

Daily God Walk

Promises

Volume Ten

Paul T Smith

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the New International  
Version (NIV). All other translations used will be credited  
using these abbreviations:  
(KJV) – King James Version  
(NKJV) – New King James Version  
(TLB) – The Living Bible  
(TM) – The Message

New Hope Ministries  
2232 Terrace Ln  
McKinleyville, CA 95519

[www.DailyGodWalk.org](http://www.DailyGodWalk.org)  
[paul@nhmresources.org](mailto:paul@nhmresources.org)

## Don't Miss Out On Future Editions of The Daily God Walk

Please let us know if you are blessed by the Daily God Walk. Some of you have responded and we are so thankful for that. But, some of you have not yet contacted us and we need to hear from you.

We need to know if you are reading it or if it just sits on the shelf. If you are being blessed by the Daily God Walk we want to continue sending it to you. If you are not then we need to know that.

Just send us a quick email at [paul@nhmresources.org](mailto:paul@nhmresources.org) or call us at 707-739-7043.

We just want to be sure that we are being good stewards of the ministry God has called us to.

We have gotten many good reports of the DGW being used in small group meetings as well as in personal devotions. We have even been told that one of our subscribers is translating it into Spanish for their local people. We use it in several small groups in our own ministry.

As you know we do not charge for this ministry but we are required to be good stewards. If you are blessed by the DGW please let us know so we can continue to bless you with it.

In His Service,



Paul Smith

New Hope Ministries

Day One

## *His Light In Us Is His Glory*

We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. - 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

Many years ago I knew an evangelist who was very careful to be sure that it was Christ who was glorified and not himself. He showed up to preach a crusade and discovered that his name and picture had been put on posters advertising the meeting.

"Tear these posters down," he cried. "This meeting is not about me; it is about Jesus Christ." The local pastor replied with this question, "Brother, when you go fishing do you use a bare hook or do you put a worm on it?" The evangelist replied, "Well, I put a worm on the hook of course." The pastor replied, "That's the point; you're just the worm on the hook."

Whatever others think about our position, or what we have accomplished, we must keep in mind that it is not about us. We are just a vessel that is being used to serve Christ and his body.

The light and the truth that is in us is the light of God and it is that light which is his glory. We must remember whose glory it is as we serve in the kingdom.

It is His light in us that attracts people to Christ, not our talents or abilities.

**Prayer:** Help me, Lord, to keep my life and service in perspective. You are the important one in this relationship; I'm just the worm on the hook. In Jesus name, amen.

## *His Light In Us Is His Glory*

**Message:** The light and the truth that is in us is the light of God and it is that light which is his glory. We must remember whose glory it is as we serve in the kingdom. we must keep in mind that it is not about us. We are just a vessel that is being used to serve Christ and his body.

**Affirmation:** The only glory I have is the glory of his light and life in me. I glory in the light of his Truth.

**Reflection:** Can you see the difference between promoting yourself and your work and allowing the Lord to use you to promote his kingdom? We must be careful that we do not promote ourselves, but we must also be humble enough to let others promote the kingdom, even when it involves promoting our work in the kingdom.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Two

## *We Are Just Jars Of Clay*

We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. - 2 Corinthians 4:7-9

Paul speaks a truth in an interesting way. First he says that we are just clay pots. There's nothing noble about that. Clay pots are not considered valuable; they are just vessels to be used. When I think of clay pots I think of the potted plants my wife keeps around the house. They aren't ornamental ceramic pieces they are just clay pots. Paul says we're just clay pots.

Then he tells us these clay pots contain something of great value; the all-surpassing power of God. The power in us is not our own - we are merely vessels for his all-surpassing power.

When we, who are merely clay pots, become vessels which contain his power, then there is nothing that can destroy us. In every trial we are victorious because of his power in us.

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

Another passage from the writing of Paul comes to mind; "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). We are mighty pots when we are anointed pots.

**Prayer:** OK Lord. I know I'm just a clay pot, but I ask you to fill my pot with your all-surpassing power so that I might serve you well. In Jesus name, amen.

## *We Are Just Jars Of Clay*

**Message:** The power in us is not our own - we are merely vessels for his all-surpassing power. When we, who are merely clay pots, become vessels which contain his power, then there is nothing that can destroy us. In every trial we are victorious because of his power in us

**Affirmation:** I am just a clay pot, but when his all-surpassing power works in me I become a mighty tool in his hand.

**Reflection:** Our Scripture passage gives us several things to think about. First; standing alone we are no more than clay pots. Second; In Christ we become filled with his great power. Third; we can endure every trial because of his all-surpassing power in us.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Three

## *We Are Dead – Yet Alive In Him*

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. - 2 Corinthians 4:10-11

In other places Paul deals with the idea of our human persona being crucified with Christ and that we are to consider our old person dead as we live out the Christ life. In this passage he tells us that we move about with the consciousness that our old nature is dead and that it is the Christ life which is living through us.

The reality is that our eternal person still lives in this house of clay that tends to be ruled by a base nature which seeks self-gratification. We must guard against the tendency of our flesh-nature to demand that it's desires are satisfied. That is what he meant by, "We who are alive are always being given over to death."

The New Testament has many references to keeping our flesh-nature in check. Jesus spoke of denying ourselves and other writers speak of self-control and crucifying our old nature. The principle at work here is that our old nature dies so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

Our old nature dies so His life may be revealed in our mortal bodies.

**Prayer:** Father, my fleshly desires at times seem to be in control of my life. Grant me the grace to live as though my flesh were dead so that the Christ life can live freely in me. In Jesus name I ask. Amen.



## *We Are Dead - Yet Alive In Him*

**Message:** Jesus spoke of denying ourselves and other writers speak of self-control and crucifying our old nature. The principle at work here is that our old nature dies so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

**Affirmation:** I continually die out to my human nature so that his divine nature may live through me.

**Reflection:** What is meant by, “We who are alive are always being given over to death?” Do a little research on what the New Testament says about denying ourselves and self-control. What are you doing on a regular basis to keep yourself submitted to the Christ Life working in you and denying flesh? Write out your thoughts on this.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Four

## *Faith Talk Produces Overflowing Grace*

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak... All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. - 2 Corinthians 4:13-15

We speak what we believe. Jesus told us that when we speak we are revealing what is in our heart. What is in our heart is what we believe.

Some say, "Be careful what you confess." I say, "Be careful what you believe." If we believe something that is not the truth, or it is not of revelation, then when we speak it the result is confusion and ultimately destruction.

When we believe the truth, and confess that truth, the result is that Christ is glorified and people are blessed. When we speak the truth we believe the glory of the Lord is released upon the earth.

We all have known people who claim to be people of faith yet the words they speak are of doubt, fear and negativity. We should not deny the existence of evil, and we should not deny the evil people do, but if our focus is on the negative then we hinder the release of God's glory on the earth.

A very real result of believing the truth and confessing it is that as we speak more people are reached causing thanksgiving to overflow.

If what we believe is the truth, then when we speak that truth, the glory of the Lord is released upon the earth.

***Prayer:*** Father, reveal to me the un-truth that is in my own belief system. Grant me the grace to believe the truth so that what I speak will release your grace upon others. In Jesus name. Amen.

## *Faith Talk Produces Overflowing Grace*

**Message:** When we believe the truth, and confess that truth, the result is that Christ is glorified and people are blessed. When we speak the truth we believe then the glory of the Lord is released upon the earth.

**Affirmation:** I heard the truth, believed the truth, and now I speak of the truth. Therefore I expect the glory of the Lord to be released upon the earth when I speak.

**Reflection:** Do you see the connection between what believe and what you speak? When you are expressing doubt and fear, what does that say about what you believe? Give some thought to how you can begin to change your speaking, thinking and believing to a more positive, faith releasing expression. Write out your thoughts.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Five

## *Earthly Trials Produce Eternal Glory*

We do not lose heart... For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory... So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

There are times that we feel the earth is shaking under us and we are about to lose it all; then we remember that our life is not about this temporary world but it is about the unseen, eternal world.

The entire fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians is dealing with the frailty of life, the many trials we go through and the power of God to survive the hardships of life.

When we endure the trials of this life God's glory is released in us. But how do we gain the ability to endure hardship? There are two primary factors; the first is the power of God, and the second is how we focus our mind and fix the attention of our heart.

When we fix our eyes on things that are eternal then everything else, even our hardship, is just temporary. There is a passage in Romans which reads, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Keep your eyes fixed on things eternal.

Fix your eyes not on what is seen but on things that can only be seen with eternal vision.

**Prayer:** Lord, I never become discouraged when my mind is fixed on your promises. It is only when I focus on what I don't have and want that I become discouraged. Grant me the grace to keep my focus on things eternal and to realize that everything in this world is just temporary. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Earthly Trials Produce Eternal Glory*

**Message:** When we fix our eyes on things that are eternal then everything else, even our hardship, is just temporary. There are times that we feel the earth is shaking under us and we are about to lose it all; then we remember that our life is not about this temporary world but it is about the unseen, eternal world.

**Affirmation:** When I fix my eyes on things that are eternal instead of the temporal circumstances around me my faith grows stronger and my hope is secured.

**Reflection:** How are you affected by the world around you when you focus on the things of this world? Can a person really pursue the achievement in this world system and still maintain a strong faith in God's eternal kingdom? Give some thought to this and write out your thoughts.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Six

## *Because We Know We Warn Others*

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. - 2 Corinthians 5:10-11

There is very little fear of God preached today. We hear much about grace and prosperity, but we hear little of what happens to those who live in disobedience to the revealed will of God.

While we are preaching the favor of God, his grace, to those who will receive him, we must also warn everyone that God holds all people accountable to the deeds done in this life. God does not suspend his law simply because we have made a confession of faith. No, in fact, that is what grace is all about.

The grace of God is made available to those who believe to forgive them of sin and to redeem them from sinning. If we willfully continue in sin then we disrespect what Christ did for us on the cross.

Because we know the judgment of God we are responsible to warn others. God, in his grace, has given us an eternal trust. We have a fiduciary responsibility to warn others of the effect of living contrary to God's revealed will.

Don't hide what you know about God - share it with those who need to know.

*Prayer:* Lord, I tend to rejoice over what you have done in my life, but I sometimes forget what awaits those who have not yet found you. Give me the grace to share what I know about you with others. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Because We Know We Warn Others*

**Message:** The grace of God is made available to those who believe to forgive them of sin and to redeem them from sinning. If we willfully continue in sin, then we disrespect what Christ did for us on the cross.

**Affirmation:** I warn others to turn to God so that his grace will be released upon them.

**Reflection:** This passage in 2 Corinthians tells us a couple of things. First, we are reminded that all of mankind must appear before the judgement sea of Christ. And second, because we know all will face judgement, we are compelled to warn others. What are you doing to warn others?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Seven

## *Out Of Our Mind For Him*

We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. - 2 Corinthians 5:12-13

Paul is showing his true self here. In all of his writings he is reluctant to toot his own horn, but there are times he feels that he should for the purpose of the Gospel. Here he is saying that he is laying his senses down and acting outside of his normal character by asking the church at Corinth to take pride in him and his message so that those who regard such things will receive the gospel.

There are times that God calls us to live outside of our normal mindset and to live with his mind. It is in God's mind to become whatever he must become, and to do whatever he must do, in order to influence others to receive the grace of reconciliation that he offers.

When we have his mind we live for the benefit of others. That may mean that we will have to move outside of our comfort zone to minister the grace of God to others. Getting outside our comfort zone is not easy. There is a reason they call it, "comfort zone." It's very comfortable there - but we are not called to find comfort, we are called to serve him.

With His mind in us we live to serve others.

*Prayer:* Father, I too often find myself having more concern with being comfortable than the concern I have for others. Grant me the grace of being able to step outside my comfort zone to serve others, and thereby to serve you. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Out Of Our Mind For Him*

**Message:** There are times that God calls us to live outside of our normal mindset and to live with his mind. It is in God's mind to become whatever he must become, and to do whatever he must do, in order to influence others to receive the grace of reconciliation that he offers.

**Affirmation:** The mind of Christ is not self-centered. It is others-centered. I have the mind of Christ, therefore I must be others-centered.

**Reflection:** Is God calling you outside your comfort zone? Here is one way to tell; when you are praying the idea keeps coming to your mind. Another clue is when you keep seeing that something needs to be done and somebody ought to do it. Pray about it - you might be that somebody.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Eight

## *We Live For His Purposes*

Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. - 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

The message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is not just about him. It is also about we who have believed upon him. When we become born again our old nature passes away and we are born a new person. We die and are raised again, just like Christ's death and resurrection.

When Christ died, we who believe died with him. Now, we no longer live, but it is he who lives in us. The person we were is gone, dead; buried with Christ. Now there is a new person living in us - the Christ person.

Yesterday we looked at our responsibility to warn others of the judgment of God. We looked at moving outside of our comfort zone. Today we are looking at the idea that His life is being lived through us. Because we live His life, His purposes should be lived through us.

Remember; we are not to live for ourselves, but for him. We must become willing to do what he would do if he were literally here on earth today - because he is here; he is in your body and my body. Think about it.

The only way the purposes of Christ can be realized is for His life to be expressed in us and through us. We are to be as dead so that His life may be the life in us.

**Prayer:** Lord, I sometimes forget that I am not my own, but that I am yours. Grant me the grace to live for you and not for my own ideas and ambitions. I commit myself to your service. In Jesus name, amen.

## *We Live For His Purposes*

**Message:** Today we are looking at the idea that His life is being lived through us. Because we live His life, His purposes should be lived through us.

**Affirmation:** I am committed to following Christ so that his purposes can be fulfilled through me.

**Reflection:** In this devotion it is stated, “We must become willing to do what he would do if he were literally here.” What do you think he would do if he were standing here today? Would he join a protest group? Would he be standing on the street corner condemning everyone who didn’t recognize who he was? How should you and I live that would be a reflection of his life and what he would do?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Nine

## *A New Point Of View*

From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come. - 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

All of us are born into a world that revolves around us. Particularly in the first months and early years the world around us revolves around what makes us comfortable. We learn that big people will come running to make us comfortable when we cry.

As we grow older we realize that the world doesn't exactly revolve around us, but we do take advantage of the world around us to get the things we want and to make our life comfortable. All too often that happens in total disregard to how our life affects others.

It is the nature of man to first consider his own desires then if he has any resources left he might think of how he can help others. Some might think that viewpoint to be a bit jaded, but think about it. From our youth we are told that if we are going to make it in this world we have to look out for number one. It's in our DNA.

When we encountered the resurrected Christ our world view was radically changed. The world was no longer about what we wanted and what would make us comfortable. Now we see the world differently. We see the world through the eyes of one who has been recreated.

We look at things differently because we are different - we are a new creation. Our world no longer revolves around our ambition but we have become aware of his will and purposes. We now see Christ and others through a redeemed and reconciled world view.

When we see the world through regenerated eyes we see a much different world. We see a world that needs Jesus.

**Prayer:** Father God, grant me the grace to ever be conscious of the Christ who lives in me. Help me to see the world through your eyes and not through my own ambition. In Jesus name, amen.

## *A New Point Of View*

**Message:** We look at things differently because we are different – we are a new creation. Our world no longer revolves around our ambition but we have become aware of his will and purposes. We now see Christ and others through a redeemed and reconciled world view.

**Affirmation:** I don't look at the world and others like I used to. Now I see them through the eyes of Christ who lives in me. I have a new point of view.

**Reflection:** Wouldn't you expect one who has been "born again" to have a different perspective on the world and life in general? Paul writes, "From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view." What does that mean to you? How would you live out that statement?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Ten

## *The Ministry Of Reconciliation*

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. - 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Reconciliation is a big word, both in size and meaning. In the context of relationship with God it simply means to be restored to God's favor. Being reconciled to God is a "grace point." That is; it is the point at which grace, God's favor, is released to you. We are enabled to reach a grace point by what Christ did for us on the cross.

The effect of Christ's death is that the door to reconciliation with God was opened to those who believe. We who, by our very nature, lived in rebellion toward God, have been given the opportunity to wipe the slate clean by coming to God with the sure knowledge of the work that Christ has done for us and a faith commitment to that work. We have been reconciled to God through faith in Christ.

There is another aspect to being reconciled. It is this; those who have been reconciled to God have the responsibility to tell others of this opportunity. When we receive Christ, and his nature is imputed to us, then we also take on the responsibility of being Christ to the world.

Now that faith has opened the door of grace for us and we have been born again we must tell others of this gift.

**Prayer:** Thank you Father God for the work of Christ in opening the door of reconciliation with you. Now grant me the grace and commitment to carry this message to others. In Jesus name, amen.

## *The Ministry Of Reconciliation*

**Message:** We who, by our very nature, lived in rebellion toward God, have been given the opportunity to wipe the slate clean by coming to God with the sure knowledge of the work that Christ has done for us and a faith commitment to that work. We have been reconciled to God through faith in Christ.

**Affirmation:** I have been reconciled to God through faith in Christ and now I have become a minister of reconciliation.

**Reflection:** There are two points made in this devotion. One is that those of us who have believed in Christ have been reconciled to God. The other is that having been reconciled we now have the responsibility to tell others of this gift of reconciliation. How are you handling your responsibility to tell others?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Eleven

## *Christ's Ambassadors*

We are therefore Christ's Ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. - 2 Corinthians 5:20

In the past few days we have been looking into the effect of what Christ has done for us on the cross. We have also considered the meaning of being reconciled to God. The conclusion is that we who live by faith in Christ are re-born into something new. We are new creations in Christ.

We have become the only visible image of Christ that the world has today. We are the flesh and blood representatives of the kingdom of God - we are ambassadors of Christ. When we accept the gift of God's favor, of being reconciled to right relationship with him, we also accept the responsibility to carry this message of reconciliation to the world.

When we speak we are representing the kingdom of God - our appeal is as if God himself were appealing to mankind. God has placed an awesome responsibility upon us. His whole plan of reaching the world relies upon believers carrying out their duty as ambassadors of reconciliation.

Paul makes reference to this responsibility earlier in this chapter when he writes, "Since we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men" (verse 11). Commit to God today that you will be a faithful ambassador of the kingdom of God.

**Prayer:** Lord, I enjoy my salvation. Being in right relationship with you brings me great peace. But, I need your grace to help me be faithful in my responsibility to others, and to you as an ambassador of your kingdom. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Christ's Ambassadors*

**Message:** We are the flesh and blood representatives of the kingdom of God - we are ambassadors of Christ. When we accept the gift of God's favor, of being reconciled to right relationship with him, we also accept the responsibility to carry this message of reconciliation to the world.

**Affirmation:** I am careful to speak only righteous words because I know that when I speak I am representing the kingdom of God.

**Reflection:** This devotion reminds us that we are to be ambassadors of Christ and of the kingdom of God accessed through faith in Christ. How do you see yourself fulfilling your responsibility as a Christ Ambassador?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twelve

## *Becoming The Righteousness Of God*

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21

The most powerful and eternally significant truth known to mankind is this; He who had no sin became sin for mankind.

In another place Paul writes of him, “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:6-8).

His life cries out, “I did this for you.” His death and blood on the cross cry out, “I did this for you.” His resurrection cries out, “I did this for you.” God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Think about this: Those who, by faith, receive Christ become the righteousness of God – the sinless Christ is imputed to us. The life we live is the Christ life. What we could not do, live righteously, he does through us.

It’s all because he who had no sin was made sin for us. Our life should be forever committed to serving his kingdom in gratitude for what he has done for us.

God's righteousness is manifest in we who believe.

**Prayer:** Thank you for the Christ who became sin that I might be freed from sin. Grant me the grace to live in righteousness. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Becoming The Righteousness Of God*

**Message:** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The life we live is the Christ life. What we could not do, live righteously, he does through us.

**Affirmation:** I am righteous before God, not because of what I have done but because of what Christ has done for me.

**Reflection:** This is the most freeing truth of all time. He who had no sin took upon himself the sins of all mankind so that those who would believe upon him would not have to bear their own sin. Can you explain what this means to you?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Thirteen

## *Do You Produce Good Crops Or Thistles?*

Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. - Hebrews 6:7-8

There are many places in the scripture where people are compared to fields, or crops, and each time the application is something to the effect that good soil produces good crops, and poor soil produces poor crops. This passage is no different.

This passage seems to promise that God will provide all we need to be successful. It tells us that good land will drink in the water falling on it and use it as nourishment to produce a crop. Good soil, that is, people who are good for the kingdom, receives the resources God has to offer and uses them properly to produce the result God intended.

Then there are the fields full of thistles. These fields get the same rain, or resources, but they don't use the resources to produce a good crop. We have all known people like that. These people do not use their resources to benefit the kingdom, but rather use their time, talent, and treasure in pursuit of their own purposes. The result is a wasted and useless life.

We all want to be fertile ground that produces a crop that is the fulfillment of the purposes God has for our life. However, for that to happen we must purpose to allow the Holy Spirit to prepare us to be good soil.

**Prayer:** Lord, I tend to use the resources you have given me for my own benefit first, saving what is left over for you. Help me to live to fulfill your purposes in my life. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Do You Produce Good Crops Or Thistles?*

**Message:** Are you fertile soil producing a good crop, or are you a field covered by thistles and weeds? Do you use your resources to benefit the kingdom, or do you use your time, talent, and treasure in pursuit of your own purposes?

**Affirmation:** I am committed to using the resources God has given me to fulfill his purposes for my life.

**Reflection:** There are several places in the teachings of Jesus where he refers to the life of a person as being a field. There is the parable of the four types of ground the seeds of truth fall into in Matthew 13. There is also the parable of the weeds in the same chapter. Then there is our Scripture for today addressing two types of land. Give some thought to the kind of field you might be.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Fourteen

## *Spirit and Truth Worshipers*

A time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Fathers seeks.

- John 4:23

In one statement Jesus is addressing a number of issues. First, he is responding to the idea that Jews had one place to worship and the Samaritans had another place to worship. Jesus was saying that a time was coming when the place of worship was not important.

The next issue he was addressing is truth. He is saying that when we know God in truth then our worship is effective. Jesus was telling this woman, and all who read this passage, that acceptable worship is based upon truth.

Another issue was the issue of worshipping in spirit. Some have taken this to apply to the Holy Spirit, and I suppose there is an application to that, but most scholars agree that the primary application is to the spirit of man. It is the part of man that is emotional, feeling and decisive. When we say someone is spirited we are saying that they put themselves into activities with emotion and drive.

Jesus was saying that the time has come when God is looking for people who have a sincere desire for him and worship him, that is, live for him with abandon. God has called us to live so that we are a living vessel of worship. We must choose to live to worship Him.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the desire to seek to know you in truth and to worship you with all of my being. I tend to compartmentalize my life into personal and spiritual. Grant me the grace to focus first on you and trust you for the rest. In Jesus Name, amen.

## *Spirit and Truth Worshippers*

**Message:** God is looking for people who have a sincere desire for him and worship him, that is, live for him with abandon. God has called us to live so that we are a living vessel of worship. We must choose to live to worship Him.

**Affirmation:** I have chosen to live for the glory of God. I know truth, and I am learning truth as I worship him in Spirit and truth.

**Reflection:** What do you think it means to live a life centered upon the truth of God and worshipping him in Spirit and truth? Is just knowing the truth enough, or must a person worship in truth? What does that mean? What does it mean to worship in spirit?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Fifteen

## *Do Not Be Afraid When You Sin*

“Do not be afraid,” Samuel replied. “You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless.” - 1 Samuel 12:20-21

Here is a rebuke, an admonishment to be faithful, and a hope for the future. Samuel acknowledges that Israel has done a lot of evil, and he rebukes them for that, but in the middle of that he says, “Yet, do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart.” The call to turn back to the Lord implies that God will be there to receive them.

God is faithful – even to the disobedient. There is a passage in 2 Timothy that says, “If we are faithless, he will remain faithful.” God’s faithfulness is not determined by our response; it is determined by his nature. When God calls us into his family he will remain faithful to receive us back when our waywardness has drawn us away from him.

Israel had a problem of handling prosperity. Every time God blessed them they used the blessing as an opportunity to turn to idols that allowed them to live out their physical desires and didn’t hold them accountable. The problem was that those idols were powerless and could not help them in any way. Do not turn away from God to useless things that will only lead to destruction.

Remember: He is faithful – renew your commitment to be faithful to him.

**Prayer:** Father, my failings are all too often, but you have never failed me. Grant me the grace to always turn to you when I fall. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Do Not Be Afraid When You Sin*

**Message:** God's faithfulness is not determined by our response; it is determined by his nature. When God calls us into his family he will remain faithful to receive us back when our waywardness has drawn us away from him. Do not turn away from God to useless things that will only lead to destruction. Remember: He is faithful - renew your commitment to be faithful to him.

**Affirmation:** God has shown himself faithful and that inspires me to faithfulness. When I do fail, I trust him to restore me because his love is everlasting.

**Reflection:** It would be good to read the entire chapter of 2 Samuel 12. Samuel is reminding the people that he has faithfully served God and the people, but they have not always been faithful. In that context he says, "Do not be afraid." How does this devotion speak to the faithfulness of God?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Sixteen

## *The Lord Will Not Forsake You*

For the sake of his great name the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own.

- 1 Samuel 12:22

In the time of this writing it was not unusual that people believed in a god. In fact, every kingdom and every village had their gods that they served. They gave their gods credit for the good things that happened to them and blamed the wrath of their gods for the bad things that happened.

The Lord had led Israel to understand that there was but one God and the names by which he revealed himself were representative of his greatness. It was because of his greatness that his name was great, and God values the reputation of his name.

God was reminding Israel that It was for his glory, not their worthiness, that he would not forsake them. God will not reject you - it is a matter of honor. It is a matter of God's honor, not ours, not to reject us when we fall.

It was God's choice to make you his own; rejoice in his choice and submit to his calling. God has chosen you. Submit to what he has revealed to be his will and you will continue in his favor. Reject what he has revealed to be his will and he will put discipline on you to bring you back to him. It is a matter of our choice.

It was God's choice to make you his own - rejoice in his choice and submit to his calling.

**Prayer:** Lord, teach me to respect your great name. Help me to understand that when I disrespect you, and your work toward me, that I am disrespecting you before the world and affecting your reputation in the world. In Jesus name, amen.

## *The Lord Will Not Forsake You*

**Message:** It is for his glory, not our worthiness, that he will not forsake us. God will not reject you - it is a matter of honor. It is a matter of God's honor, not ours, to not reject us when we fall.

**Affirmation:** The Lord will not forsake me, even when I fall. He will always be there to lift me up. He will not leave me neither will he forsake me.

**Reflection:** The Scripture for today points out that it is a point of honor to God not to reject those he has called. Jesus repeats this concept in John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." God has chosen us to follow him and it is our choice to accept or reject him, but he will never reject us.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Seventeen

## ***Teach The Way That Is Good***

As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right. - 1 Samuel 12:23

We are a community of believers who have put our hope in the Lord God. As a community of believers we have a responsibility, not only to God, but to one another as well.

Samuel believed that principle so strongly that he said, "Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you." He believed he was sinning against God by not praying for his people.

It is the responsibility of every believer to be prayerful for other believers - especially those who are in error. We have all known people who stumble along the way, and we have known people who take that occasion to disown the fallen person placing a judgment upon their actions. That attitude leads to breaking down of the sense of community that we are to have with other believers.

When we see someone struggling, or even if they are failing in their faith walk, we should minister life to them and teach them the way that is good and right. We are to make the effort to teach the true paths - in words and by our example.

Remember; God chose us, even when we were unworthy and we should choose to serve others as well. We are our brothers' keeper. It is the responsibility of every believer to be prayerful for others - especially those who are in error. When pray for others God gives us strength for the journey.

***Prayer:*** Lord, help me to be more concerned with seeing my brother restored than in seeing him face the judgment. Grant me a heart to teach the true paths in word and example. In Jesus name, amen.

## ***Teach The Way That Is Good***

***Message:*** It is the responsibility of every believer to be prayerful for other believers – especially those who are in error. When we see someone struggling, or even if they are failing in their faith walk, we should minister life to them and teach them the way that is good and right. We are to make the effort to teach the true paths – in words and by our example.

***Affirmation:*** I will not sin against the Lord by failing to pray for others and by the example of my life. I pray for those God has placed in my life and I live so that they may see Christ in me.

***Reflection:*** Have you thought about your responsibility to those God places in your path? You are not responsible for the way they respond to the message of Christ, but you are responsible to pray for them and to share the message with them.

***My Thoughts:***

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Day Eighteen

## *Serve God With Enthusiasm*

Be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.

- 1 Samuel 12:24

The concept of the fear of the Lord is often spoken of and all too often misunderstood. The fear of the Lord is not the same as the fear we have of the neighborhood bully who may shower his wrath on us at any time without just cause. The fear of the Lord is having an appropriate respect for him, his power, and his sovereignty.

It is much the same as the fear we have of electricity. I do not fear to use electricity, or to trust what it can do for me. In fact, electricity powers the machine that is printing this even as I write. However, I would never stick two wires in an outlet and touch them to my tongue just to prove that electricity has no power over me.

That is the way we fear the Lord. The fear of the Lord will inspire us to serve him faithfully, and to use his valuable resources to fulfill his purposes for our life. Because we fear the Lord we are respectful of all his benefits - and of all his commands.

Fearing the Lord in this manner does not focus on what might happen if we don't serve him well, but rather remembers the great things God has done for us. Remembering the great things God has done for us causes us to be thankful and to respect him.

**Prayer:** Father, I fear you in a healthy way. I respect what you have done, and what you will do as I walk in faithfulness to you. Grant me the ability to look at you as a just benefactor, and not just an angry judge. Amen.

## *Serve God With Enthusiasm*

**Message:** That is the way we fear the Lord. The fear of the Lord will inspire us to serve him faithfully, and to use his valuable resources to fulfill his purposes for our life. Because we fear the Lord we are respectful of all his benefits – and of all his commands.

**Affirmation:** The fear, or reverence, of the Lord is a core value I hold. I am respectful of all his benefits and of all his commands.

**Reflection:** Give some thought to the idea of the fear of the Lord. What does that mean to you? Would you be able to explain that to someone who says, “How can you say that God loves you and demands that you fear him at the same time?”

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Nineteen

## *Many Walking As One*

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. - 1 Corinthians 1:10

One leader coined this phrase, “appeasement only makes the aggressor more aggressive.” There is no place where that statement is more true than in religion. A divided people is the result of trying to compromise rather than coming to agreement.

It is easier to throw our hands up and give in than it is to pray an issue through together. When we are using human reason to come to agreement we will always have to come to a compromise that will eventually divide us. When we pray an issue through until both sides are submitted to the truth that God reveals on the issue, then we have harmony.

Agreeing on an issue brings unity in what we speak and in what we think. How do we come to agreement without compromise when we have such a variety of opinions? We can only be in agreement when we are purposed to pursue God and God alone.

Jesus said, “If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for it will be done for you” (Matthew 18:19). Pray it through until you come to agreement - then God will bless it.

**Prayer:** Lord, I have compromised for the sake of a project so many times. Now I pray that you grant me the grace to seek your will on issues until there is agreement. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Many Walking As One*

**Message:** Jesus said, “If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for it will be done for you” (Matthew 18:19). Pray it through until you come to agreement – then God will bless it. Agreeing on an issue brings unity in what we speak and in what we think.

**Affirmation:** I realize that walking in unity does not mean I must compromise basic truth. It does mean that I must be agreeable even among those with whom I disagree.

**Reflection:** How can we be in unity with those who disagree with us on some issues without compromising the truth? What does it mean to “pray an issue through until both sides are submitted to the truth that God reveals on the issue?”

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty

## *Spurring One Another On*

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.

- Hebrews 10:24-25

We are living in a time when people are falling away from the faith because they have not built a support system for their faith. The writer here at least implies that regularly meeting with other believers is critical to continuing in the faith.

We are being encouraged to consider how we can prevent this from happening. We must consider this: How can I inspire others to love more and serve better? To do this we have to get our mind off of our own needs and look to the needs of others. When we are asking, “What can I do help someone else in their journey of faith,” we are actually helping ourselves in our journey at the same time.

As times become hard it becomes all the more important to encourage one another in the faith. When others are in times of financial difficulty we need to consider how we can encourage them; when others are having relationship problems we need ask ourselves how we can serve them; when we see someone becoming distant in their faith we must find a way to “Spur them on to love and good deeds.

***Prayer:*** Lord, I tend to look at others in terms of what they can do for me. Grant me the grace to look at others in terms of what I can do for them. Help m to purposes to spur others on to love and good deeds. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Spurring One Another On*

**Message:** We must consider this: How can I inspire others to love more and serve better? To do this we have to get our mind off of our own needs and look to the needs of others. When we are asking, “What can I do help someone else in their journey of faith,” we are actually helping ourselves in our journey at the same time.

**Affirmation:** I am intentional about encouragers in their faith journey and I am also intentional about gathering with other believers to build up my own faith.

**Reflection:** Our Scripture passage, Hebrews 10:24-25, has two messages. First, consider how we can encourage others in their journey of faith. Second, we are encouraged to continue meeting together so that our own faith will be reinforced. How do you see those two things being worked out in your life?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty One

## *Naomi... The Pleasant One*

Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Nahlon and Killion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

- Ruth 1:6-7

The test of a persons' character is how they respond to difficulty and tragedy. Naomi was certainly put to the test.

This woman, whose name means pleasant, went with her husband to a foreign land when they were trying to survive a famine. There they did well until her husband died. Not long after he died her two sons also died leaving her with two daughters-in-law to care for and support.

Naomi was truly a pleasant one. There was an integrity of character in her that she had been instilling in her daughters-in-law. When she told them they must return to their families they replied, "We will go back with you to your people." When we display godly character others will want to follow us.

We cannot avoid hardship in this life, but we can allow hardship to bring out the character of Christ in us. As long as we are looking at the hardship and bemoaning the fate that has come to us we will miss the best that God has for us.

Look for a chance to display the character of Christ in every tragedy and you will lead others to Christ as they see His character in you.

**Prayer:** Lord, I look at the example of Naomi and I feel that I fall far short of what you would have me to be. Grant me the character of Christ. Amen.



Day Twenty Two

## ***Ruth... The Submitted One***

Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” - Ruth 1:16

Things had not turned out as Ruth had expected. She was young, pretty and married in a good family; then tragedy struck. Her father-in-law, the leader of the little clan died first, then shortly afterward her husband and his brother died, leaving only Ruth, her sister-in-law and her mother-in-law, Naomi.

Now she is a widow in a family devastated by tragedy. What would she do? How could she survive? With all of these things happening Naomi tells her to go home to her family.

That wouldn’t work for Ruth. She had made a commitment to her new family. Her cry became, “Don’t urge me to leave you.” Her commitment was, “Where you go I will go... Your people will be my people and your God my God.” It is a wise person who commits themselves to people of character.

Ruth’s commitment to Naomi is a display of the valuable character trait of loyalty. There is no greater friend than one that is not influenced by circumstances and the opinion of others.

Loyalty is tested by hardship and when it is practiced it becomes a quality that releases many blessings – blessings from the Lord and blessings from others. Make loyalty to your friends a priority.

***Prayer:*** Lord, Loyalty is a character trait that I need to practice more often. Grant me the grace to see the value of maintaining relationships even when it seems that the cost is greater than the benefit. Amen.

## ***Ruth... The Submitted One***

***Message:*** There is no greater friend than one that is not influenced by circumstances and the opinion of others. Loyalty is tested by hardship and when it is practiced it becomes a quality that releases many blessings – blessings from the Lord and blessings from others. Make loyalty to your friends a priority.

***Affirmation:*** Loyalty is a gift and when possessed it leads to great blessing from God and from others. I am committed to being loyal, first to God then to other believers he places in my life.

***Reflection:*** How is loyalty to God and loyalty to our relationship with others related? Give some thought to the reasons Ruth committed herself to Naomi. How was Ruth rewarded for her commitment to Naomi?

***My Thoughts:***

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Day Twenty Three

## *Mara... The Bitter One*

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?” “Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full but the Lord has brought me back empty. - Ruth 1:19-21

If anyone should be down on life it would be Naomi. In a foreign land, a widow, her sons are gone, and a daughter-in-law who refuses to leave her. What can she do now? She can go back home.

Going home required courage. She had left full and was coming back empty. Life had not been fair and she had little hope for the future.

Hardships can make us bitter or better – the difference is how we look at the future.

Naomi was seeking out the comfort of home while she worked out the details of her future. The devotions of the next two days reveal the blessing that was building in her through her emptiness. God will sometimes empty us so that he can fill us with a blessing that only he can provide.

Don’t stop the clock at the point of tragedy and declare that there is no use going on. Don’t let yesterday’s challenge become tomorrow’s prison. God will use your emptiness to produce a much greater thing than you could have produced on your own.

Trust God for the future and use your hardships to make you better instead of bitter.

**Prayer:** Lord, like everyone else I know, I have faced hardship in this life, and I haven’t always faced them with faith. Grant me the grace to trust you, even when the future looks bleak. Amen.



## *Mara... The Bitter One*

**Message:** Hardships can make us bitter or better – the difference is how we look at the future. Don't stop the clock at the point of tragedy and declare that there is no use going on. Don't let yesterday's challenge become tomorrow's prison. Trust God for the future and use your hardships to make you better instead of bitter.

**Affirmation:** My faith is based in God and his grace. I will not let hardships define me. I am allowing God to shape me into his image as I endure and mature through life.

**Reflection:** What do you think is meant by, “God will sometimes empty us so that he can fill us with a blessing that only he can provide”? How did God use Naomi's hardship to ultimately lead her into blessing?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Four

## *Boaz... The Kinsman Redeemer*

“The Lord bless him!” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. “He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.” She added, “That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers.” - Ruth 2:20

God had made a provision in the law to handle just such a situation that Naomi and Ruth faced. It was called the kinsman-redeemer. Simply stated this law allowed a close relative to marry the childless widow of his relative and the firstborn son would bear the family name of the dead husband. The child would legally be the son of the deceased and all of the benefits, property, etc. of the family would be inherited by this son.

In this story, Boaz was the kinsman-redeemer. He was both a close relative and a wealthy land owner. God had led Ruth to glean the fields owned by this man, even though she did not have a clue as to who he was and she had never heard of the law of the kinsman-redeemer; but Naomi had.

When Naomi heard that Ruth was gleaning in the fields of Boaz, and that he had given her favor, she began to realize that God was working to restore her fruitfulness and reward her faithfulness.

God has prepared people who will come into our lives to be the bearers of his blessing and his will for our lives. We must be diligent to see and hear what opportunities he is bringing to us.

**Prayer:** Father, grant me the wisdom to look beyond my circumstances and see how that you are arranging my life so that you can reveal your purposes for me. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Boaz... The Kinsman Redeemer*

**Message:** God has prepared people who will come into our lives to be the bearers of his blessing and his will for our lives. We must be diligent to see and hear what opportunities he is bringing to us.

**Affirmation:** I recognize that God is trying to lead me into a blessing and diligently look and listen so that I won't miss his blessing.

**Reflection:** Do you understand the principle of the kinsman-redeemer? Simply stated it is when a man dies before his wife bears a son to carry his name then the next of kin will take the woman to be his wife and the first son born will carry the name of the man who died. Some have seen a connection with Jesus as our kinsman-redeemer. Can you see that connection?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Five

## *Obed... A Child Of Promise*

Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. - Ruth 4:16

Naomi had been on quite a journey. Her family left Bethlehem, moving to the land of Moab in a time of famine. In that land she lost everything and returned to Bethlehem empty. All she returned with was a daughter-in-law.

By now you know the story. Ruth and Boaz were married and soon there was a child. According to the law of the kinsman-redeemer, this new born would be considered the grandson of Naomi and heir to all that her family had.

But this son was more than that. He was Obed, the father of Jesse and Jesse was the father of David. Obed was the grandfather of David, the great king of Israel.

There's more to the story. Boaz, Ruth and Obed are mentioned in the lineage of Christ. Think about what that means. Naomi's tragedy in a foreign land and bringing back to Bethlehem her widowed, childless daughter-in-law, Ruth - all of this was part of God's greater plan.

Sometimes God's purposes are not revealed for generations yet to be born and our faithfulness is critical to his purposes being accomplished.

***Prayer:*** I sometimes forget that your plan is bigger than me and extends far beyond my own life span. Grant me the grace to trust you and to see your hand at work even in tough times. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Obed... A Child Of Promise*

**Message:** Naomi's tragedy in a foreign land and bringing back to Bethlehem her widowed, childless daughter-in-law, Ruth - all of this was part of God's greater plan. Sometimes God's purposes are not revealed for generations yet to be born and our faithfulness is critical to his purposes being accomplished.

**Affirmation:** I can endure hardship and tragedy because I know God will turn them into an opportunity for blessing.

**Reflection:** If it had not been for the hardship Naomi endured this vital link in lineage of Christ might not have been made. We should be faithful to God, even in difficult times because we don't know what God is doing through us to affect future generations.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Six

## *Diligently Study The Word*

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. - 2 Timothy 2:15

When I was in college we would go down to skid row and hold street meetings. We would stand on a street corner on a Friday night and preach our hearts out to passersby. One night one of the young men with us was ready to “preach the word of God” to the heathen he saw in skid row.

He demonstrated his grasp on the scripture when he rather arrogantly declared, “Said but true, you must be born again.” He then turned, with a smug look on his face that said, “I told them,” and walked away.

That young man knew the word of God, but he did know how to correctly handle the word of truth. We must learn to use the word of God correctly so that it becomes a tool of instruction and encouragement rather a tool of condemnation.

A disciplined study of the Bible will give you a good understanding of God’s plan. Spend time reading the Bible, then meditate upon what you have read. Ask God, “What does this mean to me today?”

Study the word of God to gain insight into his nature. When you begin to understand the nature of God you will be able to understand his plan much better and finding his will for your own life will be less difficult.

**Prayer:** Help me to study your word until I know how you intend it to be used so that I might influence others to follow you. Also help me study your word so that I can better understand how to apply it's truths to my own life. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Diligently Study The Word*

**Message:** Study the word of God to gain insight into his nature. When you begin to understand the nature of God you will be able to understand his plan much better and finding his will for your own life will be less difficult

**Affirmation:** As I study God's word I understand him better and his plan for my life becomes more clear.

**Reflection:** This devotion shows the need to not only know what the Bible says but it also encourages us to get a deeper understanding of what it means and how to apply it to ourselves and those who would hear us. This devotional is designed to be a tool to help you to not only read God's word but to think upon it's teachings. I encourage you to think through the thoughts given here and then to journal your thoughts.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Seven

## *Be A Noble Vessel*

In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the master and prepared to do any good work. - 2 Timothy 2:20-21

We have many vessels in our house. Some are for cooking, some for show, and some are for less noble purposes. We have some vessels that we use for the garbage, and some we use to eat from; we would never get the two of them confused.

Paul is using the illustration of different kinds of vessels to remind us that the Father has called us to be noble vessels – of the quality of silver and gold. We would never think of using a fine golden vase as a place to put trash, and that is what Paul is warning us about.

In this metaphor of houses and vessels, we, in our natural state are broken vessels, vessels used for ignoble purposes. God has taken our brokenness, our rags as it were, and in exchange he has given us his glory and his wholeness. As we cleanse our life of behaviors that are less than noble, God makes us holy.

God has noble plans for all of us and we must cleanse ourselves of every activity that is less than noble so that we may be prepared to do his will.

**Prayer:** Lord, my problem is that I keep allowing this cherished vessel that you have invested in to be used for purposes that are less than noble. Grant me the grace to live worthy of being a vessel of honor for you. Amen.



## *Be A Noble Vessel*

**Message:** God has taken our brokenness, our rags as it were, and in exchange he has given us his glory and his wholeness. As we cleanse our life of behaviors that are less than noble, God makes us holy. God has noble plans for all of us and we must cleanse ourselves of every activity that is less than noble so that we may be prepared to do his will.

**Affirmation:** Daily I work at preparing myself to be an honorable vessel, cleaned and ready for the master's use.

**Reflection:** In this passage Paul uses the different types of vessels used in our homes to illustrate the kind of vessels we might be for the master's use. What would you think is the difference between a "noble" vessel and an "ignoble" vessel? How does one become a noble vessel?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Eight

## *Don't Argue - Be Kind*

Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

- 2 Timothy 2:23-24

I have a friend who some have said is a very negative person. He was telling me one time that people keep telling him that he is too negative and he responded, "I am not negative, I am positive. I positively believe that if you don't do it my way you will go to hell." Needless to say, this man often had to argue his way out of many situations.

Arguments do not come from knowing you are right, but from trying to get others to agree that you are right. Arguments lead to bad feelings between friends and brothers and they will produce resentment.

Paul is instructing Timothy on some of the finer points of being a leader. There are times when a leader must look at the bigger picture and realize that reaching the goal of encouraging another is more important than contending for a point in an argument.

A wise servant of the Lord will be kind to everyone, gently teaching kingdom principles. The truth we have is of no value to others if we present it in such a way that it causes resentment.

Practice teaching the truth with kindness.

**Prayer:** Father, grant me a gentle spirit so that I can teach others your way and lead them into your righteousness. Give me the wisdom to teach the truth with kindness. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Don't Argue - Be Kind*

**Message:** There are times when a leader must look at the bigger picture and realize that reaching the goal of encouraging another is more important than contending for a point in an argument. A wise servant of the Lord will be kind to everyone, gently teaching kingdom principles.

**Affirmation:** Helping others understand the principles behind Scriptural doctrine is more important than trying to convince them I am right.

**Reflection:** One reason that there are thousands of denominations in Christianity is because so many people feel like everyone else should agree them on their “hobby horse” doctrines. Paul is addressing that issue in this passage of Scripture. Think of some ways you can teach without being negative about other people.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Nine

## *Learn Gentle Instruction*

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

- 2 Timothy 2:25-26

The goal is not just to present the truth, but to have others accept the truth. The godly teacher is more interested in winning people to Christ than he is in being an eloquent teacher.

Notice that Paul, in this passage, puts repentance before understanding the truth. That is interesting because we usually think of truth being the vehicle that brings folks to Christ. But here he is saying that gentle instruction will lead to repentance.

The test of a man's ability to teach God's truth is not in the beauty of his words but in the response of those he is teaching. Most people don't need to hear that they are a sinner, they already know that. They need to know how that has affected them and how they can remedy it.

People want to know how they can make their life work better and we know the answer; faith in Christ. When people are presented with the hope of Christ a spark of faith is ignited and they become candidates for repentance and escaping the trap of the devil.

Learn to present the truth gently.

**Prayer:** Father, help me to keep the goal of bringing others to repentance ever in my mind. Grant me the wisdom to present the hope of Christ in such a way that others receive him. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Learn Gentle Instruction*

**Message:** Our goal should not be just to present the truth, but to have others accept the truth. The test of a man's ability to teach God's truth is not in the beauty of his words but in the response of those he is teaching. The godly teacher is more interested in winning people to Christ than he is in being an eloquent teacher.

**Affirmation:** I am committed to presenting the gospel message in such a way that others are attracted to the hope it offers.

**Reflection:** People want to know how they can make their life work better and they aren't too interested in doctrine. Do not fail to present Jesus as the answer regardless of what the needs are.

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Thirty

## *Becoming A Power Witness*

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. - Acts 1:8

Some people mistake the ability to witness, or share Christ, with the power of a Spirit filled witness. Being a witness with power is not the same as having the ability to speak about Christ.

There is a story in the book of Acts of some men who were impressed when they saw the apostles doing great miracles in the name of Jesus and tried to cast out a demon in the name of Jesus. The demon cried out, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" (Acts 19:15). The evil spirit then attacked them and beat them severely.

There is a difference between knowing the name of Jesus and being filled with the Holy Spirit through faith in that name. God has given the command to every believer, "Be filled with the Holy Spirit."

When a person is filled with the Holy Spirit there is power in their witness that convicts the unbeliever. Just this morning I saw the power witness of a Spirit filled life. A young man gave his heart to the Lord because of the witness of another young man whose life he had seen changed by the power of God.

Your witness must be more than the words you speak. Words alone will not cause people to change. To be effective our witness must be filled with power. "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

**Prayer:** Lord, make me a power witness by filling me with your Holy Spirit. Fill me daily with your Spirit. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Becoming A Power Witness*

**Message:** Some people mistake the ability to witness, or share Christ, with the power of a Spirit filled witness. When a person is filled with the Holy Spirit there is power in their witness that convicts the unbeliever.

**Affirmation:** I not only want to witness to others about Christ but I want my witness to be empowered by the Holy Spirit so that those who hear will be convicted and receive Christ.

**Reflection:** What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What are some of the evidences or signs that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit? How has the Holy Spirit affected your life?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Thirty One

## *Signs That Confirm The Word*

“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation”.... The disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. - Mark 16:15-20

God has called believers to make a difference in the world. When a person believes in Christ and has been born again, their life is to be different; and that difference is to be such that it affects the world around them.

A test of whether a person is a Spirit filled believer is what takes place when they share the gospel. The disciples believed, were filled with the Holy Spirit, then went out preaching the gospel. What was the result? “The Lord confirmed his words with signs.”

Too many people are facing discouraging results when they witness because it was not explained to them that the power is not in the speaking but in the work of the Holy Spirit when we speak.

One primary reason we are filled with the Holy Spirit is for our words and our lives are to be a witness to the power of God. God will confirm his word when spoken by a person anointed by the Holy Spirit.

I would encourage you to seek God for a filling of his Spirit, then live in expectation of him confirming your witness with supernatural signs.

When you have prayed for power then go to places where the power is needed. You will find Holy Spirit power waiting for you there.

**Prayer:** Lord, I think most of my witnessing is in my own ability. Grant me a new baptism of the Holy Spirit that I might be a powerful witness for the glory of God. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Signs That Confirm The Word*

**Message:** Many people are facing discouraging results when they witness because it was not explained to them that the power is not in the speaking but in the work of the Holy Spirit when we speak. Seek God for a filling of his Spirit, then live in expectation of him confirming your witness with supernatural signs. When you have prayed for power then go to places where the power is needed. You will find Holy Spirit power waiting for you there.

**Affirmation:** I regularly pray for Holy Spirit power to accompany my witness and confirm the truth of the message with signs.

**Reflection:** A test of whether you are filled with the Spirit is in the effect your witness has on others. A Spirit filled witness will produce results. Is your witness Spirit filled?

**My Thoughts:**

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