

PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

I. Purpose of the Course

Teach students the supreme value of heart devotion to Christ. Practical applications. Academic excellence, though desirable, fruitless apart from Christ-centered life. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

Quotations

"A laborer can be subtly steered away from being Christ-centered to being ministry-centered With the immensity of the task, it can be easy to shift from Christ Himself to Christ's work. That change contains the seeds of disaster." Navigator Magazine.

"Possible to have well trained but barren graduates."

"A chilling orthodoxy without a living Christ."

"Scriptural knowledge however profound and extensive, Biblical Criticism however accurate and valuable, may leave the heart barren, and the affections cold. Our great need is to find the Lord Jesus Christ in the Word, and having found Him to feed on Him by faith." C. H. MacIntosh.

Dr. Boice - in Eternity, March 1986: "In a recent survey of a theological college in the United States 93 per cent of those students preparing for the ministry confessed to no devotional life at all. It is a sad situation. Without deep communion with God, preaching lacks power and will inevitably be despised."

II. Topics to be Discussed (among others)

1. Christ, the believer's life.
2. The prayer life.
3. The place of the Word of God.
4. Victory over sin - God's provision.
5. Victory over self-effort.
6. God's provision for holiness - the Holy Spirit.
7. The Christian's body.
8. Chastening by God.
9. Christian suffering.
10. Living in the will of God.
11. Victory over the world.
12. Victory over Satan.
13. Victory over worry-depression.
14. The Christian home.
15. God's teaching about finances.
16. Broken before God.
17. Summary - examination explained.
18. Guest speakers - personal testimonies - occasionally.

III. Books

A. Required Reading

Absolute Surrender - Andrew Murray
 Prayer - E. M. Bounds
 Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret
 (These books provided at cost - \$5.00)

B. Required Term Paper

Five or six pages - any book on following list.

C. Recommended Reading

True Spirituality - Francis Schaeffer
 Celebration of Discipline - Richard Foster

D. Books for Term Paper

The Prayer Life - Andrew Murray
 The Inner Life - Andrew Murray
 Life in the Holiest - Andrew Murray
 With Christ in the School of Prayer - Andrew Murray
 The Fruit of the Spirit - Sanderson
 The Ministry of the Spirit - Gordon
 He That Is Spiritual - Chafer
 Holiness : True and False - Ironside
 Holiness - J. C. Ryle
 Conformed to His Image - Chambers
 Changed by Beholding Him - Conant
 Not I but Christ - Hession
 The Calvary Road - Hession
 The Knowledge of the Holy - Tozer
 The Pursuit of God - Tozer
 The Christ Life for the Self-Life - F. B. Meyer
 The Holiness of God - R. C. Sproul
 Memoirs of R. McChesney - Bonar
 How to Keep a Spiritual Journal - R. Klug
 The Normal Christian Life - Nee
 The Minister's Inner Life - Burnout

IV. The Church at Ephesus. Revelation 2:1-7. A Key Passage.

Reveals supreme importance of heart-devotion to Christ.

A. The risen Christ examines the church. Revelation 2:1-

His authority. Ephesians 1:22, Revelation 2:1.

Eyes of fire. Revelation 1:14.

Searching. Revelation 2:23, Hebrews 4:13.

B. Christ tells what He knows - as result of examination.

His wisdom. Colossians 2:3, Romans 11:33.

1. Thy works - commendable, varied.

2. Thy labor - long hours, trials, denials.

3. Thy patience - so necessary. 2 Corinthians 6:4.

4. Hatred of sin - like Christ. Hebrews 1:9.
- discipline.

5. Separated from false apostles - discerning.

6. Suffering - hast borne - even martyrdom - patiently.

7. Defending the name of Christ. 1 John 4:1-3.

8. No thought of turning back - 'hast not fainted'.

C. His judgment - so different from expected.

1. He is against this church. v. 4.

2. Church in a fallen condition. v. 5 - yet how much in favor.

3. About to lose its light (testimony). v. 5.

D. The supreme need - not met - heart devotion to Christ.

Thou hast left (not lost) thy first love. v. 4.

What had happened? A gradual drift from love to Christ to activity for Christ - work centered.

Distance - widened - between worker and Christ.

Christ feels this keenly. Marriage analogy.

Spurgeon: "Let not even the gifts Thy love bestows
estrangle my heart from Thee O Christ."

R. M. McCheyne: "Secret of his life of blessing was daily
enlargement in the presence of the Lord
Jesus Christ." Bonar.

Christ's question to Peter: "Do you love me?" John 21:15-17.

V. Individual Responsibility.

Remember, repent, do the first works. v. 5.

He that hath an ear - let him hear what the spirit saith. v. 7.

VI. Christ, the Believer's Life.

A. God's perfect provision - Christ.

Philippians 1:20
Galatians 2:20
Colossians 1:27
Colossians 3:4
2 Corinthians 4:7
1 John 4:4
Prayer of Christ - John 17:21-23

B. Christ's life in us illustrated.

John 15:1 - Christ, true vine. See Isaiah 5:1-7.
John 15:2 - Purging, more fruit.
John 15:4-7 - Call to abide.

C. Holy Spirit and abiding.

Ephesians 1:15-17
Ephesians 3:16-19
1 John 2:27

D. Christ's prayer.

John 17:21-23

E. How to abide.

1. Faith - Galatians 2:20
2. Put on Christ - Ephesians 4:21-24
 - Romans 13:13-14
 - John 6:57

F. A constant quest.

2 Peter 3:18
Philippians 3:10

G. Confidence.

1 John 2:28

VII. The Prayer Life.

A. The Lord Jesus Christ. Our example to follow.
1 John 2:6, 1 Peter 2:4.

B. He devoted much time to prayer. Luke 6:12.

C. Why this need for fellowship with God? Christ sinless.

- D. He made time for prayer. Matthew 14:23, John 6:15, Luke 5:15-16
Mark 1:32-35 - see Daniel 6:10, Psalm 55:17.
- E. Morning was a favorite time. Isaiah 50:4, Mark 1:32-35.
- F. The hidden life nourished. Jeremiah 17:8, 2 Corinthians 4:16.
- G. Events came to pass because of preceding prayer.

Luke 3:21-22
Mark 1:21-34
Luke 5:15-16
John 6:15-27
Luke 6:12-13
Luke 9:18
Matthew 16:14-17
Luke 9:28-29
John 11:41-42
Luke 22:31-32
Matthew 26:37-39
John 18:11
Luke 23:34
John 14:16-17
Hebrews 7:25

II. Apostle Paul's prayer for others.

Acts 13:3-4
Acts 16:25
Acts 20:36
Acts 21:3-5
Acts 28:8
Romans 1:9-11
Romans 10:1
1 Corinthians 1:4
Ephesians 1:16-20
Ephesians 3:14-19
Philippians 1:3-4
Philippians 1:9
Colossians 1:3
Colossians 1:9-11
1 Thessalonians 1:2
1 Thessalonians 3:10
1 Thessalonians 5:23
2 Thessalonians 1:3
2 Timothy 1:3
2 Timothy 4:16

I. Apostle Paul's requests for himself.

Romans 15:30-32
 2 Corinthians 1:11
 Ephesians 6:18-20
 Philippians 1:19
 Colossians 4:2
 1 Thessalonians 5:25
 2 Thessalonians 3:1
 Philemon 22

J. Prayer for missionaries.

Matthew 9:36-38
 Missionary "scrapbook"
 Christmas cards as prayer list

VIII. The Place of the Word of God.

A. Christ our example. Luke 2:52.

B. He believed Old Testament scriptures.

John 10:35
 Matthew 5:18

C. The disputed miracles.

Numbers 21:5-9 with John 3:14-16.
 Jonah with Matthew 12:40.
 Manna (Exodus 16:21-35) with John 6:49-50.
 Noah's Ark (Genesis 7-8) with Matthew 24:37-39.

D. He saw Himself in the Word.

John 5:39
 Luke 4:18-21 with Isaiah 61:1-2
 Luke 24:25-27, 44-45 (resurrected Christ)

E. He saw current events in light of scripture.

Matthew 13:14-15 with Isaiah 6:9-10
 Matthew 15:7-8 with Isaiah 29:13
 Matthew 21:15-16 with Psalm 82
 Matthew 21:42 with Psalm 118:23
 Matthew 26:31 with Zechariah 13:7
 John 15:23-24 with Psalm 69:4

- F. He used scripture as a defense against Satan. Matthew 4:1-11.
- G. Scriptures the basis of His actions. Matthew 21:13 with Isaiah 56:7.
- H. He used the scriptures addressing God:

Matthew 11:25 with Psalm 8:2
 Matthew 27:46 with Psalm 22:1
 Luke 23:46 with Psalm 31:5
 Acts 4:23-31 with Psalm 2 (Early church)

- I. He taught no higher testimony than scriptures. Luke 16:23-31.
- J. Our application: Psalm 1:2, Jeremiah 17:7-8.

IX. Victory Over Sin - God's Provision.

Chapter for Christians. Emancipation. Is this a need?
 Ask own heart.

- A. The basic question: Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound. Romans 5:20.
- B. The scriptural answer: Dead men do not sin. Romans 6:2, 6:7.
 When did death to sin take place?

Romans 6:3 - 1 Corinthians 12:13
 Romans 6:5
 Romans 6:6
 1 Peter 2:24 Our sins
 Galatians 2:20 Ourselves
 Colossians 3:3-4
 2 Peter 1:4

- C. Three key words:

v. 6 - Knowing - it is a fact.
 v. 11 - Reckon - count on it.
 v. 13 - Yield - no longer to sin but to God.

- D. Refuse to recognize sin's dominion. Romans 6:14.

Romans 13:14
 Galatians 5:16
 Galatians 5:24
 Romans 8:13

E. Crisis hours

Warning given - 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - Matthew 6:13
 Counseling sessions - attach to counselor
 Secretaries - alone with
 Car - alone with woman
 Awful cost: to God - 2 Samuel 12:14
 minister - 1 Corinthians 9:27
 church - Godly churches suffer
 family - disgrace
 Bakker

F. The cure for guilt

The supreme question: which is greater? Our sin - or
 the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:14.

X. Victory Over Self Effort.

A. Key verse: Galatians 3:3. See Exodus 20:25, John 6:63.
 After victory over sin, flesh tries to live the Christian
 life.

B. The losing battle

Romans 7:15 - What I would, I do not
 - What I hate, I do
 Romans 7:17 - Sin dwells in me - the cause
 Romans 7:18 - in flesh, no good thing
 to will present, but how
 Romans 7:19 - testimony of defeated - earnest Christian
 Romans 7:20 - indwelling sin nature, the cause of defeat
 Romans 7:21 - I would do good
 Romans 7:22 - I delight in law of God
 Romans 7:23 - a Christian captive
 "captured and enslaved" - A.T. Robertson
 Romans 7:24 - A cry for deliverance, from clutches of my
 own sinful nature

C. The answer to helpless cry

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 7:25.

D. The Spirit-filled life - God's provision

See prominence of "I", "me", "my", etc., in chapter 7 in
 contrast to Holy Spirit in chapter 8.

E. The Holy Spirit's ministry

Romans 8:2 - Freedom from dominance of flesh
 Romans 8:4 - Righteous life in Holy Spirit
 Romans 8:6 - Life and peace
 Romans 8:10 - Holy Spirit is life
 Romans 8:11 - Spirit dwells within to quicken
 Romans 8:12-13 - Flesh produces death
 Holy Spirit produces life
 Romans 8:14 - Holy Spirit guides
 Romans 8:15-16 - Holy Spirit witnesses to our sonship
 Romans 8:26-27 - Holy Spirit enables us to pray in God's will

F. The Spirit-filled overflowing life

Ephesians 5:18-19
 John 7:38-39
 Galatians 5:16
 Galatians 5:22-23
 1 John 2:14

XI. God's Provision for Holiness - the Holy Spirit.

See 2 Kings 4:8-9.

A. 1 Peter 1:15-16 - in all manner of life

B. Lord Jesus Christ - example

John 13:4-6, Mark 9:33-34, Luke 9:46, Matthew 20:21-24,
 John 5:44

C. Holy in words

Luke 4:22, Isaiah 50:4

D. Holy body - Romans 12:1

E. Whole person - 1 Thessalonians 5:23

F. God's purpose in our call

Ephesians 1:4
 Titus 2:14

G. Holy in prayer

1 Timothy 2:8
 Isaiah 1:5

H. Holy pastor - Titus 1:8

I. Holiness in view of destruction of world - 2 Peter 3:10-11.

J. Holy in our speech

Colossians 4:6
James 3:2-12
Ephesians 5:3-4
Matthew 12:36
Psalm 19:14

K. How to be holy

Impossible for self - Romans 8:7
Is simply Christ - Ephesians 4:24

L. Holy Spirit enables - 2 Corinthians 3:18

M. God chastens - Hebrews 12:10

N. Holiness revealed in little things

O. Holy in interruptions

Mark 2:1-12
Mark 5:22-43

P. Sins against the Holy Spirit

Acts 7:51
Matthew 12:31-32
Hebrews 10:29
Ephesians 4:30
1 Thessalonians 5:19
Acts 5:3
Acts 5:9

Q. Further Teaching on Holy Spirit

Each believer has the Holy Spirit - 1 Corinthians 12:13,
1 Corinthians 6:19.

Many Dealings

Ephesians 5:18
Luke 21:14-18
Acts 7:55
Acts 2:4
Acts 4:8
Acts 4:29-31
Acts 9:17
Acts 13:9

R. Dependence of Lord Jesus upon Holy Spirit

Acts 10:38
 Isaiah 11:2
 Isaiah 42:1
 Isaiah 61:1
 Luke 4:1
 John 3:34
 Luke 4:14
 Luke 4:17-18
 Matthew 12:28
 Hebrews 9:14
 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

XII. The Christian's Body.

A. A marvelous servant or a horrible master.

B. Members used for sin - Romans 3:13-18.

C. Lord Jesus Christ - example.

Hebrews 10:5-7, Psalm 40:6, Exodus 21:5
 1 Peter 2:24
 Luke 22:19

D. Christian's body not his own - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

E. Call to surrender body

Romans 12:1
 Romans 6:12-19

F. Christ to be magnified in our bodies

Philippians 1:20, Galatians 6:17, 2 Corinthians 4:7

G. Body to be disciplined - 1 Corinthians 9:27

H. Satan's attack on body - through lust's flesh. God's faithfulness - 1 Corinthians 10:13

I. Recreation

Sports in scripture

Hebrews 12:1-2, Philippians 3:14, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
 Ephesians 6:12
 2 Timothy 2:5
 Mark 6:31

Birds, painting

- J. Social to save
- K. Personal appearance
- L. Eating - 1 Corinthians 10:31
- M. Alcohol
- N. Tobacco
- O. Closing verses - 2 Corinthians 4:10

XIII. Chastening by God.

- A. Is the purging of the vine - John 15:2
No fruitful vine escapes it.
- B. Is a mark of God's tender love - Hebrews 12:5
Revelation 3:19
Proverbs 3:11-12
Psalm 94:12
- C. When is chastening necessary
When pride threatens - 2 Corinthians 12:4-7
- Luke 22:31
When sin permitted - 2 Samuel 7:14, Leviticus 26:28
Neglect of the Word - Psalm 119:67
Worldliness - 1 Corinthians 11:32
- D. When chastening strikes
Loss sense communion - Psalm 13:1, Isaiah 50:10
Grievous - Hebrews 12:11
Heaviness - 1 Peter 1:6, Psalm 32:4-5
God in control - either directly or indirectly
- E. The proper reaction to chastening
Do not despise it - Hebrews 12:5 - nor faint under it
Endure it, regard as necessary - Hebrews 12:7
Be in subjection - Hebrews 12:9
Get back in race, lift up hands, feeble knees - Hebrews 12:12-13
Search heart - Psalm 139:23-24
- F. Blessings of chastening
Psalm 94:2
Hebrews 12:10
Partakes His holiness
Fruit - Hebrews 12:11
Refining - 1 Peter 1:6-7

G. Learn obedience – Hebrews 5:8

11. Deepen prayer life - Isaiah 26:16

XIV. Christian Suffering.

Supervised - 1 Corinthians 10:13.

A. In the will of God for every Christian

1 Peter 4:19

Acts 9:16

Philippians 1:29

2 Timothy 3:12

1 Peter 1:6

John 21:18

B. Nature of suffering

Psalm 22: Christ suffered - spiritually - v. 1-3
 - mentally - v. 6-13
 - physically - v. 14-17

Christian suffers - spiritually - Romans 9:1, Philippians 1:16
 - mentally - 2 Corinthians 11:28
 - physically - 2 Corinthians 11:24-25

C. Suffering due to sin

1 Timothy 6:10

Galatians 6:8

1 Peter 4:15

D. Victory over suffering

Romans 8:37-39

John 16:33

Joshua. 1:5

2 Timothy 4:16-17

16. Christ glorified

John 21:19

Philippians 1:20-21

F. Blessing to others

Genesis 50:20

John 12:24

Hymns - written in trials

G. Blessing to Christians

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

1 Timothy 1:16

2 Timothy 2:12

XV. Living in the Will of God.

A. God's will - supreme

Ephesians 1:11

Romans 12:2

B. Self-will first sin

Isaiah 14:13

2 Thessalonians 2:4

Ephesians 2:2

1 John 5:19

Revelation 13:8

Ezekiel 28:17

Isaiah 53:6

C. Christ and the will of God

John 8:29

John 5:30

John 4:34

John 12:27-28

Hebrews 5:8

Luke 22:42

John 18:11

Philippians 2:8

D. On God's time schedule

Psalm 31:15

Galatians 4:4

Matthew 2:13

John 2:4

John 7:6,8,30

John 8:20

John 12:27

John 13:1

Luke 9:51

John 17:1

Romans 5:6

E. God's timing necessary

Genesis 24:12-15

Acts 8:5-27

F. God wants us to know His will

Ephesians 5:17
Colossians 1:9
Acts 22:14
1 Peter 2:2

G. How to know God's will

Am I willing to do it - John 7:17
Am I yielded - Romans 12:1-2
God works it in - Hebrews 13:20-21
We work it out - Philippians 2:12-13

H. Blessing of being in God's will

Mark 3:35
John 7:17
1 John 2:17
1 John 3:22
John 15:16
Matthew 25:21

I. Sense of completion of life work

John 19:30
2 Timothy 4:6-7
2 Peter 1:14

XVI. Victory Over the World.

A. Definition: 1 John 2:16-

Lust of flesh, lust of eyes, pride of life

B. Severe attack on Christians

2 Timothy 4:10
Genesis 19:1-14

C. Pride

Ezekiel 28:17
Matthew 20:20-23
John 5:44
Philippians 2:3
1 Corinthians 3:3
Matthew 6:1
Matthew 23:5-7
Luke 21:34
John 12:42-43
1 Corinthians 1:29-31

D. Barren life

1 Peter 5:5
 2 Chronicles 26:16-21
 Daniel 5:29-37
 Acts 12:22-23

E. God's provision

Galatians 6:14
 Romans 8:13
 2 Peter 1:4
 Matthew 11:28
 2 Corinthians 10:1
 1 Peter 5:6
 1 John 5:4-5

F. Pilgrims

1 Peter 2:11
 John 17:14
 Hebrews 11:13
 1 Thessalonians 2:5-6
 1 John 4:4

XVII. Victory Over Satan.

A. Satan a powerful foe

Wisdom - Ezekiel 28:12 - vast experience
 Host of demons - Ephesians 2:2
 Prince of this world - John 14:30, 2 Corinthians 4:4
 Our adversary - seeks to destroy - 1 Peter 5:8

B. Satan's 'theology' and practices

Doctrines of demons - 1 Timothy 4:1
 Doubts God's Word - Genesis 3:1
 Denies God's Word - Genesis 3:4
 Perverts Word - Matthew 4:6, Psalm 91:11
 Tempts to independency - Matthew 4:3, etc.
 Snatches away Word - Mark 4:15, Luke 8:12
 Offers world as bait - Matthew 4:8-9
 Cross not necessary for Christ - Matthew 16:23
 Lures away from simple faith - 2 Corinthians 11:3
 Trust in numbers - 1 Chronicles 21:1, 2 Samuel 24:1-17
 Lie to Holy Spirit - Acts 5:3
 Wrecks faith of failing believers - Luke 22:31-32
 Scatters believers - John 10:10-12, Acts 20:29
 Inclusive church - Matthew 13:39
 Uses Christians - Philippians 1:15-16

Hinders - 1 Thessalonians 2:18
 Oppresses - Acts 10:38
 Fiery darts - Ephesians 6:16
 Accuser - Revelation 12:9-10
 Satan's memory of our sins
 Wears out saints - Daniel 7:25
 Deceives - 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 12:9
 Seeks advantage - 2 Corinthians 2:11
 Satan has his pastors and churches - 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
 - Matthew 24:24
 - Revelation 2:9
 - Revelation 3:9
 - Revelation 18:2

C. The Christian's victory

Not to panic, fear - Luke 12:32
 - Matthew 24:6
 - Psalm 2
 Satan a defeated foe - Genesis 3:15
 - John 12:31
 - John 16:11
 - John 16:33
 - Hebrews 2:14
 - Colossians 2:14-15
 - 1 John 3:8
 - Matthew 12:29
 - Romans 16:20 (God bruises Satan for us)
 - Joshua 10:8-24
 - 1 John 4:4
 - 1 John 5:18
 - Revelation 12:11
 - James 4:6-7
 - 1 Peter 5:7-8
 - Romans 13:14
 - Ephesians 4:27
 - 1 John 2:14
 - Ephesians 6:11-14

XVIII. Victory Over Worry-Depression.

- A. No Christian escapes times of darkness
 Suicides among Christians - not unusual
 29,286 recorded in 1984, USA, general public
 See news headings: 'When tragedy strikes the pastor'
 'Coping with crises'
- B. Elijah - godly
 Standing before God - 1 Kings 17:1-
 Challenges Ahab - 1 Kings 18:17-39
 Exterminates false leaders

- C. Elijah's strength draining
 - emotional
 - physical
 - exhausting prayer - James 5:16-17
 - 1 Kings 18:42
 - ran - 1 Kings 18:44-46 (perhaps 15 miles)
 - hungry - no record of food
- D. This is the crucial time
 - need replenish strength
 - Christ replenishing strength - Mark 1:20,25-35, 2 Corinthians 4:16
 - Elijah goes on, set up now for collapse
- E. Jezebel's threat - heathen gods - 1 Kings 19:1-3
 - Ordinarily taken in stride
 - Raised the dead son - 1 Kings 17:17-22
 - Turned nation back from Baalism
- F. Fled, demoralized, now standing before fear
 - A palace in ruins
- G. Characteristics mental depression
 - Desire to flee - 1 Kings 19:3
 - Wants to die, not love to Lord-fear Jezebel - 1 Kings 19:4
 - No purpose to live - it is enough
 - Overemphasize own work - 1 Kings 19:10
 - Criticize others
 - Underestimate power of God - 1 Kings 19:10, 18
 - Reckons on enemies - 1 Kings 19:10
 - Self-pity - "I only left" - 1 Kings 19:10
 - Depression of man of God - left standing before God
 - now standing before problems
- H. Great tenderness of Lord - James 5:11, Psalm 23:3
 - Seeks depressed prophet - 1 Kings 19:6-7
 - Touch of God - food
 - Journey too great for thee (alone)
 - Rebuke - stand at Horeb where God manifests Himself
 - (Exodus 17:6, chapters 19, 20)
 - What doest thou here - 1 Kings 19:9
 - Stand before God once more - 1 Kings 19:11
 - Divine object lesson of God's power in weakness
 - Elijah recognizes God's presence - 1 Kings 19:13
- I. Recommissioned - 1 Kings 21:17-19
 - 1 Kings 21:22-23
 - Translated - 2 Kings 2:1-11
 - Saw Christ transfigured - Matthew 17:1-5
 - Still further ministry - Malachi 4:5
 - Revelation 11:3-14

J. Act of faith in depression

H. Taylor: "I believe that God at this moment is meeting all my needs." End of discouragement

Stand before God

Psalm 55:22, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7, John 14:27, John 16:33

XIX. The Christian Home.

God's first institution - Genesis 2:18

Christian home foretaste of heaven

Christian home bulwark of Christ

A. Breakdown of the home

Predicted - 2 Timothy 3:1

Divorces - single parents

Decay of family life

Gibbon: "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" - cause

1. The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.

B. Godly homes in scripture

Enoch - Genesis 5:22

Abraham - Genesis 18:17-19

Joshua 24:15

Timothy's home - 2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15

C. Marks of a Christian home

Husbands and wives as Christ and the church - Ephesians 5:21-33

Disciplined - 1 Timothy 3:4

- Ephesians 6:1-4

Hospitality - Romans 12:13

- 1 Peter 4:9

- Titus 1:8

- Hebrew 13:2

Worship - Acts 2:46-47

- Romans 16:4-5

- 1 Corinthians 16:19

- Colossians 4:15

Love in little practical things

When prayer is hindered - 1 Peter 3:7

D. Christians who failed

Eli - 1 Samuel 3:13

Lot - 2 Peter 2:7

- Genesis 19:1-38

When pastor in pulpit, whole family 'there'

E. Illustration: 3 families - Castor, Saint, Howard

XX. God's Teaching About Finances.

A. God beholds our giving - Malachi 3:8-9
 Christ beholds our giving - Luke 21:1-4
 Holy Spirit is aware of our giving - Acts 5:1-3

B. Early instructions

Genesis 14:20
 Leviticus 27:30-32
 Deuteronomy 14:22
 2 Chronicles 31:5-6
 Malachi 3:8-11 (neglected)

C. Christ and giving

Acts 20:35
 Matthew 23:23
 Matthew 6:1-2
 Luke 6:38

D. Early church

Acts 4:34-35
 Acts 6:1
 1 Corinthians 16:1
 2 Corinthians 8:1 - Corinthians failed
 2 Corinthians 8:6-7 - Titus to teach
 2 Corinthians 8:8 to 9:7 - Instructions

E. What about gambling?

For a good cause - legal
 Covetousness, not faith - Matthew 6:33, Philippians 4:18-19
 Exodus 20:17
 Acts 20:33-35
 1 Corinthians 10:31
 1 Timothy 6:10-18
 Ephesians 4:28
 Bank teller caught
 2 Thessalonians 3:10

Practical application

Start with tithe - accurate record
 Finances, with wife as partner in all

F. What about luxuries?

Poverty of Christ
 I Timothy 6:6-11
 Contentment

XXI. Broken Before God.A. Hard outer self-life must be broken
 Christ's life to be manifested

Mark 14:3-9
 Matthew 26:7
 John 12:24

B. Christ our example

Matthew 11:29
 2 Corinthians 10:1
 Philippians 2:8
 Isaiah 42:2
 John 5:41

C. Paul

I Thessalonians 2:5-6

D. Call to brokenness

Philippians 2:5
 Psalm 51:17
 Psalm 147:3
 Isaiah 57:15
 Jeremiah 45:5
 I Corinthians 1:29
 Psalm 34:18

E. Self-denial

Luke 9:23-24

F. Signs of unbrokenness

Pride as Christians - I Peter 5:5
 Seek honors of men - John 5:44
 - Matthew 23:5-7
 - Acts 8:9
 Love, praise - John 12:42-43
 A constant threat - tragedy
 Nebuchadnezzar - Daniel 4:25
 Uzziah - 2 Chronicles 26:5, 26:16
 Herod - Acts 12:23

G. Blessings of brokenness

1 Peter 5:5-6
 1 Timothy 1:15
 Isaiah 6:3-8
 Matthew 5:3-5
 Isaiah 57:15
 Matthew 11:29
 Isaiah 66:1-2
 2 Chronicles 16:9
 Psalm 147:3
 John 12:24

H. God takes steps to crush the one He will afterward use

XII. Summary.

The Christian life as God planned it

A. Is simply Christ living out His own undefeated life

Galatians 2:20
 Colossians 3:1-3
 Philippians 1:21
 John 6:57
 John 15:5

B. Accompanied by our weakness

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

C. Must not rely on training as power

Paul - well trained - Acts 22:3
 1 Corinthians 2:3-5
 2 Corinthians 13:4
 John 12:24

Devotional life

prayer - Luke 11:1-4 - Causes events to happen - James 4:2
 set time, early morning - Isaiah 50:4

D. Holy Spirit, not self-effort

Romans 7:18
 Romans 8:2

F. Holy life

1 Peter 1:15-16
Ephesians 4:22-24

G. Victory over sin

Romans 6:11

H. Victory over Satan

Ephesians 6:10
Revelation 12:9
1 John 4:4

I. Victory in suffering

Romans 8:31-37

J. Victory over material things

Philippians 4:11-13
Hebrews 13:5
1 Timothy 6:6-10

K. Victory in ministry

2 Corinthians 3:4-6
2 Corinthians 2:14

L. Christian's body

Romans 6:1-14
Romans 12:1-

M. Chastening

Hebrews 12:6-10
John 15:2

N. Will of God

Ephesians 5:17
Colossians 1:9

O. Victory over world

1 John 2:15-17
1 John 5:4-5

Final Word: Philippians 1:21
Galatians 2:20

Quotations Dealing With the Spiritual Life

A supplement to the syllabus

Personal Spiritual Development Course

PT 541

Biblical Theological Seminary

Newton C. Conant

Heart Devotion to Christ

A laborer can be subtly steered away from being Christ-centered to being ministry-centered.... With the immensity of the task, it can be easy to shift from Christ Himself to Christ's work. That change contains the seeds of disaster.

Navigator Magazine

* * * * *

Sound doctrine can inflate us, making us proud of our knowledge or our opinions.

Watchman Nee

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A chilling orthodoxy without a living Christ

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This is...a day of so much intellectual traffic in truth, but so little heart knowledge and deep appreciation of Christ.

* * * * *

It is possible (and here I speak from experience) to be a pastor for years, believing and preaching the Biblical truths, and at the same time unhappily to have the reality slide backwards down the hill.

Francis A. Schaeffer

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No amount of learning and study can compensate for the loss of this direct communion night and day with Christ.

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We can only effectively serve Christ as we are enjoying Him.

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If we are trying through Systematic Theology to know God, we are absolutely on the wrong road.

Watchman Nee

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We are superficial in our beliefs, we are often drenched with truth, yet it runs off from us like water.

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All spiritual experience derives from the shedding of Divine light upon eternal truth. Preached without light from God, truth remains but doctrine.

Watchman Nee

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Only those taught by God can teach for God. Isa. 50:4

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Those of us who minister the Word are too often drawn away from our personal enjoyment of truth into a ministerial and official consideration of it.

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Christ is everything I need to be all that I should be.

* * * * *

Do not ever let me outlive my hunger for thee, O Christ.
H. Bonar

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The abundant Christian life is simply constant, conscious, communion with Christ.

Frederick Franson

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We know that there is nothing which is more productive of all that makes life worth having--than Communion with God.

F. B. Meyer

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Happy the Christian who is attached only to Jesus Christ...and thus commences in time, that which shall be his continual occupation for eternity.
Thomas A. Kempis (1381-1471)

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We see a gap between what the traditional seminary training missionaries normally get and what is often required to meet needs on the field among unreached peoples.

K.K., Arab World Ministries

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O Christian, prize this precious union with Christ, for it must be the source of all the fruitfulness which thou canst hope to know.

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It is very rare indeed to find a case in which the virtue and freshness of spiritual life are kept up, much less augmented throughout all the stages of Christian life and warfare. It ought not to be such a rarity.

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Earnest and constant occupation of heart with Christ is the true secret of all practical Christianity. It is not rules and regulations that will ever make us Christ-like in our spirit, manners and ways.

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Let us never rest satisfied with anything less than that indefinable and sacred grace called "unction." With this, the slightest words strike home to the hearer's hearts as the message of God. I John 2:17

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I discover my true identity only in relation to God.

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Counting our assets often delegates the Lord to a lesser place.

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God's presence is the greatest resource in missions.

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The little word "all" occurs 32 times in the Epistle to the Colossians. It was exactly what the Colossians needed to see that everything was in Christ. All wisdom, all treasures, all knowledge, all fulness, all might.... Christ was all and they were complete in Him.

Jim Flanigan

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The most spiritual teaching will ever be characterized by a full and constant presentation of Christ.... There will be little room in such ministry for human logic and reasoning.

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When once we get intimate with Jesus, we are never lonely, we never need sympathy.

Oswald Chambers

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H. Bonar once commented that he could tell when a Christian was growing. "A believer will exalt his Master, talk less of what he himself is doing, and constantly become smaller in his own esteem."

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Let not even the gifts Thy love bestows, estrange my heart from thee, Oh Christ.

C.H. Spurgeon

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Abandonment to Christ never produces the consciousness of its own effort, because the whole life is taken up with the One to whom we abandon.

Oswald Chambers

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Practical work may be a competitor against abandonment to God.

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It is at the peril of our soul's welfare that we get caught up in practical work.

Oswald Chambers

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It is possible to miss the sweet reality of Christ's presence in our frantic effort to please Him.

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Christ is able to bring us into His presence and to keep us there.

Andrew Murray

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God does indeed mean that every child of His should always dwell in His presence.

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The Word of God

To understand the Bible, you must know its author. This is unlike any other book.

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Scriptural knowledge however profound and extensive, biblical criticism however accurate and valuable, may leave the heart barren and the affections cold. Our great need is to find the Lord Jesus Christ in the Word and having found Him, to feed on Him by faith.

C.H. Mackintosh

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The preacher's throne is the pulpit; he stands in Christ's stead; his message is the Word of God; around him are immortal souls; the Saviour, unseen, is beside him; the Holy Spirit broods over the congregation; angels gaze upon the scene, and heaven and hell await the issue.

Matthew Simpson

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The Lord Jesus Christ when praying made use of Scripture in addressing God.

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The Scriptures-- Admit to heart, Commit to memory, Submit to teaching, Transmit to others.

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Make the Bible your book of books. Study it much upon your knees waiting for Divine light. Beware of leaning on commentaries.

Charles G. Finney

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Blessed is that man who receives the truth of God into his inmost self; he shall never lose it, but it shall be the life of his spirit.

C.H. Spurgeon

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The Holy Spirit directs most easily those who know their Bible best.

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Who knows most of the real value of bread? Is it the chemist who carefully analyzes it? No! But a hungry man who feeds upon it for life.

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Where must the seed be sown to bring forth the most fruit when it is grown? Go plant it for Christ in the heart of a child.

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To hear effectively is to be assured of more truth to follow. Mark 4:23

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Prayer and Meditation

Can prayer be so costly to Christ and still be so cheap to me, His professed follower?

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All men greatly used of God had definite set times for prayer. Daniel 6:10

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The Lord Jesus Christ made use of Scripture when addressing God.

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Morning is the best time for prayer. An orchestra does not tune up its instruments after the concert is over. Mark 1:35

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Let us not see the face of man today till we have seen Jesus. C.H. Spurgeon

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God will let his choicest servants fail, if they fail to pray when Divine guidance is needed. Joshua 9:14

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In a recent survey of a theological college in the U.S.A., 93% of those students preparing for the ministry confessed to no devotional life at all. It is a sad situation. Without deep communion with God, preaching lacks power and will inevitably be despised.

Boice, Eternity
March, 1986

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All our libraries and studies are mere emptiness compared to our closets.

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No amount of money, genius or culture can move things for God. A. Bonar

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His preaching was a continuation of his prayers, a demonstration of the Spirit accompanied his presence.

Said of R. M. McCheyne

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Our ministry will only be as fresh and as new as our spiritual life is made fresh and new daily in the presence of the Lord.

II Cor. 4:16

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The church is looking for better methods, God is looking for better men.
The real sermons are made in the closet.
Crucified preaching can only come from a crucified man.

E. M. Bounds

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Satan dreads nothing but prayer. His one concern is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.

Samuel Chadwick

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If personal communion be not diligently maintained, the higher our position, the greater our danger and the more disastrous our fall.

C.H. Mackintosh

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The plea of a busy life cannot be used as an excuse for neglecting heart communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Josh. 1:8

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To be much alone with God is the Sovereign remedy for pride and self-complacency.

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Pause frequently in life's busy rush to recuperate exhausted nerves and vitality.

F.B. Meyer

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Prayer is releasing the mind and will of God through us.

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Set yourself to move everything through God, not man.

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That which we win by prayer, we should dedicate to God, as Hannah dedicated Samuel.

* * * * *

No amount of money, genius or culture can move things for God.

* * * * *

Real sermons are made in the closet. All our libraries are mere emptiness compared with our closets.

E.M. Bounds

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My worth to God in public is what I am in private.

Oswald Chambers

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Holiness

Holiness of character is God's choicest gift.

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A holy pastor is a terrible weapon in the Hands of God.

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God has no more precious gift to a church or an age than a man who lives as the embodiment of His will, and inspires those around him with the faith of what grace can do.

Andrew Murray

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A ministry which flows from the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost can never become barren.

John 7:38-39

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We are persuaded that next to his habitual dependence on the Spirit of God, the occasion of his uncommon success was the consistency and conspicuousness of his Christian character.

Said of R.M. McCheyne

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Cheerful holiness is the most forcible of sermons.

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The nearer a man lives to God, the more intensely has he to mourn over his own evil heart; and the more His Master honors him in His service, the more also doth the evil of the flesh vex and tease him day by day.

C.H. Spurgeon

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The first, second and third requisite for our work is personal godliness.

Alexander MacClaren

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Holiness is shown in exhibiting the patience of Christ when we are interrupted.

Mark 2:1-12

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Let not those eyes become the windows of lust, which are soon to see the King in His beauty.

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Remember that the life of sanctification and spiritual power can never be had cheaply.

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Oh, to be holy--and not be conscious of it.

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Idleness leaves one open to temptation.

II Sam. 11:2

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There is a pernicious tendency in some minds to depreciate every line of work save their own. This must be carefully guarded against and may God deliver us from it.

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Holiness does not consist in our changing and becoming better ourselves--it is rather Christ, putting on Christ.

Eph. 4:22-24, Rom. 13:14

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A holy life is made up of a multitude of little things--little words, little deeds, not eloquent speeches or one great heroic effort.

H. Bonar

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I want to live every day with the judgment seat of Christ in view.

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Away with this milk and water preaching of a love of Christ that has no holiness or moral discernment.

Charles G. Finney

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We must not only do right things, we must do them beautifully; not only speak the truth, but speak in love. The beauty of the Lord our God must be upon us--assume the meekness, gentleness and purity of Jesus.

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A single thought, a sinful look, a sinful word is enough to bring a dark cloud over the soul which will hide our view from the light of God's countenance and plunge into deep distress and misery.

C.H. Mackintosh

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We produce a stream of godliness or corruption.

Gal. 6:7-8

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The reason why many who preach the gospel fully and in all earnestness are not owned of God in the conversion of souls is to be found in their defective exhibition of grace in these easy moments of life.

A. Bonar

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They preach best who love most.

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Gentleness is a sign of Christian maturity.

II Cor. 10:1

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I perceive that this is a holy man of God which passes by us continually.

II Kings 4:9

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The whole Trinity involved in making me holy

Jude 1, The Father

I Cor. 1:2, The Son

I Peter 1:2, The Holy Spirit

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At an evening parlor certain men laughed at uncleanness and the joke was not altogether offensive to thine ear, even thou wast as one of them.

Obadiah 1:11

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All I do ought to be founded on a perfect oneness with Him, not on a self-willed determination to be godly.

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Always leave the impression of the holiness and of the power of God, never of our personal holiness.

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"No Lord, I don't want Thee, I want myself clean and filled with the Holy Ghost; I want people to be able to say--'This is what God has done for me.'" This is not abandonment, but self interest. Oswald Chambers

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We must relinquish all pretence of being anything.

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A matter may be seemingly trivial, but the crisis that turns upon a small matter may be a profound and far-reaching one in our lives.

James H. McConkey

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LIVING ONE DAY AT A TIME

Block out one day--live one day at a time

Forbidden to boast of tomorrow: James 4:13-15; Prov. 27:1

First conscious thought, the Lord: Psalm 139:18

I. Clear Teaching of Old Testament

- A. Day by day guidance: Exodus 13:20-21
- B. Daily supply of manna: Exodus 16:4
- C. Daily consecration: Exodus 32:29
- D. Strength for each day: Deut. 33:25
- E. Daily meditation in Word: Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2
- F. Daily choice to serve God: Joshua 24:15
- G. Elijah taken care of on daily basis: 1 Kings 17:6
- H. Daily blessings: Psalm 68:19
- I. Daily early morning prayer: Isaiah 50:4
- J. Daily new mercies: Lam. 3:22-23

II. Clear Teaching of Lord Jesus Christ

- A. No anxiety about tomorrow: Matt. 6:34
- B. Today the Lord's work may be done: John 9:4
- C. Daily cross bearing: Luke 9:23

III. Clear Teaching of the Apostles and Early Church

- A. Bereans searched the Scriptures daily: Acts 17:11
- B. Daily suffering "I die daily": 1 Cor. 15:31
- C. Daily renewal in presence of the Lord: 2 Cor. 4:16
- D. Daily care of work committed to us: 2 Cor. 11:28

IV. Application

Organize each new day in presence of the Lord

Worship-Meditation-Prayer-Commit each item of concern

2 Chron. 27:6 - "So Jotham became mighty because he prepared his ways
before the Lord his God."

DIVINE URGENCY

A growing conviction I am in this world on a direct commission from God. I must have His sense of urgency in me.

I. Christians Have a Direct Commission From God

Eph. 2:10
Heb. 12:2
2 Tim. 1:9
Rom. 8:28

II. This Truth Must Grip Each Christian

"Men greatly used of God were driven by a great purpose."

-- Hudson Taylor

"It is the man with a single aim who is the man through whom God's power flows."

2 Cor. 11:3 - Satan would complicate, divert

III. Urgency in the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ

Luke 2:49
John 3:14
John 4:4
John 9:4
John 10:16
Luke 4:42-43
Luke 9:22
Luke 19:5

IV. Urgency in Life of John the Baptist

John 3:30

V. Believers Who Lost Urgency

Lot - Genesis 13:12-13
Samson - Judges 16:21; 16:1
Solomon - 1 Kings 11:1-8
Demas - 2 Tim. 4:16
Mark - Acts 13:13; 2 Tim. 4:11

VI. How to Retain Urgency

Col. 1:29
1 Cor. 15:10
2 Cor. 5:14
Heb. 11:6

The set of the face determines our direction - Luke 9:51

APOSTLE PAUL'S TWO PRAYERS
(at his conversion)
Two Questions

Introduction

Apostle Paul asked two questions at the time the Lord Jesus Christ met him.

Who art thou Lord? - Acts 9:5

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? - Acts 9:6

Paul never ceased asking these two questions - a constant desire for deeper knowledge of Christ (Phil. 3:10) and a fervent desire to do His will (Phil. 3:12).

The great need of the Christian is to be asking these questions daily.

I. Who Art Thou Lord

Acts 9:5

Acts 9:20-22

II. Increasing Revelation - Who Art Thou

Col. 1:17 - Pre-existence

1 Tim. 3:16 - Deity

2 Cor. 4:4 - Deity

1 Cor. 2:8 - Deity

1 Cor. 15:47 - Deity

Col. 2:9 - Deity

1 Tim. 2:5 - Humanity

Gal. 4:4 - Humanity

1 Cor. 15:4 - Deity, Humanity

Rom. 6:11 - Victor

Rom. 7:25 - Victor

Rom. 8:2 - Victor

2 Cor. 12:9 - Victor

Phil. 4:13 - Victor

2 Cor. 2:14 - Victor

Eph. 6:10 - Victor

III. Increasing Revelation - What Wilt Thou Have Me Do

Acts 9:6

Gal. 2:8

Eph. 3:1-5

Acts 16:5-6

Acts 23:11

2 Tim. 4:7

Burden of each morning devotion - Who art thou Lord? What wilt thou have me to do?

Frightful alternative is to try to live on "stale manna" and self-will.

MOULDED OR SHATTERED?

Moulded in grace or shattered in judgment?

The crisis hour--when God reveals sin.

I. The Lesson From the Potter - Jer. 18, 19

Go down to the potter's house - divine object lesson
Vessel - product potter's wisdom - skill for his glory

1 Peter 2:9
Eph. 2:10
2 Tim. 2:21
Psalm 78:72
Isaiah 64:8

II. The Vessel Marred - Remade

Resistant, unyielding - wheels stopped temporarily
What will potter do - discard? No, remolds - vessel now good
Jeremiah watching - Cannot do this to Israel?
Israel a marred vessel - Jer. 18:15-17

III. God's Appeal to Israel - Their Response - Jer. 18:6-12

How foolish - Jer. 18:13-14; Attack Jeremiah - 18:18-23

IV. A Further Object Lesson - Jer. 19:1-11

Earthen flask - proclaim judgment - 1-3
Vs. 10 - Break vessel--shatter it - so God will shatter Israel

V. Divine Object Lesson for Us

When God reveals sin - either moulding or shattering follows

Uzziah - 2 Chron. 26:5-21
Ananias-Sapphira - Acts 5:1-8
Jerusalem - Luke 19:41-44
The above were shattered.

David
Harvey Cedars illustration
The above were moulded.

Christian Business Men's illustration

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Text: 2 Cor. 5:9-10

Every Christian will appear and be judged--the works - Rom. 14:10

Not a judgment for our sins - 1 Pet. 2:24; Isaiah 53:5; 2 Cor. 5:21

I. Christians Works - Likeness to a Building - 1 Cor. 3:10-15

A. Christ the Foundation

1 Cor. 3:11; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 10:4; Matt. 7:24; Acts 4:11;
1 Peter 2:6

B. Take heed how we build - prominence of individual

Every man - vs. 13, 14, 15

C. Two kinds of building material

1 Cor. 3:12 - gold, silver, precious stones - imperishable
gold = deity; silver = redemption; stones = gifts Holy
Spirit
wood, hay, stubble - dead things

D. Fire will sweep through the building

Heb. 12:29; Rev. 1:14, 2:23; Heb. 4:13; Malachi 3:2

Result - reward for what abides
- loss for dead works
- man himself saved

Gold, silver, precious stones: 1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Cor. 10:31; John
15:7, 15:16; 2 Tim. 4:2; Rom. 6:19; Heb. 6:10; 2 Tim. 2:21; John
21:19

Wood, hay, stubble: Gal. 6:8; Phil. 2:3; 1 Cor. 1:29; Genesis 11:3;
Rev. 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 3 John 5; Matt. 6:1, 5, 16

E. Reward or loss

Heb. 6:10; Rev. 22:12; Matt. 10:42; Luke 19:17, 18:22

Crowns: 1 Cor. 9:25; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Thess.
2:19; Rev. 4:10-11

Loss = shame - 1 John 2:28

Constantly keep the coming judgment seat of Christ in view.

Brokenness

Nothing is more deadly than self-righteousness or more hopeful than brokenness.

Psalm 51:17

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God needs men who will submit to His crushing discipline.

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God is in the painful process of mercifully stripping us of all self-reliance until we rest on Him alone.

John 12:24

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This stripping goes on until we are dead and detached from all creatures, all saints, all thoughts, all hopes, all plans, all tender heart yearnings, all preferences. Dead to all trouble, sorrow, all disappointments, all praise or blame, success or failure, comforts and annoyances, climates or nationalities, dead to all desire but Himself.

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The earthly life of Christ is a constant rebuke to my pride.

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Pride is the most deadly of all sins.

Augustine

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No man can glorify self and God at the same time.

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There is always the utmost danger when a man or his work becomes remarkable. When attention is drawn to aught or to anyone but the Lord Jesus Himself, satanic pride approaches for entrance.

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To bless some men, apart from humility and submission, would only injure. And, so in His dear love, God withholds His choicest gifts until the heart is sore broken and cries to Him. That cry is the blessed symbol of soul health.

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None but God knows what an abyss of corruption is in my heart.

R.M. McCheyne

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Only the spiritually blind are self important.

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Nothing can be more worthless than seeking a place for myself.

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If in thy secret soul thou seekest the sweet voice of human adoration, be sure that deterioration is fast corrupting thy service as rottenness the autumn fruit.

F.B. Meyer

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From the desire of being great, dear Lord, deliver me.

Moravian Prayer

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Many of us are too strong, too self-reliant and too self-resourceful to get the best that God can do.

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Can ambition that lusts after praise and place, preach the gospel of Him who made Himself of no reputation.

E.M. Bounds

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For my nothingness I get God's best.

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We need never be afraid of weakness; it is fancied strength we have to dread, vain confidence in our own wisdom, our own intelligence, our scriptural knowledge, our spiritual attainments; these are the things we have to fear.

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Empty boats float high, but heavily laden vessels are low in the water.

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Where would God's servants be if it were not for God's constant chastening, refining and cleansing.

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God takes drastic steps to weaken our natural strength.

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Process of diminishing natural strength to be clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ--the process is breaking.

John 12:24+

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Oh, this self-love, this self-will. It is the Devil of Devils! Lord Jesus, may thy blessed Spirit purge it out of all our hearts.

Whitfield

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All the misery in the world is caused by self-will.

J.C. Ryle

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God takes steps to crush the one He will afterwards use.

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Whenever a nation or church becomes wealthy and then self-centered, and labors for self-aggrandizement or yields to self-indulgence, its sudden destruction or slow decline is one of the most impressive lessons of human history.

Bishop J. W. Bashford

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Darkness (See Isaiah 50:10)

No Christian escapes times of darkness.

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Deep depression of spirit is the most grievous of all trials; other trials are as nothing.

I Kings 19:4
C.H. Spurgeon

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God never had a son who was not sometime in the darkness of perplexity.

C.H. Spurgeon

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Sometimes darkness suits God's plan for us better than light.

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Let us not fear the darkness, but fear only lest we should miss its treasures, lest we should be no richer in faith, courage, nearness to the Lord Jesus Christ in patience and holiness.

"I will give thee the treasures of darkness." Isaiah 45:3

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Leaving the presence of God--the first step to depression.

I Kings 17:1; 19:1+

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"My soul be not afraid of God's silence. It is another form of His voice. His stillness makes thee still, and He has something better than help to give thee now."

George Matheson

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Most men of God who have grown strong spiritually found most of their training took place in times of silence.

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When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace.

Edward Mote

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You may not always see Him, but you can walk by faith in the dark if you know that He sees you.

John Macbeath

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We can always trust the heart of God, even when we cannot see the Hand of God.

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Learn to trust God's silences.

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Never doubt in the darkness what God taught you in the light.

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Exodus 14:13 "What if for a while thou art called to stand still, yet this is but to renew thy strength for some greater advance in due time."

C.H. Spurgeon

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In darkness (of indecision) wait for God's light; do not try to create light.

Isaiah 50:10-11

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Take the hardest thing in your life--the place of difficulty outward or inward--and expect God to triumph gloriously in that very spot.

Lilias Trotter

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Never let what you know and are sure of be disturbed by what you don't know and are not sure of.

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The Lord Jesus Christ knows our honest doubts and fully meets the need.

John 20:27

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Do not take the Devil for your teacher. His favorite subjects are worry, memories of past failures, and what other people think.

Jack Miller

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In moments of peril and dread, murmur his name--Jesus, Jesus--and He will at once comfort thee by His presence.

F.B. Meyer

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Why go we mourning? Simply because we allow circumstances to shut out God, instead of having God as a perfect covering for our eyes and a perfect object of our hearts.

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Only do not judge God's ways whilst they are in progress. Wait till the plan is complete. Let us not judge God by an incomplete or unfinished scheme--let us have patience till the end shall justify the path by which we came.

F.B. Meyer

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There may be much unconscious blessing apart from sensible light and joy. God is putting wealth in your pocket to be found later.

F.R. Havergal

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My heart remains troubled only by my consent.

John 14:27

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Surely, because He has set His love on us in eternity, He is not likely to forget us in time.

F.B. Meyer

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The end of discouragement is to say with Hudson Taylor, "I believe that God at this moment is meeting all my needs."

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Thou art not the plaything of wild chance. There is a purpose in thy life which Jesus is working out.

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Suffering

Affliction is the best book in the minister's library.

M. Luther

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Only fruitful Christians are singled out for the deepest trials. It is the only way from fruit to more fruit.

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God has seen fit to trust me with a great sorrow.

H. Taylor

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Saints do well to trace all their trials to God.

C.H. MacIntosh

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In endless conjectures we are lost and cruel to ourselves and we gather material for unnecessary griefs.

C.H. Spurgeon

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As long as I trace my pain to an accident, my bereavement to mistakes, my loss to another's wrong, my discomfort to an enemy, and so on, I am of the earth, earthly; but when I rise to my God and see His Hand at work, I grow calm, I have no word for repining.

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Never speak of God's dealing with you using a "hurt" tone.

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God ruthlessly perfects whom He royally elects.

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The most sublime moments often lie very close to the most painful situations.

Gen. 50:20

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Such ills we remove only as we assimilate them, take them up into the plan for our lives, give them meaning, set them in their place in the whole.

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Ah, if poor, bewildered believers could only see it, they would learn that the very thing they call wrath is only love, in its own wise manner, seeking their highest good.

C.H. Spurgeon

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Suffering's power to curse or bless depends upon the reaction of the sufferer.

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Loneliness, solitude, temptation, conflict--these are the flames that burn the Divine colors into the character, such the processes through which the blessings of our anointing are made available for the poor, the broken-hearted, the prisoners, the captives and the blind.

F.B. Meyer

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Great lives, like great ships, are built for the open seas, and not for the shipyards.

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God whispers to us in our pleasures; He shouts to us in our pain.

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Christ is not a soft cushion against reality--but to show us victory as we face reality.

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A needy cry made Christ stand still.

Matthew 20:32

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We do not fall asleep in the water or the fire, but sunshine makes us drowsy.

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All sunshine makes a desert.

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Ease has not produced greatness.

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Affluence and comforts are often foes of faith, and these often do not produce self-denying Christians.

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He whose life is one even and smooth path will see but little of the glory of the Lord.

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Christ may direct us into a storm.

Matthew 14:22

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I will sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

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He is stronger by the accumulated strength of trials. It makes trial an absolute element in all perfected character.

Philip Brooks

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Unless there is a willingness for the Lord's sake to endure austerity and to be bound by iron, discipline of body, soul and spirit--it is better not to enter the battle.

Dr. Wm. Culbertson

address to Graduation Class, Moody Bible Institute

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When we weary of the strife and sin that meets us on every hand, consider that all the saints have endured the same trials.

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We may promote God's praise and glory by suffering, as much as by active service.

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A jewel is a bit of ordinary earth which has passed through an extraordinary experience. The sapphire is clay, the diamond is carbon, both of which had been subjected to supreme pressure.

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A pearl is the oysters answer to an irritation.

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It is not likely that I will fall asleep entering the water or the fire, but sunshine could make me sleepy.

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Sympathy is a shallow stream in the souls of those who have not suffered.

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Suppressed anxiety is not the peace of God.

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The Holy Spirit often "arranges" severe tests.

Luke 4:1

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These cuts I am making in the hard, black ebony wood, which seems to be destroying it, will change it into a flute, and its sweet music will charm the soul.

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I never had in all my life an inlet into the Word of God as now. Those Scriptures which I saw nothing in before are in this place and state made to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now.

John Bunyan

in Bedford Jail

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Yielded Life

I come to all God is, through all that Christ is, with all that I am.
David Richardson
in Kenya

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O timid hearts, dreading every temporal and spiritual evil--would that you
could realize how absolutely Christ assumes the complete care of all who trust
him.

I Peter 5:7
F.B. Meyer

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Because He has set His love on me in eternity, surely He is not likely to
forget me in time.

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The Christian's body may either be a marvelous servant or a horrible master.

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Can the hireling official, heartless perfunctory preach the gospel which
demands the shepherd give his life for the sheep?

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Warm feelings are not necessarily a mark of the grace of God, but a
surrendered will is.

Luke 22:42
J.C. Ryle

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God has no more precious gift to a church or an age than a man who lives as
the embodiment of His will.

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Be prepared for God to change your plans to bring greater blessing. Be
sensitive for need to change.

Acts 3:1-11,

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I am His interest and the interest of His Son, freely beloved and dearly
bought and may I not trust Him with His treasure?

Richard Baxter
Dying Thoughts, 1657

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Does what matters most to God matter most to me?

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What a "weariness" there is in an unconsecrated, unscriptural ministry.
Malachi 1:13

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We must never underestimate the ability of Christians to get themselves tangled up.

II Tim. 2:4

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Men greatly used of God were men driven by a great purpose. It is the man with a single aim who is the man of power.

Phil. 3:10-13

H. Taylor

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The Lord will not receive the fruit of disobedience.

I Samuel 15:22

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Partial obedience is disobedience.

I Samuel 15:22

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Do not try to defend sin on the basis of a "spiritual" reason.

I Samuel 15:22

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Pierce my ears, O Lord my God. Take me to your door this day.

Exodus 21:5-6

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God wants us to frequently remember our history of His dealings with us.

Deut. 8:2-3

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The important thing is to be where the Lord wants each of us individually, and being given into the Lord's hand at each moment and in each place.

F.A. Schaeffer

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Wherever God's finger points, God's Hand will make the way.

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Ask for circumstances to give assurance God is guiding.

Acts 16:10

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A baby's cry changed the course of history.

Exodus 2:6

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Is there a time-table for Christ's life and not one for mine?

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To one who asked him the secret of service, Mr. George Muller replied: "There was a day when I died, utterly died to George Muller, to his opinions, preferences, tastes and will; died to the world, its approval or censure, died to the approval or blame of even my brethren and friends. Since that time I have studied to show myself approved only to God.

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Victory

Were it not for the consciousness of Christ as my life hour by hour, I could not go on. I am carried onward with no feeling of strain or fear of collapse.
H. Taylor

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Make a pulpit out of trying circumstances.

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We enter the battle with our general, the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing just what the enemy is thinking against us, and He has already provided for my complete victory over him.

Isaiah 54:17;
Romans 8:37

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Tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

Joshua 3:5

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God must always honor the faith which He has implanted in the soul.
Hebrews 12:2

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"God's Palace at Aberdeen" - written on top of Samuel Rutherford's letters from Aberdeen prison.

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Oh, what a blessed time shall that be when we shall have mounted above every second cause and shall rest upon the bare arm of God.

C.H. Spurgeon

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Christ has charged Himself with all our concerns, all our movement, all our wants.

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Christ would have our hearts as free from care as our conscience is free from guilt.

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Let it be the grand object of our hearts to prove in our entire history that God is enough for our hearts.

C.H. MacIntosh

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No great victory necessarily assures continuous victory.

I Kings 19:1+

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The Following Quotations are from the book,
My Utmost For His Highest, by Oswald Chambers

The saint who is intimate with Jesus will never leave impressions of himself.

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The rush of other things always tends to obscure this concentration on God.

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Very few of us know what it means to be held in a grip by the love of God.

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If we do the duty that lies nearest, we shall see Him.

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A beautiful saint may be a hindrance if he does not present Jesus Christ, but only what Christ has done for him. He will leave the impression--"What a fine character that man is!"

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Christian work may be a means of evading the soul's concentration on Jesus Christ.

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Darkness comes by the sovereignty of God. Are we prepared to let God do as He likes with us--prepared to be separated from conscious blessings?

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If we undertake work for God and get out of touch with Him, the sense of responsibility will be overwhelmingly crushing.

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Always remain alert to the fact that where one man has gone back is exactly where anyone may go back.

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When we are rightly related to God, life is full of spontaneous, joyful uncertainty and expectancy.

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Every element of self-reliance must be slain by the power of God.

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Is there a freshness and vigour in our spiritual outlook?

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Do I manifest the essential sweetness of the Son of God, or the essential irritation of "myself" apart from Him?

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No sin is worse than the sin of self-pity, because it obliterates God and puts self-interest upon the throne.

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There may be any number of things dark to your understanding, but they do not come in between your heart and God.

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What are you dreading?....Remember God's word, "I will in no wise fail you."

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Beware of harking back to what you were once, when God wants you to be something you have never been.

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There is no condition of life in which we cannot abide in Jesus.

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If you will give God the right to yourself, He will make a holy experiment out of you.

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Routine is God's way of saving us between our times of inspiration.

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So many are devoted to causes and so few devoted to Jesus Christ.

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One of the greatest proofs that you are drawing on the grace of God is that you can be humiliated without manifesting the slightest trace of anything but His grace.

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Self-realization leads to the enthronement of work; whereas the saint enthrones Jesus Christ in his work.

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The one marvelous secret of a holy life lies not in imitating Jesus, but in letting the perfections of Jesus manifest themselves in my mortal flesh.

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Is the relationship between myself and God getting simpler than ever it has been?

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God puts His saints where they will glorify Him, and we are no judges at all where that is.

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It is possible to know all about doctrine and yet not know Jesus. The soul is in danger when knowledge of doctrine outsteps intimate touch with Jesus.

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We will never know the joy of self-sacrifice until we abandon ourselves in every particular.

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Theology must work itself out in the most practical relationships.

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Be rightly related to God, find your joy there, and out of you will flow rivers of living water.

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After surrender--what? The whole life after surrender is an aspiration for unbroken communion with God.

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It is dangerous to get into a settled state of experiences.

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The great need is not to do things, but to believe things.

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His silence is the sign that He is bringing you into a marvelous understanding of Himself.

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We are not in God's showroom. We are here to exhibit one thing--the absolute captivity of our lives to Jesus Christ.

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Don't rejoice in successful service; the great secret of joy is that you are rightly related to Me.

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We become so abandoned to God that the consciousness of being used never enters in.

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Beware of posing as a profound person.

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Determinedly take no one seriously but God, and the first person you find to leave severely alone as being the greatest fraud you have ever known, is yourself.

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Refuse to be swamped with the affairs of this life.

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Spiritual leakage begins when we cease to lift up our eyes unto Him.

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Never rely on the clearness of your exposition, but as you give your exposition see that you are relying upon the Holy Spirit.

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Every saint can have his body under absolute control of God.

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Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there.

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Let the past sleep, but let it sleep on the bosom of Christ. Leave the Irreparable Past in His Hands, and step out into the Irrestible Future with Him.

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