

The Recognition You Deserve

October 1

" Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord". — 1 Corinthians 15:58

On September 26, 1992 Ken Irvin had a great day that seemingly went unnoticed. Ken was a defensive back for the University of Memphis Tigers. That afternoon, as the Tigers played the Arkansas Razorbacks, he set an NCAA record by blocking four punts. It was an amazing accomplishment; there is no doubt that his performance on the field played a major role in the Tigers' 22-6 upset over the Razorbacks.

PREVIEW

The Memphis newspaper, the Commercial Appeal, gave extensive coverage to the game. However, in their coverage they did something more incredible than Ken Irvin had done: they didn't mention his performance. The story in the Appeal went on and on about the upset, but Ken Irvin's name was never mentioned.

I don't know how Mr. Irvin felt when he read the paper that Sunday morning, but I know how I would have felt. I wouldn't have expected the national papers to make me a hero, but I would have liked for the local paper at least to make mention of my contribution to the win.

The fact is that sometimes we don't get the recognition that we deserve. There are many people who serves unnoticed year after year, and no one knows about it. They go to soup kitchens and nursing homes and hospitals and day care centers and they never get applauded, they never get written up in the papers. Seemingly no one notices.

INNERVIEW

Jesus warned that this would happen sometimes.

In fact, He indicates that serving without recognition is a good thing. He said, "When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret." (Matthew 6:3-4)

Serving without recognition helps us to keep our priorities straight. It serves to remind us why we are doing the good that we do. Ken Irvin played football for the University of Memphis not for the glory, and not for money, but for the love of the sport. And even though he was snubbed by the local press, the next Saturday he was on the field, playing with as much enthusiasm as ever before.

REVIEW

One more thing. Jesus said that our Father sees what is done in secret and will reward us openly. The Commercial Appeal didn't mention Ken Irvin's accomplishment, but the national media did. Sports Illustrated named him national college defensive player of the week and the Football News chose him national player of the week.

We may not get the recognition we deserve immediately, but we will get it eventually. Recognition, or the lack of it, should never stand in our way of giving our best.

Praise God for: His abundant kindness!

Thank God for: faithful servants!

Ask God's forgiveness for: boasting about my good deeds!

Ask God's forgiveness for: boasting about my good deeds!

Ask God to help: love motivate us!

Ask God to supply our need for : consideration for others!

Daily Sunshine In The Son

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Is there something that you believe God is commanding you to do? Share your reluctance, fears or rebellion with Him and ask for His help.

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

The Danger of Getting Distracted

October 2

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" — Hebrews 12:2

A man who had bought a new hunting dog was eager to see how he would perform. So he took him into the woods one day, hoping to track down and bag some really big game.

No sooner had they gotten into the woods than the dog picked up the trail of a bear. Off he went, with the excited hunter close behind. Then the animal stopped suddenly, sniffed the ground, and headed down an altogether different path. He had caught the scent of a deer that had crossed the path of the bear.

A few minutes later, the process repeated itself. The dog stopped, smelled the ground, and headed in still another direction. This time it was the scent of a rabbit that had crossed the path of the deer. And the poor pooch was sidetracked again.

On and on it went, until the breathless hunter caught up with his dog - only to find him barking triumphantly down the hole of a field mouse.

Saddest of all, the same thing has destroyed believers who started out with high resolve to honor Christ in the marketplace, do noble things with their lives, and pursue lofty goals. Company growth, travel, money, flirtation, pride - a series of distractions came across the trail. Each one was pursued just far enough to pull the Christian a bit further off the trail of what is most important.

REVIEW

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith . . . so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Heb. 12:2). Stay on the upward path, and watch out for those seductive distractions.

Praise God for: hearing our prayers!

Thank God for: praying people!

Ask God's forgiveness for: Taking credit for what He's done!

Ask God to help: us recognize His answers!

Ask God to supply our need for : dependency on Him!

PREVIEW

We've seen this same formula destroy businesses. A company that loses sight of its true strengths, makes unwise decisions because of unrelated acquisitions, and discovers itself hopelessly diversified across too broad a range of products can fail quickly by virtue of losing its focus, marketing know-how, and client base.

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

List the detractions that Satan has used in your life to create a stronghold. Write a prayer asking God to take your thoughts captive and keep you focused.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

INNERVIEW

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Rules For Radiant Living

October 3

" But since we belong to the day, let us be self controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and hope of salvation as a helmet." — 1 Thessalonians 5:8

1. TODAY I WILL NOT STRIKE

BACK: If someone is rude, if someone is impatient, if someone is unkind... I will not respond in a like manner.

2. TODAY I WILL ASK GOD TO

BLESS MY "ENEMY": If I come across someone who treats me harshly or unfairly, I will quietly ask GOD to bless that individual. I understand the "enemy" could be a family member, neighbor, co-worker or stranger.

3. TODAY I WILL BE CAREFUL

ABOUT WHAT I SAY: I will carefully choose and guard my words being certain that I do not spread gossip.

4. TODAY I WILL GO THE

EXTRA MILE: I will find ways to help share the burden of another person.

5. TODAY I WILL FORGIVE:

I will forgive any hurts or injuries that come my way.

6. TODAY I WILL DO

SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEONE: I will reach out and conscientiously bless the life of someone with a random act of kindness.

7. TODAY I WILL TREAT OTHERS THE WAY I WISH TO BE TREATED:

I will practice the golden rule - "Do unto others as I would have them do unto me" - with everyone I encounter.

8. TODAY I WILL RAISE THE SPIRITS OF SOMEONE WHO IS DISCOURAGED:

My smile, my words, my expression of support, can make the difference to someone who is wrestling with life.

9. TODAY I WILL NURTURE MY

BODY: I will eat less; I will eat only healthy foods. I will thank GOD for my body.

10. TODAY I WILL GROW

SPIRITUALLY: I will spend a little more time in prayer today. I will begin reading something spiritual or inspirational today. I will find a quiet place (at some point during this day) and listen to GOD'S voice!!!

Praise God for: His positive outlook!

Thank God for: loving supporters!

Ask God's forgiveness for: grumbling and complaining!

Ask God to help: chronic complainers and negative thinkers!

Ask God to supply our need for : positive outlook!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Is God asking you to do something today? If you're feeling that it is too difficult or beyond your reach, tell Him about it and place it in His hands.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Pursue God

October 4

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” - Psalms 27:4

We live in an age where people seek everything more than they seek God. We seek power, position, prestige, possession and prominence more than the presence of God.

God desires and deserves to be sought after. He is looking for people in pursuit of HIM. He is looking for men and women, who love the giver more than the gifts.

PREVIEW

God receives his joy from watching us pursue him, but He also rewards those who diligently seek after Him. “After” is a pursuing term. Several years ago my daughter ran through the house from outdoors. When asked why she was running indoors, she responded, “The cat’s after me daddy”. “After” is a pursuing term. When God says, “David is a man after my own heart”, he was saying David is a man who pursues my heart. He’s seeking to know me and how to please me. That’s an AFTER WE OUGHT TO BE AFTER.

We usually worship what we pursue. Be careful what you pursue, what you chase after, because whatever you pursue can become your God. So make sure your pursuit

is big enough to be your God and able to handle what you cannot handle .

INNERVIEW

God says to Samuel, “While you were weeping over Israel I went on a man hunt. I found me a man after my own heart. (1Sam. 16:1-13)

I never go looking for anything I can’t find. I have found a man after my own heart. He’s not perfect, clean or righteous. He’s not a pattern of my heart, he is a man after my heart, he’s pursuing my heart”.

REVIEW

“ I found David out on a hill dancing before me. He was not doing it for show or fame, because there was nobody out there , just he and I. He was there in the middle of the woods, just loving me. He does not have designer clothes, degrees, material possessions or community visibility. He doesn’t have social prestige, religious clout or priestly training. He only has a desire to know me. David was there by himself just worshipping me, singing me songs and praising my name.”

Daily Sunshine In The Son

When it comes to resting your soul, there is no place like the Great House of God. "I'm asking Yahweh for one thing," wrote, "only one thing: to live with him in his house my whole life long. I'll contemplate his beauty, I'll study at his feet. That is the only quiet secure place in a noisy world." (Psalms 27:4-5 MSG)

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Praise God for: His infiniteness!

Thank God for: today!

Ask God's forgiveness for: living for someday!

Ask God to help: today to be a cheerful and productive one!

Ask God to supply our need for : passion for today!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What adjustments can you make today to obey, thus allowing God more control in your life.

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Being Blessed By Blessing God

October 5

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” -Psalms 27:4

David is called a man after God’s heart because he was in pursuit of God’s heart. He had a desire to know God intimately. Out in the middle of the woods alone, he was often found blessing God.

God seems to say “I’m going to bless him because he’s blessing me. I’m going to brag on him, because he brags on me. I’m going to promote him, because he promotes me. I’m going to honor him, because he honors me.

PREVIEW

God heard David say things like...“the earth is the LORD’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein”. (Psalms 24:1)

He’s singing me songs, writing me poetry, and blowing me kisses. He’s flirting with me, and romancing me. He’s telling me how good I am.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalms 27:1)

He calls me his strength and his life, his shelter in a time of storm,

his shield in war and his bridge over troubled water.”

REVIEW

HE KEEPS CALLING ME...

“Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name. (2) Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: (3) Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, (4) Who redeemeth thy life from destruction.” (Psalms 103:1-4)

- A Sin-Bearer
- An Iniquity-Atoner
- A Transgression-Remover
- A Name-Changer
- A Heart-Healer
- A Mind-Cleanser
- A Sorrow-Sharer
- A Burden-Bearer
- A Storm-Stiller
- A Need-Supplier
- A Peace-Provider
- A Company-Keeper
- A Joy Giver !!!

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Psalms 23:1).

INNERVIEW

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: His awesome power!

Thank God for: true light!

Ask God's forgiveness for: relying on my own power!

Ask God to help: the powerless!

Ask God to supply our need for : the power of the cross!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Make a list of both short-term and long-term goals. Pray over them and ask God to help you fulfill each one.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Know God Intimately

October 6

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” -Psalms 27:4

PREVIEW

We catch a hint of how to know God intimately, from God's dealing with Elijah. Remember the command to Elijah was to hide thyself. (1Kings 17:2-6) It was a command to **go hide thyself** in some narrow gorge uninvaded by human footsteps, fenced in by nature to form a prophet's chamber. Go into silence. Go where no depleting distractions prevail. Retire into a lonely place for meditation. Generate power before you try to impart power. Forsake the crowd for the closet. Leave the street for secrecy. Give up your hurry for the hush. *“Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalms 46:10)*

INNERVIEW

After the command to HIDE THYSELF came the commandment to SHOW THYSELF. (1Kings 18:10) *“And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.”* We must go to the private place WITH God before we go to the public place FOR God. We must spend time in the closet WITH God, before engaging in the conflict for God. We ought to see the face of God before we see the face of men. We need to get the discipline of the private place, to know how to

prepare for victory in the public place. We need the solitary place in order to have the sanctifying place. After the hiding comes the showing. After the silence comes the speaking. After the closet, comes the conflict. After Cherith, Carmel. You must have praying power, before you can have witnessing power.

REVIEW

How do you begin to know somebody intimately?

- (1) You must spend time with them.
- (2) You must talk to them.
- (3) You must listen to them.
- (4) You must study their ways.
- (5) You must seek to please them

Praise God for: victory over boredom!

Thank God for: setting me free!

Ask God's forgiveness for: making do!

Ask God to help: the spiritually dead to find life!

Ask God to supply our need for: more intimacy with Him!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Is there anything in your life that seems too difficult for you? What action would allow you to take a leap of faith and let God show you that He can give you victory in this area?

Talking To God Frequently

October 7

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...”-Psalms 27:4

You can talk to God, because God listens. Your voice matters in heaven. He takes you very seriously. When you enter his presence, he turns to you to hear your voice. No need to fear that you will be ignored. Even if you stammer or stumble, even if what you have to say impresses no one, it impresses God, and he listens. He listens to the painful plea of the elderly in the rest home. He listens to the gruff confessions of a death-row inmate. When the alcoholic begs for mercy, when the spouse seeks guidance, when the business man steps off the street into the chapel, God listens intently and carefully. He is interested in what interests you.

PREVIEW

When a friend told Jesus of Lazarus' illness he said, "Lord, the one you love is sick". He did not base his appeal on the imperfect love of the one in need, but on the perfect love of the Saviour. He didn't say, "The one who loves you is sick." He said, "The one you love is sick." The power of the prayer, in other words, does not depend on the one who makes the prayer, but on the one who hears the prayer.

We can and must repeat the phrase in manifold ways. "The one you love is tired, sad, hungry, lonely, fearful, depressed." The words of the prayer vary, but the response never changes. The Savior hears the prayer. He silences heaven, so he won't miss a word. He hears the

prayer, because he has invited us to come boldly to the throne.

INNERVIEW

You may muzzle a man so that he cannot articulate a syllable, but you have not made it impossible for him to pray. You may cast a man into a dungeon and load his limbs with chains, keeping him from all manner of communication with his fellowmen, but you cannot keep him from having conversation with God. The door has never yet been forged, the dungeon never yet constructed, the adversary never get so mighty that one can keep God from His people.

If the world is ever again, to get on it's feet, the church will have to get on its knees. If we are too busy to pray, we are busier than we ought to be.

REVIEW

Remember, it is not the ARITHMETIC of our prayer, how many and how often. It is not the MELODY of our prayers, how sweet they sound and how rhythmic they are uttered. It is not the LOGIC of our prayers, how argumentative they appear. It is not the MECHANICS of prayer, how orderly they are arranged. IT IS THE FERVENCY OF SPIRIT WITH WHICH THEY ARE OFFERED, and the power of the God to whom they are offered.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

The LORD hears His people when they cry out to him, and he saves them from all their troubles. Psalms 34:17

Praise God for: reaching those who are hard to reach!

Thank God for: His Guiding Word!

Ask God's forgiveness for: taking so many blessings for granted!

Ask God to help: provide guidance for every child!

Ask God to supply our need for: life changing principals!

Lord, today I thank You for:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Today, Lord, I need

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Pursuing God Regularly

October 8

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” -Psalms 27:4

How long since you gave the LORD a portion of undiluted, uninterrupted time listening to his voice, studying his ways and seeking his will? If you spent time reading the Gospels, observing the spiritual life of Jesus, a distinct pattern would be observed. He spent regular time with God, praying and listening. Mark says, “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35 NIV). Luke tells us, “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16 NIV). Let me ask the obvious. If Jesus, the Son of God, the sinless Savior of mankind, thought it worthwhile to clear his calendar to pray, wouldn't we be wise to do the same?

PREVIEW

Not only did he spend regular time with God in prayer, he spent regular time in God's Word. We don't find Him opening a leather-bound personalized copy of the Bible, but we do however, see him in the throes of the wilderness temptation, using the Word of God to deal with Satan. Three times he is tempted, and each time he repels the attack with the phrase: “It is written in the Scriptures” (Luke 4:4,8, 12), and then he quotes the verse. Jesus is so familiar with Scripture that he not only knows the verse, he knows how to use it.

INNERVIEW

I am aware that many of you are experiencing a difficult challenge to have a daily meditation and devotion. Some of you have tried before and were not successful. Others have a hard time concentrating. And everyone is busy. So rather than spend time with God, listening to his voice, we are tempted to let others spend time with Him and allow us to benefit from their experience. Would this rational work in any other areas of your life?

You don't say, “Vacations are such a hassle, packing bags and traveling. I'll send someone else on vacation for me. When he returns, I'll hear all about it and be spared all the inconvenience.” Would you do this? I, didn't think so! Do you allow someone to eat on your behalf? Do you say, “Chewing is such a bother. My jaws grow so tired, and the variety of tastes is so overwhelming. I'm going to hire someone to chew my food, and I'll just swallow whatever is given to me.” Have you ever entertained such a thought? Probably not!! There are certain things no one can do for you and spending time with God is one of them.

REVIEW

Spending time with God is a firsthand experience. When God asks for your attention, he doesn't want you to send a substitute; he wants you. He invites you to vacation in his splendor. He invites you to feel the touch of his hand. He invites you to feast at his table. He wants to spend time with you. And with a little training, your time with God can be the highlight of your day.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: being a God of order!

Thank God for: daily glimpses of His glory!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my overly crowded agenda!

Ask God to help: people dreading today!

Ask God to supply our need for : untangled days!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

Love God Dearly

October 9

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” -Psalms 27:4

My determined purpose is that I may know Him-that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly.

PREVIEW

The truth is-you are as close to God as you choose to be. Intimate friendship with God is a choice, not an accident. You must intentionally seek it. Like any friendship, you must work at developing your friendship with God. It won't happen by accident. It takes desire, time, and energy. If you want a deeper, more intimate connection with God you must learn to honestly share your feelings with him, trust him when he asks you to do something, learn to value what he values, be interested in what he's interested in, care about what he cares about, and desire his friendship more than anything else.

Perhaps you were passionate about God in the past but you've lost that desire. That was the problem of the Christians in Ephesus-they had left their first love. They did all the right things, but out of duty, not love. If you've just been going through the motions spiritually, don't be surprised when God allows pain in your life.

INNERVIEW

Rick Warren, correctly insists that pain is the fuel of passion-it energizes us with an intensity to change that we don't normally possess. C. S. Lewis said, "Pain is God's megaphone." It is God's way of arousing us from spiritual lethargy. Your problems are not punishment; they are wake-up calls from a loving God. God is not mad at you; he's mad about you, and he will do whatever it takes to bring you back into fellowship with him. But there is an easier way to regain your passion for God: Start asking God to give it to you, and keep on asking until you have it. Pray this throughout your day. "Lord, more than anything else, I want to know you intimately."

REVIEW

God told the captives in Babylon, "When you get serious about finding me and desire me more than anything else, I'll make sure you won't be disappointed. Jeremiah 29:13 [Msg]."

There is nothing, absolutely nothing, more important than developing a friendship with God. It's a relationship that will last forever.

Praise God for: life's adventures!

Thank God for: family!

Ask God's forgiveness for: fear of new things!

Ask God to help: feel His protection!

Ask God to supply our need for : a sense of adventure!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Love God Dearly (2)

October 10

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” - **Psalms 27:4**

PREVIEW

When it comes to resting your soul, there is no place like the Great House of God. “I’m asking Yahweh for one thing,” wrote, “only one thing: to live with him in his house my whole life long. I’ll contemplate his beauty, I’ll study at his feet. That is the only quiet secure place in a noisy world.” (Psalms 27:4-5 MSG)

What is this house of God which David seeks? Is David describing a physical structure? Does he long for a building with four walls and a door through which he can enter but never exit? I think not. Our Lord does not live in temples built by human hands (Acts 17:24). When David says, “I will live in the house of the LORD forever” (Psalms 23:6), he is not saying he wants to get away from people. He is saying that he yearns to be in God’s presence, wherever he is!

INNERVIEW

If you could ask God for one thing, what would you request? David tells us what he would ask. He longs to live in the house of God. I emphasize the word **live**, because it deserves to be emphasized.

David doesn’t want to chat. He doesn’t desire a cup of coffee on the back porch. He doesn’t ask for a meal or to spend an evening in God’s house. He wants to move in with him...forever. He is asking for his own room...permanently. He doesn’t want to be stationed in God’s house, he longs to retire there. He doesn’t seek a temporary assignment, but rather a lifelong residence!

REVIEW

“One thing I desire,” not many things. I’m not after fame and fortune, power nor position. I’m not looking for titles. I don’t want to be in a club or club. One thing I desire, one thing I want bad enough to get out of my comfort zone, and go after. That is to know God intimately and to love him dearly. I want it bad enough to extend myself, to pursue it rigorously, to go after it. **I WANT TO KNOW GOD INTIMATELY AND LOVE GOD DEARLY.**

Praise God for: His knowledge!

Thank God for: wisdom born of experience!

Ask God’s forgiveness for: not honoring seasoned saints!

Ask God to help: the world’s youth!

Ask God to supply our need for : the gift of years!

Daily Sunshine In The Son

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

To Know Him Is To Love Him

October 11

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” - Psalms 27:4

The “one thing I desire”, serious enough to get out of my comfort zone and pursue is to know God intimately and love him dearly. I desire this enough to extend myself and pursue it rigorously. **I WANT TO KNOW GOD INTIMATELY AND LOVE GOD DEARLY.**

joy and the life of faith; we should love Him enough to please Him. His will must become our will. **I WANT TO OBEY A PLAN THAT PLEASES HIM. I WANT TO BELONG TO A CHURCH THAT PLEASES HIM. I WANT TO WEAR A NAME THAT PLEASES HIM. I WANT TO WORSHIP IN A WAY THAT PLEASES HIM.**

PREVIEW

We love him because he first loved us. How do you know God loves you? He gives us many evidences: God loves you; you're never out of his sight. He cares about every detail of your life. He has good plans for your life. He forgives you; and is lovingly patient with you. God loves you infinitely more than you can imagine.

For after all, He's the...
FOUNDATION that never shakes
TRUTH that never lies
FRIEND that never forsakes
CONQUEROR that never loses
SUPPLY that never quits
FOUNTAIN that never clogs

REVIEW

The greatest expression of God's love was the sacrifice of his son. “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). If you want to know how much you matter to God, look at Christ with his arms outstretched on the cross, saying, “I love you this much! I'd rather die than live without you.”

LIGHT that never dims
DELIVERER that never disappoints
KING that never ages
LORD that never berates
SHEPHERD that never overlooks
BEGINNING that never ends
BEAUTY that never pales
COMFORT that never departs
PHYSICIAN that never 'charges'
STAR that never falls
HELP that never hinders
PRIZE that never withers
JOY that never subsides
MASTER that never intrudes
WAY that never deceives
HOPE that never fades
ROCK that never moves
STRENGTH that never weakens

INNERVIEW

Since love is the energy of life, the motive of praise, the heartbeat of worship, the center of

Trust God Fully

October 12

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” -**Psalms 27:4**

PREVIEW

God could trust David because David trusted God. Therefore, God promoted David, because David promoted God. So, we are not at all surprised to find that in David's life no honor was denied him.

No tribute was withheld from him. Every vault or every band in the nation was open to him. Every piece of paper currency had his picture on it. Every man was ready to defend him. Every woman was ready to gratify him. Every newspaper published his exploits, and magnified his face on the front page.

INNERVIEW

GOD TRUSTED DAVID, BECAUSE DAVID TRUSTED GOD! David learned well the lesson his father taught him “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The Hebrew word for “trust” is BATACH, meaning “to rely on”. Another word akin to trust is the Hebrew word for lean “SHAAN”, meaning to place confidence in”. At the root of this original Hebrew term is the idea of throwing oneself down and lying extended on the ground, casting all hopes for the present and the future upon another thus finding shelter and security there.

We are *commanded* by our Lord to cast ourselves fully and absolutely at His feet.

Throw yourself completely upon the Lord-that is, cast all your present and future needs on Him who is your intimate Savior-God...finding in Him your security and safety. Do this with all your mind , feeling and will. In order to make this possible, you must present your concern in each of your circumstances. Then He (having taken full control of the situation) will thoroughly smooth out and straighten your paths, removing each obstacle along the way (Proverbs 3:5,6 THE LANE'S TRANSLATION).

REVIEW

IF GOD FOR SOME REASON, HASN'T given you your miracle, keep trusting him. If he has not supplied your need, keep on trusting him. If he has not solved your problem yet, keep trusting him. If he has not removed your burden, keep trusting him. If he has not calmed your crisis, keep trusting him. If he has not answered your prayer, keep trusting him.

GO AHEAD AND TRUST HIM...

- He has never failed a test
- He has never lost a battle
- He has never told a lie
- He has never misunderstood a situation
- He has never broken a vow
- He has never refused an individual
- He has never disappointed a soul

Partial Obedience

October 13

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...” - Psalms 27:4

To obey God requires a believing and submissive spirit. You must believe that whatever he says is motivated out of love for you. If you are to obey, you must also believe that whatever he commands is for your best interest. This requires a submissive spirit.

PREVIEW

In today's competitive culture we are taught to never give up or give in therefore we don't hear much about surrendering and submitting. If winning is everything, surrendering is unthinkable. We would rather talk about winning, succeeding, overcoming, and conquering than yielding, submitting, obeying, and surrendering.

Submit comes from the Greek word “hupotasso”, which means, "to get in order under". If you go to a military parade, each soldier gets in order under his officers. In a common sense, submission means to "yield authority". When you approach an intersection with a stop sign or a yield sign, you must submit to cross traffic. To submit literally means to “voluntarily get under someone else's mission”.

INNERVIEW

Surrendering and submitting to God is the heart of worship and obedience. We give ourselves to him, not out of fear or duty, but in love, “because he first loved us”.

God is not a cruel slave driver or a bully who uses brute force to coerce us into submission. He doesn't try to control our will, but woos us to himself, that we might offer ourselves freely to him. God is a lover and a liberator, and surrendering to him brings freedom, not bondage. When we completely surrender ourselves to Jesus, we discover that he is not a tyrant, but a savior; not a boss, but a brother; not a dictator, but a friend.

The greatest expression of God's love was the sacrifice of his son. “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). If you want to know how much you matter to God, look at Christ with his arms outstretched on the cross, saying, “I love you this much! I'd rather die than live without you.”

REVIEW

The opposite of a submissive spirit is rebellious spirit. To fail to do what God says because you do not know what he wants you to do is bad enough. But to know what he wants and fail to do it, is called rebellion. Read again **1Sam. 15: 20-23** to see the seriousness of rebellion.

1Samuel 15: 23 God calls partial obedience rebellion and he says that rebellion is as great a sin as witchcraft.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: reaching those who are hard to reach!

Thank God for: His Guiding Word!

Ask God's forgiveness for: taking so many blessings for granted!

Ask God to help: provide guidance for every child!

Ask God to supply our need for : life changing principals!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Partial Obedience (2)

October 14

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...”-Psalms 27:4

We surrender and submit to God out of appreciation not intimidation. Surrendering is demonstrated in obedience. You say “yes, Lord” to whatever he asks of you. To say “no Lord” is to speak a contradiction. You can’t call Him Lord when you refuse to obey him.

PREVIEW

Write in bold letters on the screen of your mental awareness. There is no such thing as partial obedience. **PARTIAL OBEDIENCE IS TOTAL DISOBEDIENCE.** To obey means to do what God says, when God says, like God says, for the reason God says.

A doctrinal application of this principle must be made for us to adequately appreciate the difference between obedience and partial obedience. What does it mean to do what he says? First, it means to do what he says, **WHEN** he says. The scripture reveals in Acts 20:7 that the New Testament Church met for worship on the first day of the week. Are we following the New Testament pattern of worship, if we choose to worship on Saturday the Sabbath Day? I think not. By doing so, we have not obeyed God, even if we are worshippers and regular in worship on the Sabbath Day. To obey God is to do what he says **WHEN** he says do it.

INNERVIEW

Acts 20:7 teaches us that the early church met for worship on the first day of the week and

communed, partook of the Lord’s Supper weekly. Why, weekly? Because “for as often as we eat the bread and drink the cup, we show the Lord’s death until he comes”(1Cor. 11:26). Some churches partake of the Lord’s Supper monthly, but the scriptures say weekly. Other churches partake bi-monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually and some never, but the scripture example is still weekly.

Second, to obey means to do what he says, **HOW** he says do it. The command and example for music in New Testament Worship is singing. In Eph. 5:19, the command is to sing. To sing and play, sing and beat, sing and pluck, sing and blow violates that command. Whenever specificity (when something is specifically required), the law of exclusion goes into effect. When someone tells you specifically what to do, he does not have to tell you what not to do. Therefore, when God commands us to sing, he does not have to tell us not to play, beat, pluck or blow. To obey is to merely, sing.

REVIEW

Third, to obey is to do what he says **AND ALL HE SAYS.** That means do no more or less than he says. To do less is to disobey. Remember there is no such thing as partial obedience. Partial obedience is total disobedience.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: reaching those who are hard to reach!

Thank God for: His Guiding Word!

Ask God's forgiveness for: taking so many blessings for granted!

Ask God to help: provide guidance for every child!

Ask God to supply our need for : life changing principals!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What holds first place in your life? In what ways have you tried to succeed and failed? What would it mean to you to give the Lord first place?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

A Desire To Know Him Better

October 15

One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life... ”-Psalms 27:4

I KNOW HIM, BUT I WANT TO KNOW HIM BETTER

I KNOW HIM AS...

A journey of time and the convener of eternity. (But I want to know him better)

The object of history's gaze and the bridegroom of the church. (But I want to know him better)

My Grandmother's God and my Grandfather's friend. (But I want to know him better)

My soul's full hope, my Anchor Sure and steadfast (But I want to know him better)

The light of my life and the hope of my days. (But I want to know him better)

Our purchase price at the gates of hell. (But I want to know him better)

I KNOW HIM AS...

- My Comfort in Crisis
 - My Help in Helplessness
 - My Friend in Loneliness
 - My Joy in Sorrow
 - My Peace in Perplexity
 - My Salvation in Sinfulness
 - My Solution in Problems
 - My Glory in Grief
- (But I want to know him better)

- My Wealth in Poverty
 - My Strength in Weakness
 - My Wisdom in Decisions
 - My Stability in Stumbling
 - My Victory in Battles
 - My Light in Darkness
- (But I want to know him better)

- My Deliverance in Defeat
 - My Forgiveness in Faults
 - My Assurance in Adversity
 - My Hope in Heartaches
 - My Song in the Night
 - My Faith in Fears
- BUT I WANT TO KNOW HIM BETTER**

Praise God for: His grace!
Thank God for: deep contentment!
Ask God's forgiveness for: worrying!
Ask God to help: the discontented!
Ask God to supply our need for : grace in every circumstance!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:
Have you studied God's commands and plans for your life? What does He want for your life?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

The Hurrier We Go!

October 16

"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" -Ephesians 6:5-8

What will your day be like today? Rushing to and fro? Trying to meet deadlines? Hustling to cover all the bases? And do you ever get a tension headache? Knots in your stomach? Pain in your chest? Ever find yourself sighing and feeling drained?

Some of us need to slow down dramatically. We will not stop, drop out or withdraw from responsibility only slow down the fevered pace! Smell the roses. Nurture a relationship. Be alone with God in a secret place.

PREVIEW

The epitome of our frantic pace may have been reached a while back. The New York Times told of a funeral home in Chicago that put in a drive-through so people could pay their respects without having to get out of their cars. "The working person doesn't have time to come in," said the owner. "They want to see the body, but they don't want to have to wait." A visitor drives to a speakerphone and pushes a button for service. An attendant asks whom he wishes to view. The person signs a register beneath the speakerphone, drives forward a few feet, and views a closed-circuit TV shot of the deceased in his or her coffin on a 25-inch screen.

INNERVIEW

When we are so rushed that we have to pay our respects to the dead in the same way we buy fast-food hamburgers, we're just too busy! But when did the rushing begin? When we couldn't find time to be with our families just to eat and talk? When we became too busy to cultivate friendships? When we are too rushed to say a table grace at meals?

REVIEW

Our culture promotes bigness, noisiness, hustle and bustle. But the metaphors of discipleship used by Jesus were frequently pictures of small and quiet things such as salt, seed, candles, or leaven.

If the pace of things in your life has become too hectic, ask God to show you the secret of peace, rest, and stillness this week. He is never too busy to listen to you.

"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Ephesians 6:5-8).

Praise God for: His touch!

Thank God for: all who touch my life!

Ask God's forgiveness for: my aloofness!

Ask God to help: us touch the lonely!

Ask God to supply our need for : a loving touch!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Do you have a growing desire to know God's will for your life? What, if anything, is keeping your heart from joy today?

When Great Deals Go Bad

October 17

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” - Rom 6:23

More than thirty years ago, a Frenchman named Andre-Francois Raffray made what he considered a "great deal" that could only benefit him. He agreed to pay a 90-year-old woman \$500 a month until she died. In return, he would own her sought-after grand apartment in the south of France when she died.

PREVIEW

There was nothing illegal about Raffray's contract with Jeanne Calment. Buying an apartment en viager (i.e., for life) is not uncommon in France. The elderly owner receives a predictable monthly income from the buyer; the buyer gets a bargain in real estate, in most cases. Even if he pays the owner for only a few months, the buyer inherits the property upon the owner's death.

But this particular deal went sour. The Guinness Book of Records recently listed Ms. Calment as the world's oldest person able to document her age. She turned 120 last year! Mr. Raffray died on Christmas Day of 1995 ... after paying more than \$184,000 for an apartment he never lived in or owned. Under French law, his wife, children, and grandchildren will have to continue paying the elderly lady \$500 per month until she dies.

INNERVIEW

The apartment in question is valued at less than half the amount already paid to Ms. Calment. What looked like a sure thing became a misfortune of major proportion for Mr. Raffray and his family.

Satan offers us similar deals: a flirtation, juggling figures, misrepresenting a product or service ... the possibilities are practically endless. And who will ever know? What will it matter? Others do things so much worse! Well, you know the rationalizations that come to mind.

REVIEW

The problem is, you begin to pay and pay and PAY. First, goes your self-respect. Then comes reputation. Next comes job or family. It seems so wrong that one could be asked to pay so much for what amounted to so little. But those are the breaks of this game called life.

Integrity is better kept than recovered. So watch out for those tawdry deals that offer you what you have no right to possess. They exact too high a price in the long run.

Praise God for: His warmth!

Thank God for: the security of a father's love!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not letting go of the past

Ask God to help: His word flow to all people!

Ask God to supply our need for : security in Him!

Clearer Vision

October 18

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" -James 1:3-4

INNERVIEW

It was the poet Robert Burns who wished for humanity the power to see ourselves as others see us. What insights would come to us! But what if we could see our lives as God does?

PREVIEW

If we could see as God sees, we would know that most of our fears never materialize. The majority of things most of us spend the bulk of our time worrying over, are never going to happen. So we waste energy and weaken ourselves for today's task. Foresight and precaution are one thing, but worry is something else. Jesus said, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

If we could see as God sees, we would realize that no problem will arise without resolution. In our gloomier moments of illness, financial stress, or personal problems, we muse over questions that seem to have no answers. But the Bible still promises: "God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

If we could see as God sees, we would understand that no problem comes without an attached blessing. The good end of a painful beginning can seldom be known in advance. So, in our anxiety, we tend to doubt that anything good can come from heartache. "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds," said Jesus' half-brother, "because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance".

If we could see as God sees, we would know that pain always signals the possibility for growth. Although we sometimes sigh for a world free of difficulties, we know deep inside that such a world would create cold and unfeeling people. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

REVIEW

Through God's eyes, today may look very different from what you think you see. As my friend stated last week: "God's peace is greater than your pain, and his promise is greater than your loss." So trust the One with clearer vision.

Praise God for: directing my path!

Thank God for: life's disappointments!

Ask God's forgiveness for: doubting his guidance !

Ask God to help: the hurting!

Ask God to supply our need for : grace in every circumstance!

Celebrating What God Sees In You

October 19

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..." -1Samuel 16:6

In 1Samuel 16, we read the story of how David was anointed king. God spoke to Samuel, the prophet, saying... (v. 1) I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen of his sons to be king. " Samuel went to see Jesse and told him to gather his sons so they could join him in the sacrifice. When Jesse and his sons arrived, Samuel saw the eldest, Eliab, and thought... (v. 6) "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

PREVIEW

(v. 7) But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Samuel worked his way through the sons of Jesse---seven of them---and each time he knew "The Lord has not chosen this one." So Samuel said to Jesse...(v. 11-12) Are these all the sons you have?

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

When David arrived, the Lord spoke to Samuel and said... (v. 12) "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

(v. 13) So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power.

INNERVIEW

This passage of scripture teaches us some things about the grace of God, and how he chooses to use us for his glory. We are reminded here that when God looks at us, there are some things he sees and some things he doesn't see. Remember God doesn't see you as others see you. Others see you according to their limited knowledge and understanding; God sees you as you really are, and for what you can become. People may see you the same as David's family saw him, but God doesn't.

God promotes the David's of the world because they pursue Him. God said "I will promote him, because he promotes me". *I Promote Him Because He Promotes Me.*

He has no training, but I will make him a king.

He has not been groomed, but I will make him a king.

REVIEW

He didn't grow up in the palace, but I will make him a king

He's not one of the favorite people in the palace, they don't even know his name, but I will make him a king.

His own daddy doesn't support him or encourage him, but I will make him a king.

His brothers don't think much of him, they see no potential in him, but I'm going to make him a king.

Seeing The You That Makes You, You

October 20

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..." -1Samuel 16:6

God doesn't see in you the same as others see. He sees what they can't see. He sees your heart. The world may judge you according to your looks, money or status but God looks at what really matters. He looks at your heart. And it's as simple as this: When your heart belongs to God, he can use you. "

PREVIEW

That insight is based on the assumption that you understand that man is a trichotomy comprised of body, soul and spirit. Through the **body** we communicate with the world without utilizing the five senses, giving us world consciousness. With the **soul**, which is comprised of mind, will, conscience, and emotions, we are able to communicate with the world within, giving us self consciousness. In addition, with the **spirit** (breath-life) we are able to communicate with the world above, giving us God consciousness.

The scriptures refer to man's soul as his heart, or his inner being. The invisible part (or real part) can only be seen by God. (I Sam. 16:7). We have been created as rational beings (mind), volitional beings (will), moral beings (conscience), and emotional beings (emotions).

INNERVIEW

The **mind** is the center of our cognitive behavior. With the mind we think reason and understand (Proverbs 23:7 Mark 2:8 Matthew 9:4; Matthew 15:19; Romans 10:10). This includes knowing, remembering, perceiving, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating.

The **will** is the center for our volitional behavior. It is the mental faculty by which one deliberately chooses or decides upon a course of action (Dan. 1:8). The **conscience** is the center for our ethical behavior. It is the faculty of recognizing the distinction between right and wrong in regard to one's own conduct (Acts 2:36,37; Acts 5:33; Acts 7:54). The **emotions** are the center of our affective behavior. They are the manifestation of feelings as a result of the agitation of our passions or sensibilities (John 14:1). They include such complex feelings as love, fear, resentment, anger, compassion, and a wide range of other human emotions.

REVIEW

The ultimate challenge in making men whole and growing spiritually is to consciously nurture all four components of the soul, thus the goal of spiritual growth is not to make you happy but to make you whole and holy.

Praise God for: His gifts!

Thank God for: the seasons of life!

Ask God's forgiveness for: neglected gifts!

Ask God to help: His gifts!

Ask God to supply our need for : hearing His voice!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

What do you really hunger for? Are there areas in your life that you have not surrendered to God? Tell Him about it.

God Sees Your Value

October 21

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..."-1Samuel 16:6

During World War II, London was frequently bombed. During these trying months Leslie Weather was an air raid warden. He walked the streets ministering to those who may have been hurt after one of those frightening and frantic raids.

PREVIEW

Following one of those raids, Weather recalls finding a little eight year old boy sitting on a curb among the ruins, sobbing his heart out. With passionate concern and loving gestures, Weathers went to the child and inquired, "Son, where is your father?" "He away fighting overseas", the boy replied. "Where is your mother"? The child sobbed, "My mother, my brother and my sister were killed in the bombing". "Do you have grand parents"? Weathers asked. He said, "No"! "Do you have uncles and aunts?" The boy looked up and said, "No". Weather asked, "Well, son who are you"? The lad with piercing eyes and trembling voice said, "Mister, I ain't nobody's nothing".

You may thinking that you too are "nobody's nothing", but you are important to God. You are the crowning act of all God's creation and terrestrial developments. You are made in the image of Adam and the liking of yourself. And the unforgettable word is "God made you - And my God makes no junk".

INNERVIEW

1. You may look at me, but not know me.

2. You may know the house I live in, but you've never seen the bed I sleep in.
3. You see the smile on my face, but you know nothing about the ache in my heart.
4. You may know my presence, but not know my loneliness.
5. You may know my pleasure, but not see my pain.
6. You don't know me, but thank God, amazing grace has always been my song of praise.

REVIEW

I don't know why Jesus came to love me so, but I thank God he looked beyond my faults and saw my needs. He knows my weakness and he knows my strength. He knows my wants and he knows my needs (Psalms 24:1,2 Psalms 100:3).

Look through the crimson lens of Calvary and see how much you are worth to God. Rom. 5:8 "Greater Love has never been shown." Jesus came down from the heights of deity to the depths of humanity to die not just my sins, but the sins of the whole world (Isaiah 53:6-9).

Praise God for: His Joy!

Thank God for: inspiration

Ask God's forgiveness for: dampened enthusiasm!

Ask God to help: talented people use their talents!

Ask God to supply our need for : quiet in life's storms!

God Sees Your Potential

October 22

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..." -1Samuel 16:6

You may not have had much to do with where you've been, but you **HAVE EVERYTHING TO DO WITH WHERE YOU ARE GOING**, and what you are becoming. It all depends on who you think you are.

PREVIEW

I don't know who you think you are?

To the merchant you might just be a customer.

To the airline you may be just a passenger.

To the doctor you may just be a patient.

To a lawyer you may be nothing but a client.

To the thief you may just be a victim.

To a robber, you're just a robbee.

To an entertainer you're nothing but a fan.

To a teacher you are a student.

To a counselor you are a counselee.

To an employer you are an employee.

To your child you are a parent.

To your family you are relative.

To the social security office you ain't nothing but a number.

To the government you're nothing but a citizen.

To the community you may be just a neighbor.

BUT TO GOD YOU ARE A SON OR A DAUGHTER, because you have been born again from above. **YOU ARE SOMEBODY SPECIAL....YOU ARE A KING'S KID**. You have **ROYAL BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH MY SPIRITUAL VEINS**. Your **DADDY** is "The Unmoved Mover" - "Eternal Energy". The Unknown Absolute - Life Essence - **THE GOVERNOR OF THE UNIVERSE**. As such, you have potential, the sky is the limit as to what you can become.

REVIEW

What lies behind you is history and what lies before you is future. These are both tiny matter compared to what lies within you. You may not be able to change your past, and your future is yet un-lived. The present provides you with opportunities to maximize your life and the ability that lives within you.

Potential is unexposed ability, reserved power, untapped strength, uncapped capabilities, unused success, dormant gifts, hidden talents, and latent power.

Potential is what you can do that you have not done. Where you can go that you have not gone. Who you can be that you have not been. What you can imagine that you have not imagined. How far you can reach that you have not reached. What you can see that you have not seen. What you can accomplish that you have not accomplished.

INNERVIEW

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Praise God for: His goodness!

Thank God for: spiritual teachers!

Ask God's forgiveness for: not encouraging others!

Ask God to help: those who feel friendless!

Ask God to supply our need for : realistic goals!

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:

Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal to you the person He made you to be. What thoughts did He bring to mind?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Lord, today I thank You for:

Today, Lord, I need

God Sees You As Necessary

October 23

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..." -1Samuel 16:6

One of the most telling aspects of this story is the fact that Jesse brought his sons to Samuel to be evaluated as to which one would be the potential king, David wasn't included. He was left with the sheep. Apparently, in Jesse's opinion, David was so unlikely to be named as king that he was left out of the process completely. As far as his family was concerned, David was unnecessary.

PREVIEW

We see this attitude again in the following chapter, when Goliath was defying the armies of Israel. David came to the scene of the battle and was scolded by his brothers for showing up. His brother Eliab said to him, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." (1 Samuel 17:28)

I think we have all been in situations where we have been told, directly or indirectly, by "those in charge" that we have nothing to offer the situation. We have been told, "Your help is not needed here; we can get by without you."

INNERVIEW

In God's eyes, you are not unnecessary. He doesn't leave you out.

There is something you can do for him; there's a contribution you can make. God never puts you down; but He never lets you off either. He liberates you so that you can do His work. He motives you so that you can make a contribution. Once you're freed from the sins that would tie you down, trap and oppress you, you can really soar. You don't have to make it on your own power. When you slip, stumble and fall, there is someone who really loves you and He wants to help you. He will lift you up and set you free to become all that you can be.

I *can't* is a quitter;
I *don't know* is too lazy;
I *wish I could* is a wisher;
I *might* is waking up;
I *will try* is on his feet;
I *can* is on the way;
I *will* is at work;
I *did* is now the boss.

REVIEW

You can face ever challenge.
You can Bear every burden.
You can Climb every mountain.
You can Endure every hardship.
For when you are weak, he makes you strong.
When you are down he picks you up.
When you are empty he FILLS you up.
When you are lost he leads you.
When you are sinking he saves you. AND
When you die he will make you alive.

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Losers can become winners.
Sick folk can be healed.
Weak folks can be strong.
Blind folks can see.
Oppressed folks can be free.
Hungry folks can be filled.
Dead folks can rise up.
Broken folks can be fixed.
Delinquent folks can excel and succeed.
And estranged folks can be reunited.

Praise God for: His steadfast Word!
Thank God for: teaching me responsibility!
Ask God's forgiveness for: broken promises!

Ask God to help: trouble pass us by!
Ask God to supply our need for : follow-through n
commitments!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:
Are you more concerned about what people think about you than what God thinks about you? Talk to God about it.

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

God Sees Beyond Your Limitations

October 24

"Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord ..."-1Samuel 16:6

After Samuel had seen Jesse's older sons, he asked... (v. 11) "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep." Jesse knew that one of his sons would be anointed king by the prophet Samuel, but David wasn't considered because of his age. As far as Jesse was concerned, David was too young to be king- - but he wasn't too young as far as God was concerned.

PREVIEW

In some ways today we allow our youth to grow up too fast; they're exposed to some experiences long before they should be. But in other ways, we allow them to grow too slowly; we are often guilty of telling them, "You're just a kid. What can you hope to accomplish at your age?"

Let me also quickly add that you're never too old to make a difference, either. Though there may come a time when we retire from our jobs, we will never retire from our true vocation in life-serving God. We never outlive our usefulness to him. John Glenn orbited space at the age of 70. Norman Vincent Peale preached until his death at 98. Strom Thurmond served Congress well into his 90's. You'll never outlive your usefulness.

INNERVIEW

Samuel asked about David and was told... (v. 11) "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep." Tending the sheep. That is all they thought David was good for. They didn't see his possibilities. They didn't see his courage or his leadership skills. They couldn't have guessed that in the very near future David would boldly stand before Goliath on the battlefield and win one of the greatest victories in Israel's history. They didn't know that David would lead a mighty band of warriors through victory after victory. They didn't know that David would govern his people with the hand of God on his life. All they knew about David was that he was the brother who took care of the sheep while they applied for the job of king.

You may be tempted to see yourself as "just a school teacher"; or "just a construction worker"; or "just a businessman"; or "just a student"; or "just a musician" or "just any self-limiting concept. But God doesn't see you according to your limitations. He sees you according to your possibilities.

REVIEW

We have a tendency to idolize rock stars; however, we realize rock stars serve a limited role in the human endeavor.

Common Traits Of Winners

October 25

*"An intelligent man aims at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions" -
Proverbs 17:24*

Losers see things as they are and ask why, winners see things as they could be and ask why not.

Losers look through every difficulty and see difficulty. Losers believe because they see, and believe only what they see, and because they don't see much, they don't believe and because their faith is unlimited, their sight is limitless.

Losers see as far as they go, but winners go as far as they see. Losers say, I believe because I know. Winners say, I know because I believe.

A loser is afraid that he'll make a mistake, so he doesn't try, the winner knows that if he doesn't make a mistake, it is not likely that he will make anything.

Winners work with a purpose - Winners have a sense of mission. They know where they are headed and have figured out how to get there. They are focused. They plan their work and work their plan. "An intelligent man aims at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions" (Proverbs 17:24).

Winners insist on Integrity - Nothing lasts without integrity. Winners tell the truth - - then they do not have to worry about being caught in a lie.

"Dishonest gain will never last, so why take the risk?" (Proverbs 13:11)

Winners never make excuses - Winners never play the blame game. They accept responsibility for their mistakes. People who are good at making excuses are rarely good at much else. "The lazy man is full of excuses" (Proverbs 22:13).

Winners never stop learning - All leaders are learners. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading. Dinosaurs became extinct because they couldn't adapt to a changing environment. Can you? "The intelligent man is always open to new ideas -- in fact, he looks for them" (Proverbs 18:15).

Winners economize time and energy - We all have the same amount of time, but winners manage it better. They realize that time is more valuable than money. They work smarter, not harder. "There is a right time and a right way to do everything" (Proverbs 2:9).

Winners stick with it - Winners do not know how to quit. They keep on "keeping on". They learn from their failures. Winners realize that discouragement is a choice. You can get up and start over. "For if a righteous man fails seven times, he rises again" (Proverbs 24:16).

Daily Sunshine In The Son

Ask God to help you build these six qualities into your life. "In everything you do, put God first, and He will direct you and crown your efforts with success."
Proverbs 3:6 (Living Bible)

- Praise God for:** His excellence!
- Thank God for:** taking no shortcuts in building my character!
- Ask God's forgiveness for:** taking shortcuts!
- Ask God to help:** people pressured by deadlines!
- Ask God to supply our need for:** a commitment to excellence!

DIGGING DEEPER AND REACHING HIGHER:
How do you feel about your spiritual life? What does it mean to you that Jesus bought you with his life?

Journal for Digging Deeper:

Lord, today I thank You for:

Thank You for these answers to prayer:

I pray for the needs of others, especially

Today, Lord, I need

Knowing Who To Please

October 26

"I do not try to please myself, but him who sent me"- John 5:30

Have you been caught in the trap of trying to please everybody? Or at least caught in the dizzying trap of trying to please too many people? Or maybe just trying to please only two people — people with obvious conflicts of interest?

PREVIEW

Companies make this mistake with boards whose focus is unclear or conflicted. Small businesses often try to make too many people happy. Clubs, mothers, teachers, restaurants, politicians, children of divorced or fighting parents — all are subject to the stress of trying to please everybody. You just can not do it!

God can't please everybody. The farmer is praying for rain on his fields the same day a Scout leader is praying it will not rain out a camping trip. The autumn enthusiasts are praying for extended periods of fall color while those of us with debilitating allergies can't wait for the first couple of killing frosts. The elderly man who hopes for a mild winter without heavy snows because of his heart condition is counterbalanced by a fifth grader who prays for snow so he can miss school.

INNERVIEW

If God himself can't please everybody, should it surprise us that we can't?

Only a fool thinks he or she can do what is beyond God!

So whom should you try to please? Family members who want more of your time or a boss who wants more hours at the office or on the road? Your company's shareholders or your clients? Your quota or your conscience?

Maybe we should all take our cue on this one from Jesus. He said, "I don't try to please myself but him who sent me" (John 5:30). Everybody watched Jesus, and every pair of eyes had an expectation. Yet he kept his life in balance by honoring one supreme obligation, one highest overseer. His one boss was God. He had an audience of one and was dedicated to pleasing him above all else — and all others.

If my first question is "What does God want of me in this situation?" then my focus has been automatically centered. If you commit to doing the right thing above the pressing or politically correct thing, you have defined your moral duty to be more critical than any competing selfish interest. If you settle your heart on what God wants you to do, it will always be right to do that — no matter what anyone else thinks of it.

REVIEW

This rule of thumb does not settle every hard case, but it sets the right tone for a

When Life Crashes In On You

October 27

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. “ –James 1:2,3

This has been quite a week. Wednesday I had to do the proverbial “Reformat and Rebuild” on my computer Hard Drives. Just like most unexpected “thrills” of life, it came at a pitiful time. Quite honestly, I still do not know what happened – but with several years of sermons, lessons and several hundred fax numbers and e-mail addresses – I fell on my knees and thanked God for backups!

How do you handle life’s little crisis? What do you do when the project you have been working on falls through, perhaps you are laid off, or you get sick on the day of the big celebration? How do you respond when you are in the middle of the fast lane of life and you hit the proverbial speed bump?

Five Steps To A Successful Recovery

⌋ **CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS** – Often emotions cloud our view of reality. It is usually not as desperate as we feel that it is. Emotions should not be ignored, but handled and channeled in a constructive direction. *“Losing your temper causes a lot of trouble, but staying calm settles arguments.” Proverbs 15:18 CEV*

⌋ **DISCOVER WHAT WENT WRONG** – Did something you do contribute to the problem? Were you at fault? Was there something that you could have done differently? Was it a lack in planning? Ask yourself. Ask others. Ask God. It is amazing what can be learned when we listen! Find out what went wrong.

“Without good advice everything goes wrong – it takes careful planning for things to go right.” Proverbs 15:22 CEV

⌋ **MAKE NECESSARY CHANGES** – Rather than spending time fixing the blame, concentrate on fixing the problem. *“If you keep being stubborn after many warnings, you will suddenly discover you have gone too far.” Proverbs 29:1 CEV*

⌋ **LEARN THE LESSON(S)** – More than likely you are going to face a situation similar to this in the future. What will you do differently? If you take the same actions, do not expect different results! *“Everyone with good sense wants to learn.” Proverbs 18:15 CEV*

⌋ **GET ON WITH LIFE** – What is past is past. Remember the phrase “There is no use crying over spilt milk.” (or crashed hard drive). Once you have analyzed the situation, made the changes, learned the lessons, then get back in the game! No one ever scores while sitting on the bench! *“Forgetting what is behind, I struggle for what is ahead.” Philippians 3:13 CEV*

Praise God for: His availability to us!

Thank God for: hobbies!

Ask God's forgiveness for: being too busy for the important things of life !

Ask God to help: the elderly and the lonely find an audience!

Despising Work

October 28

"Delight yourself also in the Lord/And He shall give you the desires of your heart."
- Psalm 37:4

The newspaper ad in Oslo, Norway, read: "Tiresome and boring wholesale company seeks indolent people with a total lack of service- mindedness for a job that is completely without challenge." The article ran early in January of 1996 and garnered 130 applicants ... significantly more responses than an earlier ad for a "hard-working" and "friendly" person to work for an import company.

PREVIEW

Much of what is discouraging about today's world has to do with its attitude toward work. The modern theory of work seems to hold that relatively few jobs are "fulfilling" and that labor is endured only for the sake of earning money to pay for leisure and entertainment. Many resent the "lack of appreciation" for their efforts. "It's not in my job description!" cry others.

INNERVIEW

Paul wrote to men and women who had no choice about their jobs and who seldom received praise for anything. He encouraged them to see themselves as "doing the will of God" and to perform their assigned tasks "from your heart."

Writing to slaves (Indentured Servants) in the first-century Roman world, he added: "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Ephesians 6:5-8). Modern believers are surely called to do as much.

Do you have letters to dictate, type, or deliver today? Do it to God's glory! Are there sales calls to make or clients to service? Treat each person with whom you interact as if he or she were Christ himself! Write your report, total your customer's bill, or complete your article as a creative process in which you are partnering with God to do something useful!

REVIEW

It isn't just your product that is important ... whether goods, services, or personnel management. It is the process of integrity, respect for others, and commitment to excellence that marks your work. So let this be your guide this week: "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17).

At the end of a week lived by this principle, you might feel differently about your use of time than you did last week.

Looking Like Jesus In Desperate Times

October 29

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” - Romans 12:2

The local newspaper in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, carried the headline "Man Who Looks Like Jesus Arrives" the day after Carl Joseph came to town.

Joseph has wandered through forty-seven states and thirteen countries over the last nine years. A picture of him in the *Washington Post* looks very much like the Jesus of movies and storybooks. Flowing hair, beard, head at an angle, white robe — he has the standard look of a Hollywood Jesus of Nazareth.

PREVIEW

He is a 39-year-old man with Catholic background who sometimes hitchhikes but usually walks everywhere on bare feet. A *Post* story said: "He owns nothing but the robe and blanket he wears on his back and never takes money for any reason. For food and shelter, he relies on the goodwill of people he meets along the way. Somehow, he is always immaculate, down to the fingernails."

The controversial man who was once arrested in Toledo for trespassing at an adult theater draws big crowds. They listen to him for hours on his typical theme of God's love and grace. When he stops, hands go up. "Why do children die?" asks one. "Are angels real?" another inquires. "How can we be happy?"

INNERVIEW

Joseph does not claim to be Jesus, but he tries to model his life on the examples of Jesus. People trust him with their innermost thoughts. They tell him about their drug addiction or depression and ask him to pray with them.

I am not urging you to give up your business attire for white robes and bare feet. Perhaps Joseph is just "nutty", but there is more to the story . . .

A woman who had lost custody of her two sons because of drug addiction asked to talk to the man, and he obliged her. She has stayed clean since that day. A physician asked him to speak with a woman whose husband was dying. He did. They prayed together and she found peace in coping with her husband's death. We need someone to challenge our cynicism and invite us to focus on God.

REVIEW

The task of Christians is to furnish a sense of Jesus roaming the world. Wherever we go, the winsome aroma of his presence should surface.

The Burden of Boredom And The Space To Grow

October 30

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” –Galatians 6:18

One of the common complaints of people in our time is the monotony and boredom of life. I have a sneaking suspicion that this slant on life contributes to what we call "burnout." It also plays a role in certain high-risk behaviors that range from driving too fast to getting caught up in a marriage-destroying affair to experimenting with drugs.

PREVIEW

Monotony and boredom are self-inflicted wounds to the human spirit. If you have a routine, lackluster and sometimes tedious job, that does not mean you have to live a routine, lackluster, and tedious life. Maybe you need to change jobs. But that's not always possible — or necessary. Maybe you simply need to give yourself some additional space to grow.

Perhaps you've been to the fair and seen cucumbers grown inside soda bottles or pumpkins in gallon jugs. Young plants placed inside containers grow to the space provided and assume the contours and limits of their surroundings.

INNERVIEW

Place young fish whose species normally grow reasonably large into a tiny aquarium and its full adult size will be suppressed because of the strictly limited space it was given.

This is also true of people. We grow to the intellectual space we are provided. We take on the dull or positive contours of our emotional environments. We are big-hearted or parsimonious due to the spiritual influences that mold us. However, this does not mean we are the helpless victims of circumstances beyond our control. Regardless of your job or current life predicament, you can choose the setting for your soul. You can give yourself some room to grow.

REVIEW

For your body: eat sensibly, get enough sleep, exercise regularly and stay away from tobacco and alcohol. **For your mind:** read good literature, listen to inspirational-educational cassettes in your car, expand your vocabulary and keep clear of the pollution of pornography and vulgarity. **For your spirit:** worship, meditate on Scripture, invest yourself in service to others and refuse to live in the spiritual bondage of cynicism or bitterness over a "bad break" life has dealt you.

To be a big-hearted, a great-souled person is not the unanticipated destiny of a privileged few. It is the preordained outcome for anyone who chooses, to look beyond limitation to possibility and learn to see an opportunity in every problem.

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31a).

Clearing A 'Poopy' Perspective

October 31

My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. " — Proverbs 5:1,2

Last Monday morning as I backed out of the driveway and turned onto the street, it was obvious that my windshield had been targeted by a bird. He was a good shot! My direct line of sight to everything on the road in front of me was through a blob of bird poop.

PREVIEW

In a matter of seconds, I was laughing. I realized that unless I cleared my windshield of my blurred line of sight, I would likely be tempted to see every person or situation through, shall we say, "stuff."

Have you ever had a load of anger dumped on you that you knew was not deserved? You were smart enough realize that someone had taken out their anger at the boss or another employee on you. Even so, knowing what had happened did not the remove hurt. Maybe you have done the same thing to someone who phoned you at a particularly tense time or just after you had received bad news.

INNERVIEW

Has someone been rude to you because you are in sales or because you represent a company they had a previous bad experience? Have you ever been the next customer in line after a clerk had someone chew him or her out? Have you ever realized that you were being racist or sexist in a story you began to tell? You're beginning to get the picture, aren't you?

It helps to understand that the person is misdirecting his anger at you, but it does not remove the offense. The best each of us can do today is to keep our line of sight relatively clear. If things were tense at home over the weekend or as you left for work this morning, resolve that you will not take it out on the people around you. They do not deserve it, need it and may not handle it well.

REVIEW

Suppose, on the other hand, that something really unpleasant or stressful happens today at work. The great temptation will be to take a bad attitude at the end of the day and make your mate, children, or friends pay for it.

Do you need to stop right now and ask God to help you clean your spiritual windshield? It will surely beat going through the day with a poppy outlook on life.

Praise God For: His kindness

Thank God For: the world's givers

Ask God's Forgiveness For: being more of a taker

Ask God To Help: cab and bus drivers

Ask God To Supply Our Need For: strength to help others

