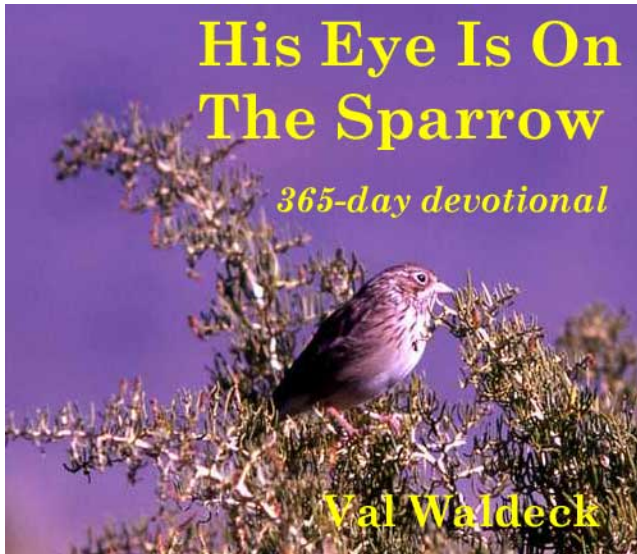


HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW



Vesper Sparrow by www.weforanimals.com

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HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW

His Eye Is On The Sparrow

365-Day Devotional by Val Waldeck

The Lord cares about every detail of our lives.
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He cares
for you!

*"Look at the birds of the air,
for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into
barns;
yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not of more value than they?"
- Matthew 6:26*

Enjoy the Devotional and be blessed
throughout the year as you meditate on His
Goodness, Mercy and Grace.

In The Blessed Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

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January Devotional: **WHEN THE STORMS COME**

How often we cry out, "I can't take it!" when the STORMS OF LIFE rise up and threaten to destroy us. We forget so quickly that the Lord has promised to stand by us no matter what happens.

The Old Testament book of JOB tells us about a family who suffered terrible loss. Job came through the storm with his faith intact. Although he had never read 1 Corinthians 10:13 (a New Testament scripture written thousands of years later), he fully believed and experienced its truth.

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." – 1 Cor.10:13.

Job's wife came through the storm too, but she fell apart emotionally and spiritually on her journey back to faith.

The message of this devotional is very encouraging: When the storms of life come – you can take it! Our attitude makes the difference as to how we weather the storm.

This is one of the oldest, most interesting, and thought-provoking books of the Bible. It is not often one gets to look behind the scenes and sense the will and purposes of Almighty God.

WHEN THE STORMS COME

- January 01 - **There Was A Man**

"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job." (Job 1:1)

Job lived a long time ago. Many believe he was a contemporary of Abraham, and the book written about him is certainly one of the oldest books in the Bible. He lived in the land of Uz, in the Middle East, and was a well-known figure in his hometown. Everybody knew Job.

But more importantly, God knew Job. He knew his name, where he lived, and all the circumstances of his life.

God knows everything about us too. Psalm 139 tells us that He knows exactly who we are (v.1-5). He knows what we are thinking and even what we are going to say before we utter a word. He knows where we are right at this moment (v.7-12). He knows what we are (v.13-16). He watched us being formed in the womb and scheduled each day of our life before we began to breathe. Every day was recorded in His book.

It is said that a genuine friend is the one who knows the worst about you – and loves you just the same! Our God is a Friend Indeed and this Psalm reminds us that He thinks about us constantly. When we awaken in the morning we still have His full attention (v.17-18).

In times of trouble and stress, run to God, never away from Him! He knows the future and the answer to every "Why?"

WHEN THE STORMS COME

- January 31 - **A Fulfilled Life**

*"After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations. So Job died, old and full of days."
(Job 42: 16-17)*

Job died an old man, having lived a full and complete life. There had been "highs" and there had been "lows" but, overall, his testimony has rung through the generations that followed – God is Sovereign and He is Faithful.

We take note of three things as we close this book.

1. God will never allow us to suffer more than we can take.
2. Satan's power is limited and subject to God's sovereignty.
3. God is faithful and He brought both Job and his wife out of their trial, regardless of their personal reactions.

God is faithful! Choose to believe that and you will find – no matter what happens in life – You Can Take It in His Strength and because of His Grace.

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

February Devotional: **LIFE'S FAT CATS** **Psalm 73**

Everybody gets discouraged at some time or another. Perhaps things are not going as well as we had hoped in our lives, our homes, our family or our job, and there seems to be no end in sight.

This is a very serious condition to be in because discouragement can so easily lead to depression, disillusionment and despair.

When the circumstances of life get us down, we tend to forget that the seasons of our life have a purpose, and an end under God's direction. That is what the Psalmist discovered. God is sovereign and He has everything under control.

Psalm 73 shares a journey from discouragement to faith as the Psalmist tells us how LIFE'S FAT CATS of this world made him question the goodness of God in his own life.

They seemed to have everything going for them, while he - doing his best to serve the Lord faithfully - seemed to miss out on so much.

Or - at least - that's the way it seemed to him.

He got thoroughly discouraged and disheartened, until he heard the Lord say..

"Let's talk about THOSE FAT CATS and the CURE FOR DISCOURAGEMENT".

- February 01 -
God Is Good... All The Time

"How good God is .." (Psalm 73:1 TLB)

Psalm 73 is a testimony to the goodness of God. It opens with the conclusion of the Psalmist after a journey from discouragement to faith.

No matter what things look like, God's goodness, love, mercy and grace - His undeserved favor - never fails those who genuinely love and serve Him.

Whatever happens in life, the fact remains that "Good is a good God, and the devil is a bad devil." Oral Roberts made that saying famous in the 60's and it still rings true today.

God's nature will never change and - no matter what circumstances we are facing - our God may be trusted. His promise stands secure.

He will never allow us to become discouraged to the point of no return.

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." - 1 Cor. 10:13.

Can you believe that today? Why not bow your head right now and THANK HIM for HIS GOODNESS and FAITHFULNESS toward you?

He will make a way. Believe it.

God is good, all the time.

- February 28 - **The Conclusion Of The Matter**

"But as for me, I get as close to Him as I can! I have chosen Him, and I will tell everyone about the wonderful ways He rescues me." (Psalm 73:28 TLB)

This is a happy man. He knows where his treasure is. "I have chosen Him." When you own the "Pearl of Great Price" (Matt. 13:46) - and you know it - there can be no room for depression or discouragement.

He makes two resolutions.

Firstly, he determines to get as close to God as he possibly can. He has chosen Him and he wants to get to know the Lord. Did you know that we can have as much of God as we desire? Think about it.

Secondly, he determines to share his testimony with everyone he can. The world has nothing of value compared to Eternity with God, and they need to hear about the great Gift of Salvation. They may not realize this is their greatest need, but nevertheless it is.

"Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy," - Psalm 107:2.

I trust that walking with the Psalmist has renewed your faith, trust and joy in serving the Lord. Jesus is coming back soon and, when we see Him, it will be worth it all.

The challenge for the Christian disciple today is to boldly declare in the face of trouble - "I am going to trust Him" - regardless of the World's Fat Cats.

March Devotional: JESUS CHRIST, LORD AND MESSIAH

The Lord Jesus Christ is the focus of prophecy because HISTORY is HIS STORY.

The Coming of MESSIAH was prophesied in great detail thousands of years before the birth of Christ. Literally hundreds of prophecies were required to be fulfilled by the One who laid claim to the title.

To fulfill just eight of them by chance or coincidence has is practically impossible. The probability has been estimated as one in ten to the seventeenth power, i.e. one with seventeen zeros. This is a number so big that we cannot even begin to comprehend it.

Imagine an area the size of London being covered two feet deep in Euro coins. Somewhere out there in the middle of those coins is one with a red dot on it. Imagine a blindfolded person being given only once chance to pick up the marked coin. That will give you some idea of the improbability of the situation.

Jesus Christ fulfilled all of these prophecies in minute detail, bringing the odds to an even more impossible number. No one could have organized that, but God Himself. Not only did Christ fulfill hundreds of prophecies relating to the events of His First Coming to earth, but He is about to fulfill many more with His Return.

**- March 01 -
Bethlehem, Birthplace Of
Messiah**

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." - Micah 5:2

Jesus Christ, Lord and Messiah, was born in Bethlehem exactly as prophesied years before His birth. His parents lived some distance away, but were required to go to their ancestral home to complete a government census.

They arrived in Bethlehem just in time for the birth. The town was full and they found shelter in a local cave used as a stable. The baby was born that very night.

It was not a pre-arranged or planned event as far as man was concerned. As far as God was concerned, it was planned in minute detail and prophesied hundreds of years before the event.

A star led wise men from the East and hovered over the birthplace. Herod, the king, was aware of something significant and tried to put a stop to it. Shepherds visited the little family, while angels sang in the heavenlies.

Are you aware that He has a detailed plan for your life too? Why not take time out this year to wait on Him daily for more information?

- March 31 -
The Saviour Of All Who Believe

"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him." - Psalm 2: 12.

His grace (undeserved favor and mercy) is still extended to the "whosoever will believe".

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." - John 3: 16.

Those who receive the Savior receive life. Those who reject God's Only Way of Salvation will find themselves lost forever.

"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." - 1 John 5: 11, 12.

It is a sobering message and one we have to share urgently with our generation.

"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." - John 20: 30, 31.

April Devotional: **THE AMAZING LOVE OF GOD**

There is nothing as magnificent and awesome in all of creation as the Amazing Love of God. That the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, should love seemingly insignificant people is a wonder that saints have pondered throughout the ages.

"What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?" said the Psalmist long ago (Psalm 8: 4).

Paul, the New Testament Apostle, knew something about this great love of God, and he longed that believers of all ages would begin to understand and comprehend something of its length, depth, height and breadth.

It is a message we need today. God is for us. His Grace (underserved favor) is extended freely to His children. He is our Heavenly Father, unlike any human father or friend.

This is an incomprehensible truth - "it surpasses knowledge" (Eph. 3:19), wrote Paul. At the same time, the incredible quality of God's love can be revealed to us by the Spirit of God, and that was Paul's heartfelt prayer for the Church of Jesus Christ of all ages.

May the Amazing Love of God encourage and delight us as we meditate on this wonderful truth for the next 30 days.

THE AMAZING LOVE OF GOD

- April 01 - **The Amazing Love Of God**

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." - Eph 3:14-21

God's personal love for each one of us is so great that it takes revelation-knowledge for us to begin to grasp something of its reality. It encompasses the whole family of God - every individual, in heaven or on earth.

The result of a deeper understanding of His love causes us to become stable, strengthened and full of His Glory, reflecting His love to others around us.

Do you know something about the depths of God's love? He wants you to. Why not personalize this prayer and make it your own? Your life will be revolutionized.

Remember, God does not just love – He is Love (1 John 4:8).

- April 30 -
Cleansing, Forgiveness, Peace
Because He Is Praying For Us

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." - 1 John 1:9

The Lord is wonderfully merciful and always willing to respond to a humble, repentant heart.

People tend to remember our faults, even once they have forgiven us. "There you go again," they said. "You always do that." Husbands and wives know something about dragging out the sacred cows! So does everyone who has ever been in any kind of relationship with another human being. We are like that. We forgive, but find it hard to forget.

God is not at all like that. When He forgives, He chooses by an act of His will never to remember our sin again. (Jer. 31:34).

That is the secret of forgiveness - to refuse yourself permission to remember the faults of those you have truly forgiven from the heart. That means you do not meditate on, think about, write about or talk about that which is dealt with.

Are you harboring unconfessed sin? Feeling depressed about some action or attitude you have displayed recently. Repent, confess your sin to the Lord and receive His forgiveness. Then put it right with the one you offended and go in peace.

"For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged." - 1 Cor 11:31.

May Devotional: **THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

Recorded in Matthew 6:9-15 and Luke 11:1-4

Prayer has been called "the highest activity of the human soul". Documented evidence of answered prayer abounds in every generation and it is exciting to know that God still hears and answers prayer.

Our greatest need is to learn how to pray effectively and that is why the disciples asked the Lord to teach them the secret of prayer.

The Lord's response is encapsulated in what is known as "The Lord's Prayer". It is one of the most fascinating prayers of all time because it covers every need of men, women and children. It is as if the Lord gave us the headings and we fill out the details. This is a prayer to be prayed - not to be recited.

The Prayer of Jabez by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson has taken the world by storm. Few realize that the Prayer of Jabez is actually fully incorporated in The Lord's Prayer. It is just a small part of the Prayer of Jesus.

There have been many exciting answers to prayer as people have made the principles of Jabez's prayer applicable in their personal lives.

How much more there is for us to experience as we pray the Prayer of Jesus.

- May 01 -
Teach Us To Pray

"Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." - Luke 11:1

Have you ever wished you knew how to pray effectively? As you look around at the needs and hurts of those you come into contact with, do you desire to pray in such a way that lives are changed, circumstances altered, and the Presence of God is experienced?

The best place to start learning how to really pray is at the feet of Jesus. We have very little knowledge of prayer and perhaps that is the reason so few people actually pray. We believe in prayer, we want to pray, but we just do not know how.

That is how the disciples felt. They were used to prayers being said and they took note when the Lord told them not to "say" prayers but to "pray" prayers. (Matt. 6:5 TLB)

The reward of our words bouncing off Heaven's ceiling to the acclaim of men is not worth having! If we want to pray prayers that reach the Throne and get an answer, then we have to pray "God's way". He made us and He put the desire in our hearts to pray.

He is more than willing to teach us how to pray.

- May 31 -
God-Centered Prayer
The God Who Never Changes

" .. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." – Matt. 6:13

His Kingdom, His Power and His Glory are eternal. He is the caring, compassionate God who remains ever faithful to His children. (Malachi 3:6).

Our Saviour is Jesus Christ, the One who "is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Heb 13:8).

All the principles enshrined in this magnificent Prayer of Jesus are eternal too. We have the "headings" - all we have to do is fill in the detail specific to our circumstances.

We begin with worship as we contemplate Who God is. Then we concern ourselves with God's interests and His Kingdom, co-operating with Him in the accomplishment of His Will in our world and our lives.

That brings us to people and their needs. The keyword is "our". We must not be so full of false humility that we pray only for others and neglect our own spiritual well-being. Nor so self-centered, we care only about the things that concern us.

Finally, the Lord encourages us to spend time in worship, acknowledging that the God Who Never Changes is the One who has taken time to listen and Who has the power to meet our request.

June Devotional: **FAITH TO LIVE BY**

A Study in the N.T. book of James

Christians are not immune to problems, trials and temptations and how well we know that.

There are some people, however, who believe that unpleasant events in our lives are proof that there is something wrong with our faith. They assume that there is a problem in our relationship with God and they tend to correlate goodness with prosperity.

This is not Biblical teaching and James gives us some clear teaching in his epistle on the subject. The Early Church in his time was a scattered and persecuted Body and James assures us that the Lord never allows anything in our lives without PURPOSE.

He always provides the WISDOM needed for us to deal with trouble. At the same time, He requires a very definite RESPONSE from us.

This is a very practical letter to Christians of all ages and is our theme for this devotional teaching.

Be blessed and encouraged in your faith as you follow the daily devotionals.

- June 01 -
James, A Bondservant

"James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings." - James 1:1

Two of the original twelve Apostles were named "James" (Matt. 10:2,3).

The JAMES who wrote this New Testament letter, however, was not an apostle. Known as "James the Just" by the New Testament Church, he was, in fact, the "brother" of the Lord Jesus Christ (in that Mary and Joseph were his parents). (Matt. 13:55).

James was not a believer at the start of Jesus' ministry (John 7:5), but after the resurrection Jesus appeared to him personally. (1 Cor 15:5-7).

He was present on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:13), became the recognized leader (overseer) of the Judean Church and pastored the Jerusalem Church. (Acts 12:17, 15:13-21, 21:18, Gal. 1:19, 2:9,12).

James was martyred after thirty fruitful years of ministry. Historians tell us that he was stoned to death while on his knees praying, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

This is the James who wrote this epistle around AD 60. The "brother" of the Lord and a renowned Church leader, he makes no claim to a unique relationship with Jesus, nor does he share stories from his youth. No "name-dropping". He is a man of HUMILITY and faith.

- June 30 -
The Purpose Of God

*"My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful."
- James 5: 10-11*

We are not alone in our struggle to practice patience. Look back, says James. Some of God's choice servants have suffered the most awful persecution, but they are also the greatest examples of patience and faith this world has ever seen. Job is a prime example.

God has a PURPOSE in everything He allows. Nothing we go through is wasted and everything must be viewed in the light of His great compassion and mercy. (Rom. 8:28).

We are to be straightforward and truthful at all times and in all circumstances. Our word must be our bond. "Swearing" in any form whatsoever is not for the Christian. (James 5:12).

Whatever our circumstances, James encourages believers to focus on the Lord first. (James 5:13-20).

The Epistle of James is a practical and exciting book with dynamic principles, which - if applied - will revolutionize our lives, forever.

July Devotional: JEREMIAH, A MAN FOR HIS TIME

Jeremiah lived in very troubled times. As a Prophet of God, he had a very strong message for the people of his time and it broke his heart.

Israel had been a United Monarchy under King David and the son who succeeded him to the Throne, King Solomon. However, only five years after the death of Solomon, the Kingdom split apart. Ten northern tribes joined together and called themselves Israel. The remaining two tribes, known as the Southern Kingdom, called themselves Judah.

The Good News is that the Lord has promised to restore them in the End Times and reunite His people. That is an exciting study in itself. Read Ezekiel 37:16-22 in this connection.

Judah was ruled by the dynasty of David and still exists as the modern State of Israel. Jeremiah's task was to warn them of impending disaster if they did not repent.

Other prophets saying the same thing at the time were Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Obadiah and their writings are found towards the end of the Old Testament.

- July 01 -
Jeremiah's Call Into The
Ministry

*"Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained
you a prophet to the nations." - Jer. 1:4-5.*

Jeremiah was born at Anathoth, about six miles north of Jerusalem. He was born into a Priestly family (1:1), and some believe that his father may have been Hilkiah, the High Priest, who found the Book of the Law during the reign of King Josiah, resulting in a great revival (2 Kings 22).

His call to the ministry came in BC 627 during the thirteenth year of King Josiah's reign. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was in worse trouble than perhaps even Jeremiah realized. Judgment was about to fall and God called this young man to sound a warning. He was "God's Man for His Time."

The Lord knew long before Jeremiah was born, that he was ordained to be God's Mouthpiece and a prophet to the Nations.

Our world is in a similar condition today as we stand on the edge of eternity and the Return of Jesus Christ. You and I were born in our generation for a purpose.

Like Jeremiah, we are not here by chance. We are "God's People for Our Time."

Are you ready to fulfill your destiny?

- July 31 -
A Ray Of Hope

"Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" - Lamentations 3:22-24

Jeremiah also wrote the Book of Lamentations. This is a firsthand account of the Babylonian invasion and a heartfelt "lamentation" as he poured out his heart in sorrow.

The people of God were in exile, says Jeremiah, but it is because of God's mercy towards, and love for, them that they were not totally consumed by the enemy. His compassions are new every morning and He is faithful towards His Children.

Paul said a similar thing in the New Testament – "1 Cor 10:13.

No matter what is happening in our lives, the Lord will never relinquish control. (Job 1:10-12).

He cannot even take a life without express permission from the Lord (Job 2:6). "You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your book!"- Psalm 139:16 (TLB).

A word of encouragement from Jeremiah. "The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD." - Lam. 3:25,26.

August Devotional: **JONAH, THE** **RELUCTANT PROPHET**

Jonah is one of the most interesting characters in the Bible. A prophet of note, he was well known in Israel.

He lived in Gathhepher, close to the town of Nazareth, during the reign of King Jeroboam II, and many of Jonah's prophecies were fulfilled during his lifetime. (2 Kings 14: 25).

God called this man to prophesy against Nineveh, capital of Assyria, and call this nation to repentance. He was very reluctant to do that. Israel's enemies were his enemies and the last thing he wanted was for God to be merciful to them. He preferred that they come under judgment and disappear forever. He was unable to understand that the conversion and repentance of Israel's enemies could well result in peace toward Israel, bringing about greater good and glory to God.

Jonah, the Reluctant Prophet, has a message for our generation. It is possible for an unknown foreign missionary to turn an entire nation to God, if we will but preach God's Word faithfully and let Him do the rest.

This book is not a myth, or allegory, as some have thought. Jesus personally testified to its historicity in Matthew 12:38-41.

Jonah was a real man, encountering a real sea creature, and turning a real nation to God.

- August 01 -
The Word Of The Lord

"Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying .." - Jonah 1:1

What a privilege that Almighty God should speak to mortal man. We are talking here about the Creator and Sustainer of all things, visible and invisible, speaking to a human being. That surely leaves us with a sense of awe.

This was not the first time Jonah had heard the Voice of God. He was a famous prophet in Israel and many of his prophecies concerning his nation had come true in minute detail (2 Kings 14:25). He knew the Voice of the Shepherd.

Now God was speaking again. Here is an opportunity for Jonah to share another incredible supernatural experience, to see lives changed, and to bring glory to God.

God loves to communicate with His creation and He has chosen - of His own free will - to work in co-operation with mankind. How we respond to His commands sets the tone for our future success and fulfillment.

It is vitally important what we do today because it affects our "tomorrow", and also the tomorrows of those whose lives we touch.

Have you heard the Word of God? Is there something God has asked you to do for Him? Will you do it today?

- August 31 -
The God Who Loves People

"And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left; and much livestock?"
- Jonah 4: 11

There were over 120,000 children in Nineveh, little people who had not yet reached the age of discernment. These innocents - and the innocent livestock - would have perished if the people of Nineveh had continued in their sin and rejected God's offer of mercy.

Jonah did not spare the children or the animals a passing thought. The plant directly impacted his life and that was all that mattered to him.

We do not hear anything more from Jonah, but the Bible speaks highly of him as a "type" of word-picture of Christ. (Luke 11:30).

Jesus told the people that the Ninevites would testify on the Day of Judgment against the generations to follow because they had repented at the preaching of Jonah, while those who heard Christ Himself minister hardened their hearts. (Matthew 12:41).

Will you take up the mantle of Jonah and share this message with your world? D.L. Moody said that the world has yet to see what God can do through one person who is totally yielded to Him.

Will you accept the challenge?

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

September Devotional: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Esther lived in the 5th Century BC during the time of Persian rule under the capricious King Ahasuerus (Xerxes).

This Old Testament book - named after her - tells the story of a plot to exterminate the entire Jewish nation and how God used a believer to bring those plans to naught.

This was a woman who lived "for such a time as this". May her story challenge each one of us to fulfill our God-appointed destiny.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

- September 01 - It Came To Pass

*"Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus ..."
- Esther 1:1*

Sometimes we watch events taking place in our world and we forget that God is watching as well. Men may make their plans, and behave in the most abominable manner, but God will allow nothing to thwart His Divine Purposes.

He always has the answer to every situation, no matter how bad things appear on the surface. There is never any need for the believer to panic. God is still on the throne!

King Ahasuerus - or Xerxes - of Persia was a volatile ruler and reigned the known world with an iron fist. Whatever he signed into law became irrevocable - unable to be changed, even by his own decree.

His word really was "the last word" on any topic. He is known for some very eccentric behaviour. Once he honoured a fruit tree by bedecking it in jewels and demanding that everyone worship it. Another time he was angry at the sea and ordered his men to lash it 500 times to teach it a lesson. He was not a man to be trifled with.

Do you know someone like that? He or she may be "king" of "their" universe, but - at best - their reign is temporary. Our God is supreme and sovereign and the reign of earthly "kings" always "comes to pass."

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

**- September 30 -
The Man - Or Woman - God
Honors**

"For Mordecai the Jew was second to King Ahasuerus, and was great among the Jews and well received by the multitude of his brethren, seeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his countrymen." - Esther 10:3

The book is named after Esther, a brave woman who was prepared to put her life on the line for God, but the inspiration behind the story is Mordecai.

Here was a man who refused to compromise his faith. He bowed only to the Living God and was prepared to die rather than deny his Lord. He inspired Esther in like manner.

Daniel of the "fiery furnace" fame had the same attitude. "We will burn, but we will not bow", he and his friends declared. (Daniel 3:16-18).

With an attitude like that, they were able to impact their generation for God. We are living thousands of years later, but our generation needs the Lord just as desperately.

Here is a personal challenge from the Lord Himself as He invites you to speak up for Him. "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." - Matthew 10:32,33.

October Devotional: HE'S COMING BACK AGAIN

The Bible is a prophetic book. It speaks of historical events in the lives of people and nations with a certainty and clarity that is unique.

Thousands of years before they existed, in many cases, the destinies of individuals and nations were charted with precision and history bears out the accuracy of those predictions.

Its prophecies are being fulfilled right up to the present time and we read about them daily in our newspapers.

Some of the greatest prophetic revelations concern the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He came the first time right on schedule, and the Bible tells us to expect His return.

It is estimated that there are more than three hundred specific prophecies in the Bible concerning the first coming of Christ - and about eight times as many concerning His Second Coming.

The New Testament mentions it at least 318 times in 210 chapters and there can be no doubt that saints throughout the ages have always "looked for His appearing".

The Second Epistle of Peter takes an exciting and motivating look at this great truth. Jesus us coming again – soon!

- October 01 -
Focused On His Return

"Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder)," - 2 Peter: 1

This is the second letter the Apostle Peter wrote to the Early Church and he tells them that he has a very special purpose for writing this epistle.

He wants to stir up their thinking and stimulate their minds as he reminds them of some well-known facts concerning the anticipated Return of Jesus Christ to earth.

Peter was the first disciple to follow Jesus, and the first to recognize Who He really was (Matt. 16:16). Present at the Mount of Transfiguration (1 Pet. 1:16-18), he preached the famous sermon on the Day of Pentecost that led to the conversion of three thousand people.

He knew that the facts of the Second Coming (known as the Parousia) were powerful motivators to holy living and evangelism and he desired to stir up the Church afresh to live in anticipation of that Day.

He wrote his two epistles shortly before his death approx. AD 67 when, according to tradition, he was crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to be hanged the same way as the Lord.

Are you excited about the Second Coming of Christ? Do you often think about His return?

HE'S COMING BACK AGAIN

- October 31 - **A Growing People**

"but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen." - 2 Peter 3:18

We are to grow in grace - grow spiritually and receive strength from the Lord, and we are to grow in the recognition - knowledge - understanding - of the Lord Jesus Christ and make it our aim to become better acquainted with Him.

There is only one way to get to know someone, and that is to spend time with them. It is the same with the Lord. We need to make time on a daily basis to read His Word, talk to Him, and enjoy rich fellowship with Him. (Rom 12:2).

Living things grow! For those who feel that they are not growing, perhaps this is the time to accept Paul's challenge in 2 Cor. 13:5. "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed you are disqualified."

For those who are genuinely "born again" of the Spirit of God, and feel they are not growing spiritually, here is a word from the Lord Himself: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." – Matt. 6:33.

And, finally - all the GLORY goes to Him! He must be "pre-eminent" (first) in all things – Col. 1:18.

November Devotional: THE "ONE-ANOTHER'S" OF THE BIBLE

No man is an island complete of itself, and the Bible emphasizes strongly that every individual believer is part of the Body of Christ. What we do and say, and how we behave, strongly impacts on "one another." We need each other and we need to be there for each other.

".. so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another." - Romans 12:5.

This month we will be sharing together a selection of the "one-another's" of the Bible. May you be richly blessed, inspired and motivated to be a working part of God's Great Body - the Church - bringing Glory to God.

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." - Ephesians 4:16.

- November 01 -
Peace With One Another

"... have peace with one another." - Mark 9:50

I heard about two elderly sisters who lived in the same house for nearly forty years without speaking to one another. They used masking tape to sub-divide their home and each one cared only about her own needs. When one sister died, the other was totally unaware of the fact.

Shortly afterwards the second sister died, sad and alone, and neighbors found the bodies in their respective bedrooms. There may have been "peace" - in the sense of lack of verbal communication - but there was no PEACE in that home.

It is not always possible to get on with everybody all the time, but the Bible exhorts us to "have peace with one another" - and leaves the responsibility squarely on our shoulders. (Romans 12:18).

Is there someone who irritates and frustrates you to the point that you no longer speak to him or her? Or, if you do, your words are critical and provocative, sarcastic and unkind?

Make a decision today to obey God and "have peace with one another." Your stress levels will come down and the peace of God will be your experience.

When we do the possible, He delights to do the impossible.

- November 30 - **Ministering To One Another**

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." - 1 Peter 4:10

God has given each of us specific gifts. His intention is that we use them to enhance our world, and He holds us responsible if we bury them, refusing to share with and benefit others.

Those gifts include creative ability, e.g. musical talent, ability to paint, draw, sew, manage, speak, etc., and so much more.

We are called upon to minister these gifts to one another, realizing that we are but stewards of the wonderfully grace of God.

None of us "deserves" anything from God, but we are responsible to share with others the gifts He has imparted to us for their benefit.

Sadly, most of the world keep their gifts for themselves, and use them to benefit their own pockets.

There are people with the call of God on their lives who could have sung thousands into the Kingdom of God, but who buried their talent in a mountain of money.

Do you have a gifting that God wants you to share? Use your talents to the full, especially where you worship together with one another.

That is why He gave them to you.

THE GOD WHO IS ALWAYS THERE

December Devotional: **THE GOD WHO IS** **ALWAYS THERE**

Psalm 139 is one of the most precious Psalm in the Bible and gives us a strong sense of God's sovereignty in our lives. Every moment of the day, the Lord knows..

Where we are
Who we are
What we are

and He loves us just the same.

Be blessed, encouraged, inspired and refreshed as you walk with the Psalmist during the next few weeks.

- December 01 -
He Knows Who I Am

"O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me" - Psalm 139:1

It has been said that we present many faces to the world. People perceive us to be the person they think we are - we view ourselves as the person we think we are - but the Lord alone knows who we really are!

He has examined our heart in minute detail, and He reads the inner motives that few people know about. He, in fact, knows everything about me.

That is a wonderful truth because it means we can come to Him in prayer "just as we are."

There are some who "put on" a special voice when they pray, or who use all sorts of pious expressions in the Presence of God.

What a relief to know that we can be totally ourselves in His Presence. He knows what we are thinking anyway!

So, today's challenge is to tell God exactly what you feel and think about your situation, no matter how "unspiritual" it sounds.

God can only deal with us when we are totally truthful, and those are the kind of prayers He answers.

He knows who I am.

- December 31 - Walking With God

"Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life" - Psalm 139:24

John the Apostle wrote some very beautiful and pertinent words in his first general letter to the church.

"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." - 1 John 1:7.

If we are prepared to "walk in the light" - allowing the Lord to point out anything in our lives that is offensive - two benefits will result.

Firstly, we will enjoy fellowship with one another, and live in peace. That is the Will of God. "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men." – Rom. 12:18.

It is not easy! As someone once said, "to live above with saints I love, that will be grace and glory, to live below with saints I know, now that's quite another story!" But it is possible, if we allow the Lord access to our attitudes before we share them with others!

Secondly, we will enjoy wonderful fellowship with the Lord Himself. As He points out negative things in our lives and we confess, and put them right in repentance, the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from sin, and we walk in unbroken fellowship with Him.

This is the path that leads to everlasting life and an eternity in His Presence.

PRAYER

Let Us Pray

Before we can pray a prayer of dedication and commitment, we must first "know the Lord."

If you have not yet received Christ as your Personal Lord and Saviour, please pray this prayer first.

[Yes, I want to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.](#)

Are you ready to commit yourself to the Lord in full surrender so that He may use you mightily in this generation preceding His Return?

[Yes, I want to be fully committed to the Lord](#)

Are you feeling dry and in need of spiritual refreshing?

[Yes, I want to make a fresh dedication of my life to the Lord](#)

THE SINNER'S PRAYER

The Sinner's Prayer

If you have been challenged by the Call of God on your life, but know in your heart that you have never made a personal commitment to Christ, I want to encourage you to pray this prayer out loud.

Afterwards, tell three people afterwards what you have done.

It is very important to make a public confession of your faith so that it is firmly cemented in your heart.

Dear Lord Jesus,
I repent of all my sin.
I ask You to forgive me for not serving You
with all of my heart.
From this day forward I want to start all over
again, and so, as I repent of every sin that I
have ever committed,
I ask You to come into my life
and to be the Lord of my life.
I will serve no other God but You.
Thank You, Lord, that You are a covenant-
keeping God and even as I endeavor,
by the power of Your Holy Spirit,
to keep my side of the covenant,
I know that You will keep Your side.
I ask all these things
in the Powerful and Precious Name of Jesus
Christ, my Lord and Savior.
Amen

Please [email](#) me if you have prayed this prayer.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Prayer of Dedication

Dear Lord Jesus,
I don't want to wind up my life as a stale, dry
and critical shell of "what could have been."
I want to enter eternity with my life on fire,
with my spirit fresh and with a heart
that is ready to receive anything and
everything from You.
You alone are my chief joy.
My meat and drink are to do Your will above
everything else.
I repent of my sins and every disobedience of
the past.
I want You to be more than my Savior.
I ask You to be my Sovereign Lord, the Ruler
of my life.
From this moment on I dedicate my life to
being a God-Seeker.
I will rise in the morning with the Name of
Jesus on my lips
and I will have God on my heart every moment
of each day.
I live to worship, serve, and obey Your every
command.
My every prayer says "More of You, Lord.
I want more of You."
Thank You for loving me so much. I am totally
Yours just as You are mine.
In Jesus' Name, I pray. Amen.

Please [email](#) me if you have prayed this prayer

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Prayer of Commitment

Dear Lord Jesus,
I have given my life to you, but I repent right
now because up until this time,
I have done very little which is constructive for
the Kingdom of God.
I ask You to forgive me.
From today onwards I am offering myself for
Your service.
I acknowledge that the time is short,
that the Kingdom of God is at hand,
and that people need to repent and hear the
Gospel.
There are so few people preaching the Good
News of Christ
and many are perishing because they have
never heard the Gospel.
I want to make a difference.
I pray that You will use me in whatever area
You are calling me to.
Help me to make a start today.
Help me reach my next-door neighbor,
the people down the street,
and press right on as You lead.
And Lord, if You should call me to a foreign
country,
I pray that You will make a way for me
and give me the faith and courage to follow it
through.
I ask this in Jesus' precious Name.
Amen.

Please [email](#) me if you have prayed this prayer

PLEASE CONTACT ME

If you have been blessed and challenged by this book and you have prayed either - or both - of these prayers, please email and tell me about it.

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