed, it is now. Select persons in public office; ask God to move through them and in spite of them to accomplish his will. Hold up friends and acquaintances in the same way. Today ask God to give you a prayer-field – and then PRAY.

(I Kings 18:17-39; Joshua 6:1-20)

Prayer: O God, forgive me for my indifference, timidity, and lack of trust in the power you have given prayer. Teach me to master it so that through it I may become a better witness, a more faithful servant.
AMEN

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2026

“FROM THE GREATEST SINNER
TO THE GREATEST SAINT”

SCRIPTURE:

I Timothy 1:12-17;

Luke 7:37-50

How many of the greatest Christian people the world has known are those who at one time were the greatest rebels – those whom Christ has forgiven so much, to whom he has given new life and another chance . . .

Most people have been forgiven comparatively little – small sins, petty grievances, self-indulgences; because their forgiveness has been granted in proportion to their sins, often their understanding of the scope and power of God's forgiving power is limited . . . they have not experienced the awesome scope of divine forgiveness. Nothing is too great for him to forgive, nothing too far for his hand to reach out and reclaim.

Paul, a relentless, cruel persecutor of the Christians before his conversion, was such a man. Yet in spite of the fact that he had been responsible for the death of good people, he constantly dwells – not on his former sins but on the amazing miracle of divine forgiveness and re-positioning.

In all of his letters, we sense an intense joy and awareness of this forgiving power.

So should we view our own and others' lives. Many people are misdirecting their efforts, not out of evil or godlessness but ignorance of who Jesus Christ is and what God has accomplished through him. Never look at anyone as hopeless or beyond God's power to forgive.

Prayer: God, grant me the kind of trust in your love which Paul had, I pray. AMEN

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TUESDAY

*“WHAT WOULD WE DO
WITHOUT PRAYER?”*

SCRIPTURE:

II Thessalonians 3:1-5;
John 17:6-19

What would we do without prayer during the long, difficult absences from one another? No other kind of communication can fill the emptiness and helplessness in quite the same way. There are not enough letters or phone calls to bridge the gap, for in love there is always the need to minister in a special way.

There is also something strangely quieting in knowing that someone is praying for us. A child may smile self-consciously when a parent says, “I’ll pray for you –” but inside, possibly unknown to him, is the assurance that wherever he is, that prayer and the God Who answers is the shield which goes before.

This knowledge does not make us less careful or more foolhardy. On the contrary – it makes us aware of the importance of each life in God’s Plan and the value of every moment lived.

Such a person soon becomes aware of those times in which he did escape temptation, the times in which a difficult decision was made correctly – and little by little, the effect of another’s praying soon becomes a part of his life, and he, too, begins to ask God’s guidance for himself and also those he loves.

Prayer is the unseen line binding us together.

Prayer: Father, I thank you for the warm presence of prayer in the still, lonely nights; for your faithfulness which always hears; and for your comfort in my hours of despair and bewilderment. Teach us all to pray, Father. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

*“FOLLOW CHRIST AND YE’LL NOT FALL
FOR THE DEVIL”*

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 4:1-11;
James 4:2-8a

Before leaving for World War II, a young Scotsman, who had never been away from his farm, paid a final visit to his pastor. The old man, never one for much talking, sat quietly at his desk, looking out over the countryside, peaceful with its sheep and rolling hills.

At last, looking at the boy from under shaggy brows, he said, “Well, laddie, there be a deal I could tell ye about the world but ye’ll be finding it oot soon enou’. So ye’ll ken the best advice for the fewest words be those of St. James . . . ‘If ye follow Christ, ye’ll not fall for the devil.’”

And this is true. The longer we follow the open truth which our Lord lived and taught, the less prone we will be to fall for the deceit of Satan’s world; the more quickly we will spot the twisted scripture, the distorted philosophy – and learn to ignore the scorn of those who do not believe. And we will be tempted into the very treacherous games of doubt which so many people play today.

Our responsibility is to see that we stay close to Christ – and therefore safe beneath the shadow of the Almighty’s hand. For none of us can predict what we will need or when . . . only God’s ever-present love reaching out into the future beyond us, can see that.

Prayer: God, as your Son, Jesus was careful always to walk within your will, so teach me, too, so to walk that I may know your presence. AMEN

THURSDAY

“A CROSS . . . WHAT IS A CROSS?”

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 9:23-27

We hear it so often and understand it scarcely at all! When we think of a cross, we think of pathetic, down-and-out people, trudging unhappily through life – faces glum and steps dragging.

A cross *is* heavy and unwieldy and sometimes brings us to our knees, as it did our Lord. But we forget. The cross is so much more. It is the way to a new dimension in living.

A cross is a burden we take up of our own accord or accept willingly. Sometimes it is placed upon us by circumstances or people, but it is always ours to carry or put down. Jesus carried his cross because it was a part of the decision he had made; so even though it had been placed upon him, it was willingly accepted. He did not resist it.

There are thousands of people who daily take up crosses out of love to others or for God; they carry their crosses, knowing this act of love may lead to the death of their own desire or opportunity. And yet as their own needs, their own desires are sacrificed on that cross, they find a new meaning to life, a higher dimension of living – what Christ calls “Finding Life!” For the meaning to living is giving and the greatest thing any of us can give is a part of ourselves.

Prayer: Lord, none of us is too young to take up your cross. Help us each to seek his own and to bear it with humility and love, we pray. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

FRIDAY

“WHY AN ALIEN, NOW?”

SCRIPTURE:

I Peter 2:9-12 (13-17)

A young soldier, home from a tour of duty in an isolated area, said, “I was never as homesick or lonely there as I am right now. I’ve never felt so much a stranger or so alienated”

And a friend said, “But how can you feel this way in your own home, your own country?”

He replied, “I’ve lived more with myself and God than with people these past few years, so that I guess I’m closer to his world than my own –”

Have you ever felt this way – as a stranger in your own country, a misfit in your own home – an alien from society? Peter refers to this in the passage just read. We *are* aliens if we have elected to follow the higher road of Christian commitment, striving always to keep ourselves within the dominion and guidance of God.

How can the world comprehend that still small Voice which has the power to guide us unerringly through some very treacherous decisions? How can the world understand divine love as it suddenly wells up in a moment of fear or doubt? How can the world know that the only real loneliness is separation from God, and that the only real failure is in failing him?

The Christian must expect to feel more and more strange in a society which rebels against God. But even as we feel the gap widen, we must do even more to build bridges of compassion and love through the knowledge that our Lord is the answer.

Prayer: Lord, as one who knows love, may I never be alone or feel deserted by you. Help me to feel your presence always. AMEN

SATURDAY

“FOR WE ARE AMBASSADORS”

SCRIPTURE:

II Corinthians 5:20-6:11

When an ambassador is in residence in a foreign country, everything he does is a reflection on his nation. He cannot live unto himself as an ordinary or irresponsible tourist. He is the representative of his nation. It is for this purpose he is living as an “alien” in that foreign land.

And Paul reminds us that this is precisely our position in the world. Having chosen to follow our Lord, and to be members of the higher or spiritual Kingdom of God, we live here now as ambassadors for Christ, and we no longer have the right to live only unto ourselves: we represent him to the world. Of course we will be homesick from time to time; ambassadors recognize this as an “occupational disease”. Of course we will feel awkward and restrained at times; we are not free to do many things others do. We will often long just “to be ourselves.”

And yet, strangely, we will find that the longer we live as ambassadors the easier this becomes for us. Courtesy, the ability to listen, the need to be honest, the desire to keep communication open between God and other people, little by little begins to alter us as individuals. Soon it becomes easier to live lives above reproach – to reflect God to others, to seek first the Kingdom of heaven. We find we are not alienated so much as needed – not deprived so much as rewarded, and that those we have won for our Lord, have become our friends as well.

Prayer: O God, let me serve you well. Help me to keep your banner high among those to whom you have sent me. AMEN

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026

“WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?”

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 24:36-48 (Acts 1:1-3)

(Supplementary reading John 20:11-21:25)

Many people hesitate to give their lives to God because of, “What will happen to *my* plans, *my* dreams – me?”

This is a fair question. The need to be individual – specifically who we are – John, Sue, Mike, Betty – is very strongly implanted in the human heart. We want to be ourselves – not just a face in the crowd or a puppet, even for God. We fear losing our identity.

This is what Christ came to tell us: the amazing fact that God respects and cherishes the individualness of each man, woman and child. Because of this, his Way – the Christian faith – is the only one that promises the resurrection of the individual – John as John, Sue as Sue – while other religions merely propose the return of our spirits into the One Anonymous, Great Spirit – completely wiping out the individualness of each person – as though each had never been.

Everything about the Christian faith is created to make the most of the individual and to make it possible for him to live eternally, never to die but to go on being the very best, the purest that he can be forever, beginning right now – here.

And yet unless we know this, and unless we understand the wisdom and compassion of our God, we go on running from the very things we seek.

Prayer: Father, you sent your Son to show us the truth of your Way – and yet, Lord, we are so fearful. Teach us to trust your love for us. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“CHILD’S PLAY – OR GOD-DIRECTED?”

SCRIPTURE:

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Psalm 118:8, 9; John 14:8-14

It is a frightening experience to watch a high-powered motor boat going at top speed without someone behind the wheel. It is just as unnerving to watch a person going through life the same way. Inevitably we witness the smash-up of the individual life and destruction it brings to those involved.

Unfortunately guiding a speedboat is still more simple than running our own lives. Somehow men are just not equipped to do it alone. We are as inept at it as a child is behind the wheel of a large boat: not high enough to see ahead into the future; not strong enough to avert disaster; not resourceful or experienced enough to keep it running smoothly.

God made man’s life so intricately that it is not child’s play to run it; it takes the expert proficiency of God – his wisdom, his omniscience, his power, his love for us.

And when we do see a life that is guided by him, what a difference in power, direction and performance. A life fully committed to God is a beautiful thing to watch.

Every man, woman and child has a place for God at the helm of his life. This is why God sent his Son to be that pilot, the helmsman of our lives. Is he yours?

Prayer: Lord, help me to think of my life as belonging to you and may I willingly give you control of it through your Son, my Lord. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“THE DESIRES OF OUR HEART”

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 21:1-6; 37:3-5

Scripture says, “He will give you the desires of your heart.”

This does not mean merely that he grants us whatever we want; it means more – that in the man committed to God, the heart’s deepest desires are placed there *by* God – and therefore, we can expect his help and guidance in bringing them to fruition. Once we look at it in this light, it becomes important that we remain committed to his will; we want to be sure that what we want is from God – blessed by him, right for us.

How can we always be sure that our desires are his?

There will be times in our lives when, in spite of our spiritual commitment, we may desire that which is not within the will of God. When this happens, two things may occur: either God in his wisdom will not allow us to have it, or as we live with the desire we may see that its fulfillment might hurt another, subtract from another’s happiness, or in some way obstruct the divine plan.

This is why daily prayer is essential to the Christian life. Without it, we can go wrong so quickly. Without continually aligning ourselves with God, we are as helpless as planes in a fog without radio assistance.

Is there something you want very much? Search your life. Can you put God first and still desire this thing? If you attain this desire, will God still be first?

Prayer: Lord, I know your love for me; how lavish you are with your goodness. May I trust it, Lord. AMEN

THURSDAY

“WHEN WE NEED REASSURANCE”

SCRIPTURE:

I John 3:19-24

Are you ever filled with self-doubt and uncertainty? Do you often condemn yourself needlessly? How can you be sure you are doing what God wants you to do?

There are many times in our lives when the Christian must have reassurance, and receiving it from friends does not always satisfy the doubt. We feel the need of God’s reassurance.

These powerful words are meant for such moments: “– by this we know we are of the truth – because we keep his commandments – and all who keep his commandments abide in him and he in them. (This is his commandment – that we believe in the name of his Son and love one another.)”

When you are in doubt as to whether you are right, ask yourself these two questions:

1. Am I acting out of a sense of commitment to Christ and his will?
2. Am I acting out of love toward others?

If you can answer “yes” to both of these, then your heart cannot condemn you for God does not condemn you. He knows your heart; he knows what the motivation is behind what you are doing. And once you are assured of this your doubt and uncertainty will vanish. Try it.

Prayer: Dear God, I know that guilt and uncertainty can weaken my effort to do those things I should do. Help me to commit all things to you, then after receiving your assurance, to go on with certainty and faith. Will you be with me, Father, I pray. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

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FRIDAY

“THE STILL, SMALL ‘VOICE’ ”

Scripture: I Samuel 3:1-10; I Kings 19:11, 12

The Bible says that God “spoke” to certain of his people – Moses, Elijah, Abraham, Samuel . . . Does that mean his voice was actually audible, that one could hear it with the ear?

Some of the deepest experiences we have are the most difficult to describe or put into words. Of course God spoke to Samuel – but being a Spirit, he probably spoke to Samuel as The Spirit – but it was strong enough to awaken him three times.

For us, perhaps God’s voice could be described as the strange urging or pressure, a heaviness or restlessness which makes us suddenly stop as we become acutely aware that God *is* communicating with us. Perhaps you have been awakened in the night, your entire being alert, awake. You have felt a deep urgency to pray – and you pray until a peace comes. This is real – just as the spirit within us is real.

And just as we can sharpen our physical senses to a high degree, so we can sharpen our spiritual sense so we can hear God’s voice. Practice listening for him. Let your spirit move as he wills it to. We are never too young to know it.

Prayer: God, I know that you still do speak to your people today, but somehow it seems harder to hear you; there are so many people to listen to. Help me to seek out your “still” voice in my heart and to obey it quickly. AMEN

SATURDAY

“THE BREATH OF THE SOUL”

Scripture: Psalm 28:6-9

There are many kinds of breathing. When we sleep, our breath is even and effortless. When we run, our breathing is labored and deep. Whatever we do – our breathing adjusts itself according to the body’s need.

Prayer should be like this.

There are times when your life is moving along easily; prayer then, too, is easy, free, almost effortless. You are hardly aware of it – but it’s working.

There are times when something terrible happens – and suddenly your prayers are deep and labored, your entire being strains with the effort. There are times when you are preparing for a critical event – and your praying becomes intense, quick, heightened. Then there are times of rest when you are simply quiet with God . . . “breathing” is easy – it is praise and thanksgiving – and refreshment.

Prayer should be so much a part of our living that when we go to bed at night, we feel as though we have been beside God all day. This is what he desires . . . being so close to us that he is “nearer than breathing, closer than hands or feet.”

Prayer: God, give me a healthy spirit. Fill it with the breath of your own Spirit, Lord, until your strength is as deep as my need. AMEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2026

“VOICE OF THE INNER MAN”

Scripture: Psalm 103:1-5; Isaiah 66:13

We all go through life, filling our various roles as teacher, supervisor, father, mother, child, friend, doing our best to meet the requirements of those roles – as we should.

But each of us feels the need, sometimes, to be a child, to throw aside our pride, and run into God’s arms; to cry because we are discouraged; to admit our defeats; to confess our sins – just for a while to be our own inner man.

This is prayer: the luxury of being ourselves – the only times, really, we can be completely and unashamedly – unreservedly all we are, the best or the worst.

For there is nothing God does not already know. He knows our inmost thoughts, our dreams, our sins, our potentials or our weaknesses. And because of this, he has the unique ability to deal with the actual, *real* person, in the actual, real situation. And once we know this, we run more quickly to him – for only in this rare and beautiful relationship, can we see things – life, ourselves, others – in true perspective.

How long since you have run to him? How long since you have known this luxury of being yourself? Prayer is the greatest relationship man can have. Use your right to it today.

Prayer: God, forgive me for turning away from you. Make me realize that because you already know me fully, there is no need for me to hide from you. I ask your presence with me now. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“GOD’S WALKIE-TALKIE”

Scripture: Isaiah 42:16; John 14:3-6

A man was lost in a dangerous swamp. All around him was quicksand. He was afraid to move. Then a guide, who knew the area well, was taken up in a helicopter. When the machine was above the man, a “walkie-talkie” was dropped to him.

The guide said, “Listen to what I say, and I’ll guide you from here.” The man listened, and step by step, he was led to safety.

This is prayer. Jesus Christ is our guide, prayer our “walkie-talkie.” As long as we are in contact with him, he can lead us through the swamps of temptation and difficult decisions safely – until we reach God’s firm land.

Are you in constant touch with God? Or is prayer something you use only when you have already fallen into an impossible situation?

Prayer is so much more than a rescue tool. It is a compass, a lifeline, a light and God-with-us. God meant it to be an essential part of our everyday life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, forgive me when I have strayed into dangerous or treacherous places because I have not listened to you. I know that you are always ready to help when I call, but Father, grant that I may want to know your will before I walk, and follow the path you have chosen for me, I pray. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“GOOD SEED – OR BAD?”

Scripture: Romans 8:28; Luke 11:11-13

Prayer is a seed – planted in the soil of belief, nourished by trust – and strengthened by the Son of God.

Many people cannot pray, because they do not believe. They cannot pray because they do not know or trust the God to Whom they would pray; they never really plant their seed. They toss it on top of the ground and challenge God to a miracle.

And the seed never germinates.

Or sometimes we plant a seed with care – but it is not a good seed. God knows it will grow into something we should not have, something that might poison our life, or cause us injury.

God blesses nothing which could ever harm us – and many times he has arrested the germination of a prayer we have “planted,” knowing its fruit might harm or destroy us.

We plant our seeds of desire, of ambition, of many things. It is God’s mercy and discerning wisdom which allows some to die, others to flourish in profusion.

He is faithful and just. He is love. Why don’t we trust him more?

Prayer: O God, forgive me for forgetting your love for me . . . forgive me when I do not accept your wisdom and mercy in choosing for me that which will most benefit my life, and my service to you. Grant me the kind of unfailing trust your Son, Jesus Christ, had in your wisdom, I pray. AMEN

THURSDAY

“PRAYER WITHOUT CEASING”

Scripture: Ephesians 6:18; Acts 6:4

Most people underestimate the importance of prayer; they regard it as an emergency measure . . . something to fall back on when everything else has failed. This is not the original purpose of prayer; it was never intended to operate on a “spasmodic” basis.

For prayer is to the soul what our breathing is to the body. Too much oxygen after the body has been deprived of it can lead to dizziness and lightheadedness.

Some people’s prayer life is like this. They go along sluggishly for a time, then suddenly decide to go on a “prayer binge.” This sudden infilling of the Spirit sends them into a “spiritual high.” For a while they are on top of the world; they love everyone; life is fine and they have energy to burn. Then gradually they sink down again into lethargy. They become listless, morose, discouraged; things become increasingly worse until they go on another of their “prayer binges.”

This is neither spiritually healthy nor is it Christian. Prayer, to the Christian must be like breathing: deep, daily, constant and in accordance with the day’s need. As our bodily exercise increases need for more oxygen, so spiritual trials produce the need for deeper and more consistent prayer.

How is your spiritual breathing?

Prayer: God, I thank you for the wonderful privilege of prayer. Dear Lord, let me use it to nourish the life of my soul, I pray. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

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FRIDAY

“THE HARDEST COMMANDMENT”

SCRIPTURE:
Exodus 20:12
Romans 13:1-7
I Peter 2:13-17

These words go straight against the grain of today’s philosophy . . . “My parents don’t live according to God’s law; why should I honor them? My country has abandoned Christianity’s principles; why should I serve? People are not worth the effort; why should I love them?”

Today we are very big on love . . . but something has happened to honor. Yet God always links the two together: it is impossible to please him without honoring and obeying. Disobedience, rejection, contempt, scorn are never the qualities he accepts, or desires from us. But today, many people hold themselves as judge and free agents – free to disobey, dishonor, reject.

Have we this prerogative, as followers of Christ? When these passages were written, people were living in slavery, in an even more corrupt time than ours, ruled by a despot – and what are they told to do? Their obedience puts our so-called piety to shame. The Christian then lived to exalt Christ, not his own ego; he lived so that people would recall how the Lord himself had lived – and died. To live beneath such authority and still be free was new then, too. *Can* people remember Christ as they see you react and live?

Prayer: Lord, I find myself defending my opinions, my ways so often. Help me to remember that I am first your witness to an unbelieving world. AMEN

SATURDAY

“SAY IT!”

SCRIPTURE:
Colossians 1:9-14
Proverbs 15:23; 25:11

“One of the saddest things about life is that with such boundless power to give cheer to others by our speech, most of us pass through the world in silence, locking up in our own hearts the thoughtful and helpful words which we might speak, and which if spoken, would minister so much strength and inspiration.

“Hearts are breaking with sorrow; men are bowed under burdens too heavy for them; duty is too large; battles too sore. On every hand and in every life, there is need for love’s ministry that men and women may not fail. Nor is it a large or costly service that is needed: kindly words often give all the impulse and inspiration required. And the feeling is always close at hand – wanting to be spoken where the struggle is going on.

“Yet many of us let the good will lie in our heart unuttered, and we stand by in silence while our brother goes down in defeat which one word of ours would have changed into victory. It is not the want of love that is our fault, but the penury which locks up the love, and will not let it out to bless others.”

J. R. Miller

Prayer: O God, help me not to worry so much about what to say, but let me be more aware of the need to say something, anything so that love may be felt. Lord, give me grace to step aside and let you minister through me – give me your love, perception, and patience. AMEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026

“IT SHOWS IN YOUR LOVE”

SCRIPTURE:
I John 4:7, 8
II Peter 3:18

“Another mark of ‘growth in grace’ is an increase in charity.

*The man whose soul is growing,
Is more full of love every year –
of love toward all men*

*But especially of love toward his fellow believers his
love will show itself actively in a growing
disposition to do kindnesses,*

*to take trouble for others,
To be good-natured to everybody,
To be generous, thoughtful, tender,
And considerate.*

*A growing soul will try to put the best
construction on*

*Other people’s conduct,
And to believe all things and hope all things,
Even to the end.*

*Would anyone know if he is growing
In grace?*

Then let him look within for increasing charity.”

J.C. Ryle

Prayer: Lord, sometimes I become so involved with serving you, that I forget to look with love to those I serve. Give me an understanding and a love which gives freely and without question. May I see in each man the perfect creation you did create in him – and give me the wisdom, the love and the patience to coax it forth for you. We thank you, Father, for your infinite love for us. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“TAKE TIME TO ENJOY IT”

SCRIPTURE:

Nehemiah 8:9-13

John 15:7-11

A young scientist who had recently been assigned to work with one of the world’s greatest nuclear physicists, arrived at his house one afternoon and was amazed to find that great man lying on the floor of his study, surrounded by half a dozen tiny kittens. He seemed completely absorbed in their play and watched in boyish delight their attempts to retrieve the balls of yarn from each other.

The youth watched, wondering how such a man could waste valuable time in so meaningless a pastime. Finally the older man rose, and reading the younger man’s mind, he said . . . “You seek to learn the secrets of a wondrous universe, boy. Make sure that in your search to unlock those mysteries, you do not lose the joy in simply loving her.”

This is true of our faith, too – sometimes in our effort to know more about truth, wisdom and God, we forget simply to take time to enjoy and become part of him. And in our eagerness to make Christ known to another, we may forget to take time to be with him ourselves.

One of the things our Lord wants for us is to have joy in life. Reach out for it; take time for it; enrich each day with it.

Prayer: Lord, a joyful heart is one of the things you bring. Teach us to yield to it as easily as children – to put aside troubles for a time, to leave them with you when they are too burdensome. Thank you, Lord. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“BREAK THE VICIOUS CIRCLE”

SCRIPTURE:

Titus 2:1-10

Today so much of life seems to be a vicious circle . . . the sins of one generation causing rebellion in the second generation – leading to a reaction of the third generation which has had to grow up under their rebellion and hatred. And so it goes . . . the sins of the fathers visited upon their children and added to their individual sins.

But there is a way to break this ancient circle, straighten it out into a direct and powerful current for any generation. Christ gave us the answer and the example: what he did was not triggered or directed by others’ actions. He did not react: He responded to God’s will for him. This works for us, too.

Your father may be antagonistic – toward you or God or life; rather than building your resentment against his, God can reveal to you the reason for his anger and give you a desire, not to reject but to love. Your mother may be an alcoholic; as God reveals to you why her life is empty, you’ll reach out to help her find him, and break the chain of despair, failure.

In every relationship we can really break the vicious circle by the transforming power of God’s love toward other people. As God’s love becomes a buffer between action and reaction, so his love through you can continue to be a buffer.

Prayer: Lord, the chain of sin is so heavy it seemsto threaten us all. May I seek understanding, comfort and love from you and by so doing break my own circle of reaction and resentment, and turn it into a life for you. AMEN

THURSDAY

“TO WHOM ARE WE RESPONSIBLE?”

SCRIPTURE:

I Samuel 3:10-18

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

John 17:6-8

This story could have been written today: Eli, a man of God, priest of the temple, a failure as a father. Why a failure? Because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them – not because he did not love them, or was too restrictive, or “forced” religion upon them. God condemned him because he failed to stand for God, even if it meant standing against his sons in this matter.

Today’s parents are restrained on every hand, by psychological philosophies that say, – “Never superimpose your belief on your child.” By educational ethics which state, “What was true for father is not necessarily a truth for son. “By moral demands which belittle a mother’s standards: “Times have changed. You cannot expect your daughter to hold the same principles as you held toward chastity.”

Where do we find this deviation in our Book? Where do we find Christ diluting the essence of purity? Why do we, then, as Christians, follow the edicts of men? Why have we permitted ourselves to be shamed into submission, robbed of our God-given place as spokesmen for him? We *are* to be the symbols of authority in a home: God says so. We are responsible for our children honoring him while they live under our roof. And we are supposed to live our lives which exemplify The Higher Way.

Prayer: Lord, give me the wisdom, love and strength to serve you before my children. Help me to remember that I answer only to you when life is over. Make me faithful, Father. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
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FRIDAY

“GET UP – AND MOVE OUT”

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 71:17-19 (Job 28:1-6)
Revelation 2:2-7

“If there is one thing the matter with Christian people today, it is their inability to get up from their knees and back out into the world!”

This minister went on to say, “We know of no single person-to-person job that couldn’t be filled without cost to the government by some capable, compassionate Christian adult; it isn’t that there are not enough Christians – there simply is not enough impetus, not enough mapped-out avenues of service for them to follow.”

Christian people are not indifferent people. They simply do not know how to go about helping. Often they feel they must have some specific ability or talent before they can be used. But professionalism was never a requirement for the people Christ chose for his people-to-people activity.

Mothers in poverty areas need other mothers to talk with and pray with. The same holds true for the fathers – and their children. People must not be classed as job holders or educational potentials. They are persons with problems like ours, needs, hungers, fears that often have less to do with material substance than we realize. We all fight sin, disbelief and callousness no matter where we may live.

How many hours a week are spent, trying to kill a day? God has an outlet if we seek it.

Prayer: Lord, from child to adult, may we learn to seek our place in your needy world, we pray. AMEN

SATURDAY

“I CAN’T LOVE EVERY ONE!”

SCRIPTURE:

I John 4:7-12

“I can’t love everyone!”

Of course *you* can’t. God never expected you to. He knows your personality, your likes and dislikes, the things you particularly need and respond to. But he never asked us to love – on our own strength, or even with our own love.

What then? This is perhaps one of the most difficult parts of Christian faith for us to understand. Probably the best way we can grasp it, is to picture ourselves as imitators of Christ – imitators in the highest sense. By that we mean, “How would Jesus react to this particular person? What would he say? What would he see in that life – what need, or fear, or hunger?”

It is strange how this attitude in meeting people can change us. Immediately, we fade out of the picture – our personality, our preference, even our preconditioned response. Suddenly that person is not seen as a person in relation to us, but rather in relation to Jesus Christ and we become the go-between. The usual “chemical reaction” is neutralized; the person we ordinarily would shrink from, run from or detest holds no distaste for us. We do not react *to them* – we act *for God*, as Christ did. And as such, we become ambassadors of God, and our opinion no longer matters so much.

Prayer: God, I know this kind of love does not come easily but in proportion to my love for you. So let my love for people grow to include all those whom you love, I pray. AMEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2026

“PHASES THAT BECOME PEOPLE”

SCRIPTURE:

Proverbs 22:6
Philippians 4:8, 9

Soil conservationists know that each small crevice is a potential threat – can become a large gully or erosion that will scar and destroy the usefulness of good acreage. People are a lot like land.

Petty phases, so-called unimportant “stages” should never be minimized, either in youth or adulthood. Each unattractive phase can so easily become a habit, the habit becomes a trait, the traits become a person.

Have you ever seen an unpleasant, disagreeable person and wondered how he ever came to be like that? Very few people start out purposely to become so disagreeable. In most cases, it was simply a matter of not paying attention to the small habit of petulance, sulkiness, irritability, indifference, coldness – till over the years, the small mood, the unimportant reaction became more dominant, more of a habit, and a person emerged.

Take stock of yourself today. We are all aware of those unpleasant actions we consciously commit. Children even know when they are disagreeable. After you have made your assessment, ask members of your family to mention the things they see in you that need to be changed. Then do an about face. Each time the reaction starts – reverse it. At first this is as difficult as bending a twig backwards, but it will come with prayer and perseverance.

Prayer: Lord, help me to see myself as others see me and to seek your help in changing. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“AFTER THE FIRST STEP – GOD.”

SCRIPTURE:
Philippians 3:12-16

So often we expect prayer – and God – to do the things for us that we must do for ourselves. It is true that prayer reveals the problems and God gives us the strength to act, but God never takes the first step for us. His strength is meted out in proportion to our own efforts. The harder we try the more strength he gives. But for the person who waits – with hands folded and will awash, he will grant nothing.

Take attitudes. Look back over the past year. How much have you changed and in what ways? For the better? Are you more relaxed, more compassionate, more understanding, patient, perceptive and optimistic? Or have you become cynical, quick-tempered, indifferent, careless? So often we ask God to “make us better people”; yet we get up from that prayer and walk into the same attitudes we left when we entered.

Wherever you see God at work in men, you see men at work with themselves. Abraham did not receive his blessing until he had taken *himself* up and moved out of Chaldea. Moses did not become the leader, until first he made his way back into Egypt. And you will never be on your way to becoming a better person until you have begun to do your part.

Prayer: Lord, it is so hard to take the first step. May my desire to be a better person for you make me eager to take that step. Then, Lord, will you please give me the continuing energy and strength to go on. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“TAKE TIME TO DREAM”

SCRIPTURE:
Isaiah 30:15
Psalm 23

We all admit today that few people have enough time simply to dream anymore. And yet without the dream – the city is never built . . .

Today the routine of most people, from children to adults, is mapped out from breakfast to bedtime. We run by the clock, not by impulse. And yet – as people living in a society such as this, we need not denounce everything and become recluses. The answer is to use the moments we have, to decide on those things which are important and to act accordingly.

Take stock. How important is that TV program? How long since you have stood quietly in the night, your eyes lifted to the stars or the planes flying overhead, letting your spirits soar, too – to past dreams, to future dreams, to what have you done for God, to what you wish to do for him.

How important is that errand? How long since you took the time to go down a side street to sit in quietness, watching people pass, looking at a garden or the arch of trees overhead? How long since your child has known the luxury and benediction of complete stillness and peace, without radio, TV or homework?

The spirit cannot survive without the nourishment that comes through a regular period of contemplation, quietness, dreaming and opening itself to the Spirit of God.

Prayer: Lord, teach me that activity is energy released and that I must renew that energy through you. Help me to seek your presence more. AMEN

THURSDAY

“THE CHALLENGE OF THE DOLDRUMS”

SCRIPTURE:
Psalm 8:3 through 9:2

“I never noticed the tiny delicacy of the roadside wildflowers until the day my car broke down and I was forced to sit by the highway for several hours, waiting.” This statement by a busy salesman who had suddenly confronted a whole new realm of beauty.

We all have days when we are so “low”, so down and discouraged, that we are literally out of the running. What do you do on such days? Simply sit and mope, look at the four walls of your room, see the same things?

Or do you make an effort to move into a new area of perception? Even those in a confined place can learn the secret of seeing anew, responding anew to anything which is close by – which in the rut and hustle of daily life can be overlooked.

Often our depression is a sign of wearing thin. Whether we are aware of it or not, our senses, our spirits cry for a new stimulus – new beauty, new vistas, new thoughts. No one has to rely on psychedelic drugs to attain this; by ordinary, everyday awareness we can notice and be part of things we have formerly ignored.

The more minutely we look at life, the more perceptive we allow ourselves to be, the more we pull free of self, and become open to God and to others.

Prayer: O God, I know that so often my depression comes from too much emphasis on self, too much concern and apprehension and not enough awareness of your presence, your power and love. God, grant me that inner peace. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

FRIDAY

*“WHAT A CHRISTIAN DOES WITH
FEAR”*

SCRIPTURE:

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

II Timothy 1:7

All around us today we sense fear. It has enveloped the whole world and sometimes the Christian finds it difficult not to be fearful, too. But there should be a difference between our fear and that of the world.

Fear is a natural part of being human. Even Christ wrestled with it in the Garden the night before his crucifixion. He prayed with all his might that “the cup might pass from him”. He was not ashamed of it. He even asked his disciples to stay awake and pray with him. If they had, they would have seen how he handled the same fear which would shake them later. For the difference between human fear and the “fear” of Christ’s, was that while he knew fear, he did not become a victim of it, was not diverted by it from doing God’s will. Had he been, we would not have forgiveness and salvation today . . .

And while we may know fear, Christians need not become victims of it, diverted by it. It is not the lack of fear which sets us apart from a frightened world, but Christ’s conquest of it in our hearts.

So today when world powers threaten destruction if we do not bow down to their pagan demands, when all around us we see the corruption of the world we know, the Christian is told to go on in hope and joy for his ruler is God and his life is held within the hollow of his Almighty hand.

Prayer: Father, I thank you that in this, too, your Son showed us the way to be victorious. I give you my life, too. AMEN

SATURDAY

“THOSE WHOM GOD HAS CHOSEN”

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 2:1-3

I Thessalonians 5:12-24

“He’s too emotional . . . ”

“He’s too stiff . . . ”

We do not lose our personal taste or opinions simply because we become Christians – and this often leads to discouraging misunderstandings. One person will shy away from a “Bible-thumping” evangelist – but there are those who would never have found God unless that “Bible-thumper” had spoken. Some remain unmoved by sermons which are “too intellectual”, and yet other people have come to know their Lord in this way who would have gone away from another type of ministry.

As Christians we have been given the right of personal choice, but we do not have the right to ridicule or criticize that which we have not chosen. Our personal taste has nothing to do with the validity, genuineness, or worth of another Christian, and we always must be very careful never to injure or undermine the work of a truly committed believer whose method – or personality we do not happen to agree with or prefer. When we do this, we may oppose Christ for he calls as many kinds of shepherds as there are sheep.

This is the beauty, the scope, and the power of his Gospel.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to be grateful that for every need, for every man or woman, you have appointed a specific, ideal witness. Please keep me from the kind of pride which is exclusive and blind and injurious and give me the grace to see all your elect as part of you, too. AMEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026

*“THE ALTERNATING CURRENT OF
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE”*

SCRIPTURE: I John 4:13-15; Acts 1:1-8

The Christian life runs on two “alternating currents”: our commitment to Christ, and his commission to us. No life can reach its full capacity until these two actions are continuously in effect and working.

Commitment is our stepping forward to Christ with our life, talents and love. Commissioning is Christ meeting us with specific tasks, to which he also adds his stamina and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Commitment is saying, “Lord, here I am, use me, make life meaningful.” Commissioning is Christ saying, “This is how I need you, and here is the strength and power to do it.”

You will notice that even Christ did not start his ministry until he had received this power or authority from the Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit is God-in-us working – and no Christian can claim to be working for God unless he has first given himself completely to God, and secondly, been given the task from God. (*Mark 1:9-13)

How do we know – after commitment – whether what we are doing is a true commission? There is the peace that comes. Sometimes so quietly, we hardly notice – sometimes as an excitement or amazement that we should be doing this at all. Whatever it is, if it be God’s he will bless it.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to see your hand even in the small, unfamiliar things you bring to me to do. Make me faithful in my commissions, I pray. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“A MAN ON DANGEROUS GROUND”

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 4:6-9
Proverbs 3:5, 6

Have you ever watched a mountain climber traverse a glacier? He does not stride carelessly; he walks with extreme caution, constantly testing, probing, securing his safety-line – viewing the area for telltale signs of a fault or chasm.

So we must walk as Christians. It is such a temptation – once we have received our commission – to go striding off with never another thought as to the terrain over which we are walking. This is the danger.

Christ never said the way would be without danger; he frequently reminded his disciples of the danger. But he prepared them, too – with the lifeline of prayer, the deep probe of Scripture, and the quick reflexes and perception of the Holy Spirit.

So when you receive your commissions (and there will be many during your lifetime) remember to pray, to align your work with Scripture, and to wait and move according to God’s Spirit within you. So many well-meaning people have failed because they became too reliant on their own power and forgot the kind of world into which they were moving. All about us we see evidence of good things going bad, lofty dreams ending in corruption, highest human ideals being taken over by Satan – all because men forget God and the equipment he has given us.

Prayer: Dear Lord, as I begin to fulfill my commissions for you keep me close in prayer, God’s Word, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for using me, Lord. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“FOR EVERY MAN – A PLACE”

SCRIPTURE:

I Corinthians 12:4-12, 25-31

What kind of army would we have if everyone in service were a supply corpsman, or a private, or a radio operator, or a flier? The better the army, the more diverse the areas in which it is involved. And the Kingdom of God is as diversified, as far-flung and as intricate as any human army.

As Christians our calling or commissions will differ so widely sometimes we may question the importance of someone else’s task. One may be appointed to move quietly into the by-ways of life, ferreting out the hidden dangers, the snipers who threaten the life of the Spirit. Another may be called to lead the troops into battle. Still another may be assigned to communications, running supplies, or simply boosting morale. Then there is the greatest body of all, the men who actually bear the brunt of the battle – the bodily contact, the day-to-day action, walking, trudging, holding, until one day seems like every other.

But peace is won by each man being faithful to his duty whatever that duty may be. Success means faithfulness in every area, by each man every day.

Are we each faithful to our present commissions, great or small, dull or interesting? Often we are given the big tasks only after we have proven ourselves in the lesser.

Prayer: Dear God, forgive me when I am discontented, or when I view others at work that seems unimportant. Please illuminate for me the importance of your Kingdom and keep me a part of it. AMEN

THURSDAY

“THE WORK OF SATAN IS ALMOST INVISIBLE”

SCRIPTURE:

I John 4:1-6

An engineer on the railroad many years ago said that it was not the big obstacles on the track that concerned him the most; it was the possibility of the train being derailed by someone tampering with a switch that posed the worst problem. “I can always see the big things ahead. The switch I can’t see until it’s already too late.”

Today Satan does not bother to put obvious things in our way. Most people would avoid them. Instead he uses invisible, unnoticeable devices through which he hopes to divert our efforts from God’s way to his . . . from Christ’s to the world’s.

So many things today which lead a person away from God are coming in the form of “good things” that aren’t Godly things: peace that is not God’s peace; brotherhood that is not based upon God as Father; love that is really self-indulgence; unity that is conformity rather than obedience to God; peacemaking that is not making peace at all but rather compromising souls of men for the safety of the “world”.

Movements, men, philosophies, and beliefs can all be judged by the simple test which John gives to us here in the passage above.

Prayer: Father, it is such a temptation to join the world in its “good” movements rather than in following you toward God’s desire for us, for the world. Please give me courage to choose your way, I pray. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

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FRIDAY

“WINDOWS AROUND YOU — OR MIRRORS?”

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 16:24, 25; I Timothy 5:3-6

Do you live in a house of mirrors, or are you surrounded by windows that look out onto the world, skylights opening up to God?

Do you judge people by how they react to you. . . life by what it has to offer you . . . God by what he has done for you? Sometimes our lives can be a house of mirrors: no matter where we look, we see only ourselves reflected.

A person who is super-sensitive is often self-centered: everything is evaluated in terms of “me”. Rarely does a person like this view life in terms of what he can do for others, or for God. Self is the pampered master that must be continuously fed lest he feel hurt . . . slighted . . . snubbed . . . ignored. A person in such condition, is in no state to help others or God.

Such people are slaves to their egos. Their main goal is saving, serving and promoting Self. Christ warned: these people eventually lose every valuable spiritual advantage, while the person who has windows opening out to the needs of the world is inevitably, surely drawn out into the world, away from selfishness that breeds apathy — and spiritual death.

Windows not only open your world — they brighten your life. If you would live an interesting, unhidden, useful life — take away the mirrors and open the windows!

Prayer: O God, search me and see if there be any hidden sin in my life. Open the windows of my soul and keep me from the monotony of a self-centered life, I pray. AMEN

SATURDAY

“IN WHATSOEVER STATE I AM”

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 4:11-13;
II Corinthians 12:8-10

One of the qualities that mark the Apostle Paul is his great enthusiasm. Even in prison he sings at the top of his voice! Why? Because he knows that no matter where he is he is still living for God. Instead of waiting for circumstances to suit him, he fits into circumstances. Of course, he could preach better in a synagogue — but if he happens to be in jail, then we see him ministering to the jailer and to the other prisoners.

It was never the circumstance that determined Paul’s reaction: it was always the “why” — the motivation.

Have you this ability to adjust to God’s circumstances? Are you really a servant of his, or are you attempting to be your own agent?

If we live for God, it won’t bother us when things seem to fall apart, or if we find ourselves in strange or difficult situations.

Never feel as though you are on a railroad siding. Look around. God has put you here for a reason. He can always be served . . . even when we are alone: there is prayer then, and meditation, and more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of . . .

War, retirement, illness, bereavement and childlessness, there is more than enough work to go around if dedicated Christians will only be available to their Lord.

Prayer: O God, help me never to find an excuse for idleness. Help me to be at your bidding at all times, in every place, I pray you! AMEN

MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026

TO ME, TO LIVE IS _____?”

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 1:21;
John 4:31-34

People have been known to live and die for many reasons.

Paul’s reason for living was Jesus Christ; everything Paul did, whatever he was, whatever he had to suffer was done in such a way that God would be pleased and Jesus Christ glorified.

What is your reason for living?

How would your “motto” read?

To me to live is popularity?

To me to live is financial security?

To me to live is my children?

To me to live is happiness . . . health . . . a full life . . . success?

Whatever you give your heart to is eventually going to shape your life.

Whatever you put your time and energy into will be the treasure you are left with at the end of this life.

Whatever you serve will become also your master.

Write your motto today. It may surprise you.

Prayer: God, I ask you to illuminate my inner-most thoughts. Show me where I am putting other things before you. Lord, teach me that if I put you before all else in my life, you will bless whatever else I may do because it is unto you. I thank you for your presence with me and your help. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“LIFE IS NOT A LEVEL ROAD”

SCRIPTURE:

I Kings 19:1-18

It is comforting to know that even God’s greatest men knew such discouragement. In this passage, Elijah goes off into the wilderness: “It is enough now, Lord — take away my life!” Man’s anguished plea for God to end it all.

Yet even here, Elijah turns *to* God, not away from him, and God sends help and strength and encouragement, as he always does. More than that, he even reveals the presence of others who —like Elijah — are faithful to him, so even his isolation is removed. What a comfort this can be!

Remember the times in your life you have felt you failed, that you stood alone, that there was no point in going on? Moses, John the Baptist, and even our Lord knew periods of such anguish. But what marks them is the fact that in this discouragement, they turned *to* God and were reestablished.

When your hour comes, don’t be ashamed to cry out to God. These often are the times when his love and power are illuminated most clearly for you.

We are never alone when we live to serve God; our lives are never wasted.

Prayer: O God, help me not to fear the times of discouragement, but to turn to you, no matter how great or insignificant my problems may be. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

*“LIFE CONSISTS
NOT IN THE ABUNDANCE OF THINGS”*

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 12:13-31

Today everyone — society, governments, even the church — is feverishly interested in the abundance of the things which men possess. Each organization is trying to outdo the other in giving things — housing, medical care, education, financial security — to the world.

Why? Because today the “good life”, the “abundant life” is the accepted basis for happiness and contentment. We place little importance on spiritual poverty; we think that if a man has enough *things* he will somehow be free from problems, at peace with all.

This concept is opposite to what Christ taught: “Seek ye *first*,” he said, “the Kingdom of Heaven and all these things will be added unto you.”

Not seek ye first the other things and the Kingdom will come!

But we stubbornly go our way, offering everyone — even our children — so-called security in the form of things. Then we are bewildered when these are not enough to keep them from suicide, godlessness, apathy, crime and empty lives.

Are you careful always to minister first to the souls of men — so that a natural joy, vitality and industry in living come as a result of their relationship with God which leads to a continuing enrichment of their lives?

Prayer: Give me the kind of love that reaches out to a man’s soul, and give me wisdom in leading them to you. AMEN

THURSDAY

“WHICH LIFE?”

SCRIPTURE:

John 17:3;
John 14:3-9; 18-23

It is not easy to keep our minds on heaven and eternity when we are enjoying this life. Older people have as much trouble as the younger ones with this. We all keep putting off such pious thoughts believing we will have enough time later to plan for the other life.

Actually the two lives can be simultaneous; God intended them to be. If we fill the requirements for eternal life, we’ll find that the requirements for this life are fulfilled.

What are the requirements for the other life? “*To know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he sent.*”

This doesn’t seem so difficult after all. If we know God, we will know what is right for our lives. If we do what is right, we will not get in as many predicaments. If we know Christ, as Lord, our need for forgiveness has been met and we are no longer burdened with guilt. If we know him, if we believe what he said, we find truth, for he “is the truth and the life.”

Whatever we need to make us a success in this life will be fulfilled, if we seek first eternal life.

Try it — with friends, in the office, at home, on the playground. Put God first and see how quickly living can take on new power and smoothness.

Prayer: Help me to remember that this life is but the preparation for eternity. Make me the kind of person who puts you first in all things. Keep me close to you each moment, God! AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

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FRIDAY

"BE READY FOR THE VALLEY"

SCRIPTURE:
Job 33:22-30

Why is it that after we have had a "mountaintop" experience or have known a time of joy and exhilaration, our moment of truth, that we plummet down into a valley of lethargy, doubt and an overall letdown?

By definition alone, a mountain is a raised portion of land surrounded by valleys or lowlands. And this can be just as true spiritually and emotionally. Many times we have experienced difficulties, valleys of decision, days of monotony before we are brought up into the "highlands". And conversely, just as surely, we will again descend into the ordinary, the everyday, at some time following these "mountaintops".

So the Christian who experiences these ups and downs must learn not to be depressed by them. They are a natural rhythm of life, for a journey is not meant to be traveled on peaks alone; the swiftest and most direct progress is made in the lowlands.

So when your mountaintops come, be grateful, enjoy them without restraint, and remember them. Let the effect of their beauty and the vision you glimpse there, become a part of you -- a part that lingers to beautify the ordinary and keeps you going toward other high moments to come.

One of the most exciting things about life with God is the unexpected variety he brings. Let us learn to accept it all.

Prayer: Lord, give me patience to accept my valleys. Keep me from despondency and lift my eyes to you from whence my strength comes. AMEN

SATURDAY

"SATAN WORKS THE VALLEYS"

SCRIPTURE:
Psalm 23:4-6; John 17:15;
I Peter 5:8, 9

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow ... I will fear no evil."

How well David knew the dangers that lurk in the spiritual valleys; they were as real to him as the valleys he had walked as a shepherd.

We seldom encounter dangers when we are on the spiritual mountaintop for up there we are intensely aware of God's presence, his love, his omnipotence. We are held firm.

But in the valleys, where sometimes we can see no farther than the next step, where the shadows seem to blot out the assurance of God's love, where we seem to walk alone toward a canyon that is closing in on us -- it is here that the real danger lurks -- for Satan works the valleys. He will not attempt to compete with God on those mountaintops: he is no match for divine love and truth. He bides his times for our inevitable descent into the valleys, down to his level, to the ordinary, the everyday.

It is here that he begins to whisper from the shadows, begins stalking us, raising doubts, destroying our confidence, overwhelming our enthusiasm. Watch for him; expect him when you leave your mountain. Jesus, after his forty days with the Spirit, met him in just such a way and came to know firsthand the insidious, terrible tempting of this valley devil.

Prayer: Lord, as David said, 'I will fear no evil for you are with me.' I ask that you will come to me in those valleys of mine. Make me feel your presence, help me to trust you, and to know that you are always near. AMEN

MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2026

"NO OTHER SIGN WILL BE GIVEN MEN"

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 12:38-41; Acts 17:30-31;
I John 4:9 (Job 19:25, 26;
Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:1-3)

If ever there was a time when people wanted to believe in a living God, it is now. There are many, who are openly searching for such a God, and despite the fact that others say that God is dead, they still go on searching for him, knowing deep in their souls that God, being God, has always been, is now, and always will be. No one can take away this tenacious search of the soul for its fulfillment

Yet we seek proof, a sign. They did in Christ's time, too. "Give us proof" And he said, "Even if aman should rise from the dead, you would not believe!" They didn't, they still don't,

However, if you do seek a personal God, look again at Easter. For the Christian and the skeptic, it is the yearly challenge and command to re-evaluate our faith. *Could* God care enough to do such a thing? This personalness, this divine concern is one of the most difficult things to accept: that the Creator of the world, Spirit of spirits, Life of life, functions on this uniquely personal level.

And yet unless our God is such a God, what need have we of him? Unless he is Love seeking and searching for every man's heart, reaching out in forgiveness and love, offering power to be the people we long to be, why seek communication with him at all? (Luke 16:31)

Prayer: Father, I thank you for this day, this proof that you are a God for your people. AMEN

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TUESDAY

"THOSE THINGS I WOULD NOT DO – I DO"

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 7: 15-25

What a poignant passage this is! The wretched cry of a man who wants to do God's will, who longsto be a better man but continually fails and fails and fails.

This was the great Apostle Paul -- the man through whom God wrote the greater part of the New Testament. It should give us hope.

It seems that the closer we come to full Christian commitment and the higher we set our sights, the farther short we seem to fall. Our inner man soars in dedication to God; in our hearts we see ourselves perfect for him.

And then we move out into the daily life, among men, and no one would dream of those noble and lofty vows we made, no one can imagine how much better we would like to be. Men see only the imperfections of our spirit filtered through the corrupted flesh, they see only the ordinary, ordinary man: the human us.

How fortunate that God looks on the heart! How humbling to know that he at least knows what we would desire to be for him. And he knows, too, that we cannot continue to submerge ourselves in him without at last becoming more like him. As the soul is purified, so the outward life begins to glow, and the sanctification soon becomes apparent even to the world.

Prayer: Lord, often the more I look into your face, the greater my discontent with my life becomes. Teach me not to be discouraged but to wait for your perfecting of me for your sake. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

"THIS DEAD BODY OF OURS"

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 7:24-8:5

In certain prisons during Paul's time, prisoners were shackled together for the duration of their stay. If one man died, the other was forced to live with this body shackled to him. He was unable to get rid of it but had to drag along the unbearable weight of this dead body until the body simply disengaged itself eventually through natural processes.

This is what Paul is probably referring to in this passage: once we have given our lives to Christ, have been cleansed and rejuvenated, we think all is accomplished! We are free. And yet for a time, like the dead and decaying body, our former selves are a constant reminder and fact, clinging to us,

However, God knows that this unpleasant aura, this unlovely presence is not us. Already we have been granted pardon and it is now only a matter of time before we will be completely free of the former self and living unfettered, freed, and whole.

Don't despair. God understands. Our Lord stands beside us, and soon the time of confinement will be at an end.

(II Corinthians 5:17)

Prayer: Lord, it is so easy to allow this former self, these past failures to drag me down to despondency. Help me to realize that the past really is dead and has no further influence upon my life as long as you have given me your love and pardon. I thank you for the promise that in you, I am a new creation. AMEN

THURSDAY

"THE DISCIPLES -- AFTER EASTER"

SCRIPTURE:

John 16:4-15; Acts 1:6-8; Acts 4:8-12

It is a strange and wonderful phenomenon that God continues to touch his people with the identical power and presence with which he blessed the earliest Christians in Acts. In years past the mere mention of such activity, this reality of "God-With-Us" used to make people squirm.

Many today see society as collapsing at such an alarming rate, that hatred, immorality, greed and rebellion are so rampant, that people are finally reaching out for the one power big enough to cope with it all — they are reaching for a personal God.

What was this "Power" that came to the early Christians and is coming again to us today? It is what Christ had promised his disciples: He called this power "The Counselor". It was the presence of God, touching men of obedience and belief — and filling them with the love and power which Christ had received from his Father. Christ promised it only to his people, those who believed in him, who accepted him as Lord. (John 17:8, 9, 20)

Astonishing? Yes, and yet how like God to match the cataclysmic warring of Satan with his own indestructible plan. Like a powerful neutralizer, divine love can change a world full of corrosive acid of hate quietly — and surely.

Prayer: Lord, I know this power has been promised to those who love you and believe in you. Grant that I too, may be an instrument by which you come to others. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

"WHEN GOD OVERWHELMS EVIL"

SCRIPTURE:

John 3:18-21
Romans 12:21
I Corinthians 10:13

There are certain cancer cells which when grown in a test tube medium with human cells, grow at the same rate as the human cells. But when the same cells grow in a living human body, the cancer cells begin to outnumber and crowd out the natural, body cells. Why?

Human cells are designed to respond to certain physiological controls in the body - enzymes which keep the human body from growing to monstrous or unlimited proportions. The cancerous cells do not have this built-in control response to the body; therefore they quickly outnumber and overwhelm the healthy cells for they respond to no restraint.

In life, evil knows no restraint of either moral or spiritual control and it seems - and many times it is true - that evil literally swallows up and overcomes good. What can we do about this to prevent it?

God has given us the power to outgrow - to stay up with and *overcome* - evil providing we allow him to stimulate the growth of the Holy Spirit in our souls. This was the secret of Jesus' power over sin and evil.

Prayer in our life is a releasing of God's power over evil in any area. When you feel evil begin to overwhelm you, pray for greater growth in that area, a stimulation of God-in-you.

Prayer: Lord, you have given us an antidote for everything that threatens our .spiritual life. Check any growth in my life that is not of you. AMEN

"GOD'S RETURN ON HIS INVESTMENT"

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 25:14-30

We are familiar with the kind of contest in which three people are allotted \$100, three others \$500, and a third group \$1000, with which they are to select a wardrobe. The one in each group, who makes the most of the money, wins the prize.

Life is like this. God has given each of us certain "talents" - assets which we are to use and multiply in our lifetime. It is interesting how three people, with similar potential, can come up with such different results! Many times those with great talent, numerous abilities, make less of their lives than those with only a fraction of that ability.

Look at your life. It is all you will have to give God when this life is over. The capacity to love ... how much has it grown? Patience ... is it stronger? Your faith ... has it been shaken? And your talents? Do you know what they are - or do you have a preconceived notion of what they should be to be "acceptable"? Any ability - no matter how insignificant it *seems* to you, is needed by God somewhere.

God does not ask our evaluation of what he has given us other than that it be dedicated to helping his world and to bringing people to a knowledge and understanding of his love and his Plan for us. He knows what we are capable of. It is to him we will answer one day.

Prayer: O Lord, help me to run to do your will. Give me an eagerness and gratitude for what I can do for you in this life. Help me to dedicate it to you, Lord, I pray. AMEN

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2026

"THE REALITY OF PERSONAL PRAYER"

SCRIPTURE:

John 17:1-11

We have all heard people say, "I don't believe in prayer. God is a creator, too universal to be concerned - too great to care about my problems."

Turn to Scripture. Does Jesus pray as though he believes God is an unattainable force? He prays to him as a Father with a certainty, love and intimacy which is deeply moving and to us, very revealing.

This mystery of the personalness of God is something we must accept on faith. It defies description and cannot be argued logically. If anyone is in doubt, all we can say is, "I know because Jesus prayed believing, and he commanded us to pray in the same way." (Matthew 6:7-13)

The world can destroy the faith of the Christian if he takes his eye off Christ; it can argue us into all sorts of doubts, ridicule our belief, because there may be times when you wonder if indeed God does hear. When that time comes, turn to these verses, claim them as truth, and wait in Faith for your God to work his great will in your life. Your faith will be renewed.

Prayer: O God, how we thank you that your Son has shown us the way in every area of our spiritual life. Father, we would not know of your personal love - your ability to speak with us, to answer our prayers if it were not for his example. We thank you Father. AMEN

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TUESDAY

"ARE YOU INTIMIDATED?"

SCRIPTURE:

Acts 4:14-31

It takes courage today to speak of your faith - if you are a Christian. Somehow the world is more lenient toward the agnostic and the atheist than it is toward people who follow Christ as their Lord.

But read this passage in Acts again: the Sadducees were afraid of the power of this risen Lord; they had seen a man healed, and there were hundreds of accounts of miraculous happenings daily in their city that they could not explain with their rigid logic.

The same is true today. Many do fear the true Christian experience, because it still has inexorable influence over people and events, whereas agnosticism and atheism are limited by purely human endeavor.

In your campus, office, club meeting or politics you often find more fear and resistance at the mention of Christ than you do at the mention of a mere political rebel, moral corruption - dishonesty, materialism. Why? Because people instinctively feel they can cope with these manmade threats. The power of God working through people is something else.

They see the poise and certainty in your life which nothing can touch - and they see God at work; they cannot hurt you. They are suddenly helpless in the face of this invisible force.

People have always feared a *living, involved God*. Such a God demands some sort of response - belief or rejection.

Prayer: Lord, as long as you continue to reveal your power through your people, lives will be changed and events shaped. Help me to be such a one, a true and faithful witness to this amazing strength - this God-with-us which is my life daily. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

"A MIXED BLESSING"

SCRIPTURE:

Mark 10:13-16

Luke 10:21-23

A wise old philosopher once said that maturity is a left-handed asset: we need it to get along in this world, but it can take the magic out of life!

What did he mean? We need to be mature, in control of our emotions and in the judgment by which we make decisions, our ability to take life in stride. But the place it threatens to defeat us is in our attitude toward others, our relationship with God!

Why is it that in the Bible, the intellectual, the proud, the independent are never mentioned as those receiving his greatest approval or his richest blessings? Why is it we are admonished to "come as children" to him?

Because only as we become totally dependent, like children before him, can we ever realize the full wonder, the real meaning of the God-man relationship. The man who has never cried out to God in utter helplessness - to suddenly feel his powerful presence beside him - can never understand his omnipotence. The man who has never felt like a lost child, has never felt, either, the overwhelming love of a divine Father.

It is only as we stand before God as children that we see his awesome and compelling love. If you have never reached out for this, if you have not yet thrown yourself in his arms, you have a lesson to learn in security. Security in this world is God.

Prayer: Father, so many times I do long to be a child again, to give up the pretense for just a moment of being so strong and self-sufficient. If I come now to you, please let me believe and feel your presence. AMEN

THURSDAY

"WHERE ARE YOU LOOKING?"

SCRIPTURE:

Habakkuk 1:2-5

Philippians 1:3-6

"Two men looked through prison bars; the one saw mud, the other stars."

Which are you? In the passage above we see God commanding his people - "Look and be astounded!"

But it is so easy today to look and "be dismayed." We see the social deprivation, the moral decay, the disintegration of the family and we throw up our hands in defeat.

It is time for believers to once more lift up their faces and really *look* at what God is doing for us and among us. Who does not feel the silent power of his hand when humans are rescued from near fatal tragedies, or when wars long endured by innocent civilians are finally ended?

The quiet continuing work of the Holy Spirit will always balance the scale according to the need and the cries of God's people. The greater the falling away on one side, the greater will God's hand come among those who call for him.

Look into just your own heart ... how much more mature are you in your faith than you were before you were tested - how much more reliant on God - how much more *personally* aware of his presence in your life, of your daily, critical need of him? Of course.

Prayer: Father, give me patience - eyes to see that you have not changed your timetable - that you are still reaching out to take men into your love and will continue to do so until our Christ comes. AMEN

FRIDAY

“LOOK ABOUT YOU”

SCRIPTURE:
I Corinthians 8:1-12

In this passage, Paul is speaking of ‘meat offered to idols’. In those days, the pagans offered meat to certain of their gods, then ate it themselves, believing this meat gave to them special power or blessing. Paul and the disciples knew they could eat it without being affected this way.

However — the pagans seeing them eat it, could easily misinterpret this act as one of approval or participation, and this would automatically become a puzzlement or ‘stumbling block’ to them. How could Christians participate in pagan activities without being hypocrites or untrue to a singularly pure faith? How could the Christian thus ‘serve two gods’?

So, though those Christians knew there was no power in such things, it was imperative that they abstained — for such things *did* interfere with their witness and did bewilder and confuse those who still lived under the pagan law.

Today there are certain activities we as Christians cannot take part in without the unbelievers being understandably confused. When we follow Jesus Christ’s way, we may be free of the old law, but we are under a far more responsible law — that of Love. We refrain, not out of fear, but out of love, of concern for another. No longer do we live only to ourselves. Are you at this place, yet . . . ?

Prayer: Lord, we long to be free — and under your law, we are free, but what responsibility you give us! God, make us faithful. May we never disappoint you or cause anyone to fall. AMEN

SATURDAY

“NO ONE REALLY KNOWS ME BUT
GOD!”

SCRIPTURE:
Romans 8:26, 27
Psalm 116

A seventeen year old girl said she turned to God out of desperation . . . “I couldn’t get myself across to anyone else!”, she said. “Things I would say at school were taken the wrong way; I’d come home and my parents almost always found fault with something I did, without even seeing the things I was trying to change! Finally I just went to my room and said — “God, at least YOU know what I want to be . . . what I’d like to do!”

“And little by little, my desperate one-sided conversations became prayer. I felt a *real* peace, a real sense of Someone’s presence with me. After a while, all my anger and resentment would be gone and I would feel whole again, accepted, understood.

“I didn’t really understand what was happening until one day I read that this was what Christ had promised, that this was the way God actually came to people — inside, to that part of us that needs him most.

“Now I automatically come to him, I never expect from other people the same kind of complete understanding and acceptance I find with him. And because I *don’t* need this from people, I find I am able to love them much more: I go to them to give, not to receive — and I find there is no limit to that.

“People who need *God* are the luckiest people in the world!”

Prayer: O God, how good you are to come to us like this. Please make me aware of your nearness to me . . . AMEN.

Daily Family Devotions

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MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

“COULD THIS BE YOUR TIME?”

SCRIPTURE:
Esther 4:14
Genesis 42:1-25; 45:1-12

“Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this —?”

We must be constantly looking for ways in which God might need us. To go blithely through one day after another, thinking only about what *we* want, what *we* need is living half a life.

The book of Esther, like the story of Joseph, is an amazing example of how God uses one person to save an enormous nation of people. Joseph as a slave sold by his brothers became an instrument of their later salvation . . . Esther, as the queen of a pagan land, was the instrument through which God delivered his people again. No one else was in the unique position to gain the king’s ear, to be the voice of persuasion for God.

You never know when God moves you from one place to another, when you find yourself in strange and even unhappy circumstances, how God intends to use you. This is why it is so important never to turn away from him, never to become bitter, angry, tired or unavailable. This could be your shining hour! It could be for this very purpose you have come into the Kingdom at this time!

Prayer: O Father, what a privilege it would be to be used by you for such deliverance. Help me to continue to seek your face, your hand in all of my life that I might be ready to follow your plan, open to your will AMEN

TUESDAY

“GO ON — GIVE IN!”

SCRIPTURE:

Acts 8:26-39

Has something been gnawing at you and troubling you? Is there something you feel compelled to do — and yet you continue to hesitate?

God speaks through urgency, through an indescribable compulsion sometimes. If you stop to analyze it, it often falls apart in its meaning. It may be totally aside from reason or logic; and yet until you obey this impulse, you will not know peace and if you continue to reject it . . . that place of sensitivity to divine urgency scars over, and the next time it will be easier to ignore.

We often look at people through whom God works so constantly. “What makes him ask them?” They may not be any more capable, talented, or eager than we — and yet these people are in the midst of God’s wonderful working continually. Why?

Because they move out when he asks them to move! God does not ask for talent, genius or uniqueness; He seeks obedience and availability. And until you learn to move at his command, you might as well be dead to him.

When he called Philip to run after the Ethiopian, Philip simply took off without question.

There is nothing as exciting as a life completely motivated by and in tune to God’s will!

Prayer: God, so often I am afraid to trust my soul’s desire to run after you. Please teach me to respond to you freely and without fear. Help me to know when it is you calling, and when it is not. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“CAST YOUR NET WHERE HE DIRECTS”

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 5:1-11

There will be many times in our lives when we “lower the net” into a particular place — the office, our club, even our home, only to come up time and again with no results. Nothing can be more discouraging than pulling up an empty net time after time . . .

Then suddenly, God will lead us into a place and say, “Now —” and we pull up the net full. Or perhaps he does not have us move, but at his command or at his will, this time we try again and people respond.

In the passage above, Christ is clearly showing his disciples that he has power to bless whatever we do in obedience to him. He had to prove this to his disciples before he could ask them to leave their work and follow him. Without experiencing his power in this, they probably would have had little trust in his ability to bless their luck as “fishers for men”.

Once you have committed yourself to God, do not fret if you do not succeed immediately in your new “work”. Not a single moment or hour of your life is wasted once it is God’s; the only difference is we do not always know how much preparation He must undertake before our nets are filled . . . It takes more time for some people than for others. We need to be patient and keep trusting his direction . . .

Prayer: Lord, as your disciples immediately lowered their nets at your divine command even after their failure, so may I not be hesitant to try with your leading. AMEN

THURSDAY

“NOT FOR OURSELVES ALONE”

SCRIPTURE:

Malachi 2:7-9

Luke 17:1, 2

If we had only ourselves to consider when we make decisions, how much simpler life would be! But each of our lives — in some way — affects someone else’s.

This is especially true for Christians. We not only live to please God; we live so that others may find life less hazardous, less of a heartache — more meaningful, more lighted by the awareness of our Lord.

Pleasing God, and choosing what is right for us is comparatively easy in contrast to caring how what we choose to do might affect another’s actions.

Yes, a man can go through life giving reason for most of what he does, feeling justified, free, unaccountable to anyone else.

But for those of us who have committed ourselves to the Higher Way, to putting him first and others necessarily second, this is no longer possible or right.

Perhaps you could go to a certain place, do certain things without them affecting your belief. God knows your heart; you know your own limitations fairly well. But people only see our actions, the places we go, the people we choose as friends — the things we do. Are you sure that all you do is a clear indication to others that you really are committed to the higher way? Is it easy for them to identify you with your Lord . . . ?

Prayer: God, I want to put you first in every decision I make. May I never put a stumbling block in anyone’s life. AMEN