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2700-PLUS SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS (D-TOPICS)
Compiled and Arranged Topically by Duane V. Maxey

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DANGER

0630 -- A SOLEMN AWAKENING

A company of tourists were benighted while strolling among the Bernese Alps. After having groped in the dark for an hour or more, they resolved to spend the night at a certain spot where they felt they were treading on soft mossy soil, although the darkness prevented them from seeing where they were. As they were young and knew little of the cares of this life, they entertained each other with songs and merry talk till at length the one after the other stretched himself out on the grass and fell asleep.

When a few hours later the sun rose and the morning breeze awoke them, they discovered with horror that they were lying only a few steps from a vast precipice, and that they had been jesting and singing and sleeping on the very brink of what might have been their grave. -- Denton

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DANGER

0631 -- DANCING WITH DANGER

During the month of December, 1847, in the great rise of the Ohio river, a large portion of Cincinnati was overflowed by the water. Multitudes of the inhabitants were driven from their houses in the lower part of the city. Many were subjected to great privations and losses, and many lives were lost. In the midst of these scenes of extraordinary and wide spread wretchedness, Sheriff Weaver, during his charitable tour through the flooded portions of the city, heard music proceeding from a house. The upper story of the house and roof only were above the water, and several skiffs were hitched to the windows. Upon rowing up, it was discovered that the hall was in full blaze and the waltz in giddy whirl to merry music, male and female participating. This jolly party seemed unconscious of the danger that threatened themselves and indifferent to the distress which surrounded them. -- Arvine

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DANGER

0632 -- DANGER NOT REALIZED

"Look, papa" cried a child, "at the beautiful berries I have found!" The color fled from the face of the father, as he asked in terror, "Have you eaten any of them?" "No, papa, not one." "Then give them every one to me," he said, "that I may fling them all away." "What? fling away my pretty blackberries, that I took so long and worked so hard to find?" There were tears in her eyes, but she gave them up, only asking, "Why? What are they?" Her father answered, "They are the berries of the deadly nightshade." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DANGER

0633 -- FOOLS FEAR NOT WHEN THEY SHOULD

At Kenesaw, during the battle, those who approached a certain tree were almost sure to get shot. Eight men had fallen at that place. A sign was put up: "Beware!" A man in a braggadocio spirit said, "I am not afraid to stand there. There is no reason why a man should be shot there, any more than anywhere else." He stepped up to the tree, and instantly fell, fatally wounded. -- Talmage

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DANGER

0634 -- HARM'S WAY CAN BE AT HOME

In the year 1752, Dr. Gill had a memorable escape from death in his own study. One of his friends had mentioned to him a remark of Dr. Halley, the celebrated astronomer, that close study preserves a man's life by keeping him out of harm's way. But one day, after he had just left his room to go to preach, a stack of chimneys was blown down. The debris crashed through the roof of the house and broke his writing table in the very spot where a few minutes before he had been sitting. The doctor very properly remarked afterwards to his friend: "A man may come to danger and harm in the closet as well as in the highway, if he be not protected by the special care of Divine Providence." -- Religious Tract Society Anecdotes

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DANGER

0635 -- HE DESIRED SLEEP, NOT RESCUE

An Irish wayfarer, greatly fatigued from the effects of a long journey, had taken up his quarters in the West Port of Edinburgh in 1823, the evening before it was destroyed by fire. He was roused during the night by the police in order to get him out before the flames should render it impossible. At first, he could by no means be convinced of the necessity of rising: "He had paid his twopence for his bed, and it would certainly be hard if he could not get his sleep out." The poor fellow was at length rescued against his will. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DANGER

0636 -- IMAGINARY DANGER

In the war of 1509, a division of Maximilian's troops was cautiously advancing along one of the slopes of the Dolomite Alps, when the notes of a horn broke suddenly from out the mist which wrapped the mountainside and hung above the deep gorges. It was but a casual blast, blown by a herdsman, as is still the custom there at certain seasons, to warn off bears. But, supposing themselves to be attacked by the Cadore people, panic seized the invaders and they fled in haste the way they came over the Santa Croce Pass to Sextem. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DANGER

0637 -- NO MANTLE OF INVULNERABILITY

Heathen poets describe their gods as brooding over the perilous edge of battle, and snatching away their favorite hero when death threatens him, wrapped in a mantle of invisibility. -- John Guthrie

Too many, however, fancy themselves to be invisible and invulnerable to real danger. While God does especially protect His children, yet His solemn warning is: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." -- D. V. M.

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DANGER

0638 -- PARLEYING WITH THE ENEMY

A very pretty story, written by Mrs. Hannah More, gives an account of a castle besieged by an enemy; and the enemy could not take it for it was so strong; till at last they found a porter at the gate, and his name was Mr. Parley. The enemy talked to him and went on giving him pretty presents, persuading him to listen to them; till at last they talked him over and got him to unlock the gate. So the enemy got in; but they never would have got in if Mr. Parley, the porter of the gate, had not let them in. So Satan, though he is a person, cannot hurt you unless you let him in. Never parley with Satan. -- Nye's Anecdotes On Bible Texts

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DANGER

0639 -- PROCEEDING WITH CAUTION

"You see that buoy, sir, moored in the bay?" said the captain of the steamship in which I visited the Orkneys. "Yes," I replied, after carefully picking out in the twilight the well-known danger signal. "Well, there is a reef of rocks which, starting from the shore, runs to a point within ten yards of that buoy. The worst thing about it is, that there is no indication of the existence of the reef. Even at low water, it is covered, and woe to the ship that should strike upon that dangerous reef. In the dark nights, that buoy is an object of deep interest to me. Anxiously, do I look out for it, and we proceed with care until it is found." -- Henry Varley

Likewise, there are times when a Christian should be very sure that he sees the buoy of Divine guidance before proceeding. Satan has planted many hidden reefs of potential destruction beneath the surface of an apparently safe path. He risks eternal shipwreck who does not constantly bear this in mind, and thus "move with fear" toward the heavenly shore, seeking carefully to see the Divine warnings of these dangers. -- D. V. M.

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DANGER

0640 -- SITTING ON A POWDER KEG

Once upon a time a London exquisite descended into a coal mine. Seated on a cask to rest himself, he proceeded to question the swarthy miner, who was his conductor, concerning many things, and especially about the operation of blasting. "And whereabouts, my man," condescendingly, said he, "whereabouts do you keep your powder?" "Please, sir," replied the swart one, "you're a-sittin on it." -- Paxton Hood

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DARKNESS -- PHYSICAL

0641 -- WON OR LOST AT NIGHT

Midnight on the St. Lawrence River. In the darkness, barge after barge loaded with British soldiers floated silently down the broad river. As they were nearing their destination, the commander of the army, Wolfe, recited to the officers of his staff these lines of Thomas Gray:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness, and to me.

When he had finished the stanzas, he told his officers he would rather be the author of that poem than win the battle with the French on the morrow. By a mountain path, the army made its ascent in the darkness from the river to the Plains of Abraham. When the sun began to shine the morning of September 13, 1759, its rays were reflected upon the bayonets and cannon of the English army. The French army fought well and courageously all that day; but their courage and their heroism, and that of their gallant commander, Montcalm, were all in vain. The battle had been irrevocably lost by night. An empire, a kingdom, the dominion of North America, had been lost by night. It was not the first, and not the last, time that a battle and a kingdom were lost by night.

Belshazzar lost his kingdom at night. He fell a victim to the sins of the night. One night did the fatal business for this young king of Babylon. One night has done the fatal business for many another young man. In Philadelphia sometime ago the courts had a peculiar case of a man who was adjudged sane by day, but insane by night. That would seem to be true of not a few in the world about us today.

Sometimes the mistakes and errors of the night suggest and demand the sins of the day. Lawless acts of the day are committed to cover up and meet the demands of the sins of the night. Night life has played its part, and a chief part, in the downfall of many a trusted employee. The stealings and dishonest transactions of the day are carried out to cover up the losses of the night. God knows there are enough sins by day, but many of them are the lineal descendants of the sins of

the night. The true epitaph for many a man who has made shipwreck of his career, and cast away his kingdom, and who now lies dissheptered and uncrowned, is this: "In that night he was slain.

Every night, in every city, immortal souls, made for fellowship with God, made for the purple robe of honor and the scepter of right and the throne of influence, are stained, marred, broken, slain, lost. O night watchman! O policeman! O physician! O nurse! O priest! O minister! O magistrate! O father or mother! O sister or wife! What if thy lips could open, and tell of the tragedies of the night! -- McCartney

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DARKNESS -- SPIRITUAL

0642 -- LOVER OF DARKNESS

When the Bastille, a castle-like prison in Paris, was about to be destroyed in 1789, a convict was brought out who had been confined in one of its gloomy cells for many years. But instead of joyfully welcoming his liberty, he begged to be taken back. It had been such a long time since he had seen the sunshine that his eyes could not endure its brightness. His only desire was to die in the murky dungeon where he had been a captive. In the same way, some men continue to reject the Savior until they eventually become so hardened in their sin that they prefer the dark ways of eternal death.

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DARKNESS -- SPIRITUAL

0643 -- VICTIMS OF THE NIGHT

I have noticed, in reading of the disasters which befall airplanes, that the great majority of them happen by night, in spite of intricate instruments and signals flashing along the route of the plane. If a survey were made of the lives of those who have met spiritual and moral shipwreck, it would undoubtedly show that the great majority of them commenced their downward course in the night. They, too, were victims of the night. -- McCartney

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DEAFNESS -- SPIRITUAL

0644 -- HOW GOD'S VOICE IS DROWNED

On entering a mill, the noise of the machinery stunned and bewildered me. The owner of the mill explained the various processes as we went on, but it was a dumb show to me. I heard nothing. Suppose when I came out, I had been asked whether the gentleman spoke to me during my visit and I had replied, "No." Would it have been true? Certainly not. He spoke but I did not hear. His voice was drowned in the surrounding noise. And so it is with thousands of those around us.

God speaks to them, but His voice is drowned in the hubbub by which they are surrounded. They are awakened in the morning with the postman's knock and, before they have time for a thought about God or eternity, the noise of their own mill is all around them. Before the letters are finished the morning papers arrive, and the roar of the world is added to the sound which already existed, and henceforth it is whirl and excitement till evening. -- Charles Garrett

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DEAFNESS -- SPIRITUAL

0645 -- SPURGEON'S DEAFNESS

There is a good kind of spiritual deafness. Consider the following story:

C. H. Spurgeon, while still a young man and a village pastor, was passing the house of a woman who greeted him with a volley of words the reverse of polite. Smiling, the young man said, "Yes, thank you; I am quite well." She burst into another string of expletives. "Yes, it does look as if it's going to rain," he replied. Surprised as well as exasperated, the woman exclaimed, "Bless the man, he's as deaf as a post! What's the use of talking to him?" -- Christian Herald

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DEATH

0646 -- DEATH COMPARED TO A DEPARTED SHIP

Sometime ago an army officer (it was Colonel David Marcus) was killed in action. Before he was buried, the contents of his pockets were put together and sent to his widow. She was greatly comforted by one thing that he was carrying when he died. No, it wasn't a letter addressed to her; it was a little bit of paper entitled: "The Ship." I don't know where the Colonel got it. I only know how much it meant to her:

I am standing upon the sea-shore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength, and I stand and watch her until at length she is only a ribbon of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says, "There! She's gone!" Gone where? Gone from my sight -- that is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her, and just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There! She's gone!" there are other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "There! She comes!" and that is dying.

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DEATH

0647 -- DEATH-BED REMARKS

What do people think about on their death beds, and what do they say? Here is a sample: Murderer Richard Loeb was a trifle optimistic about his survival after being stabbed 56 times by a fellow convict in 1936: "I think I'm going to make it!" James Rodgers replied to the question whether he had a last request before facing a firing squad: "Why yes, a bulletproof vest."

Legendary swashbuckler Douglas Fairbanks must have been confused before giving up the ghost in 1939 because his famous last words were: "Never felt better." William Palmer, who was hanged in 1856, was told to step on the scaffold's trap door. "Is it safe?" he asked. Charles Wood, a murderer who died in the electric chair in 1963, faced witnesses and quipped: "Gents, this is an educational project. You are about to witness the damaging effect electricity has on wood."

Finally, Phineas T. Barnum, believed by some to be the greatest ballyhoo artist in history, was interested in the almighty dollar right up to his last moment on earth. His last words: "How were the receipts today at Madison Square Garden?" It's really tragic their thoughts are not on the God they are about to meet. -- George Gipes

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DEATH

0648 -- FERRIED ACROSS JORDAN

Driving down to the bank of the Ohio, we saw an old-fashioned ferry come lazily over the river to ferry us across. It was a frail-looking platform for such a heavy machine, but soon we were safe on the farther side. I thought of a verse from Scripture: There went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household." (2 Sam 19: 18)

Yes, at the end of life's pilgrimage, we come to the river deep, wide, swiftly flowing. There are many roads which lead here and there, but all come down at length to the river's bank! Who shall ferry us over? O Christ, thou divine boatman, whether it be early in the morning when the dew is yet fresh upon the grass by the rivers bank that we come down to the ferry, or at high noon when the sun burns down upon the broad waters and the cattle in the nearby meadows seek the shade of the willows, or late at evening when shadows are hastening down like an army of giants to conquer the realm of light -- whatever hour it be that we reach our utmost bound -- do thou be there to greet us and fetch us over. Let us hear thy cheerful hail. As earth's shores recede and time for us ceases to be, let thy presence go with us and bear us safely across to the golden shore. -- McCartney

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DEATH

0649 -- IGNORING DEATH MAKES IT NO LESS REAL

Edith Rockefeller McCormick, the daughter of John D. Rockefeller, maintained a large household staff. She applied one rule to every servant without exception: they were not permitted to speak to her. The rule was broken only once, when word arrived at the family's country retreat that their young son had died of scarlet fever. The McCormicks were hosting a dinner party, but following a discussion in the servants' quarters it was decided that Mrs. McCormick needed to know right away. When the tragic news was whispered to her, she merely nodded her head and the party continued without interruption. What a picture of the world's attitude toward death! Try to ignore it. Brush it off. Don't let it ruin the party. But as hard as the world works to deny the reality of death, nothing can stave off the inevitability of life's final transition. -- The Little Brown Book of Anecdotes

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DEATH

0650 -- KENNETH, DEATH IS JUST LIKE THAT

In Catherine Marshall's book about her husband Peter, she cites a touching story of a young terminally ill son asking his mother what death was like, if it hurt. "Kenneth," she said, "you remember when you were a tiny boy how you used to play so hard all day that when night came you would be too tired even to undress, and you would tumble into mother's bed and fall asleep? "That was not your bed. It was not where you belonged. "And you would only stay there a little while.

In the morning, much to your surprise, you would wake up and find yourself in your own bed in your own room. "You were there because someone had loved you and taken care of you. Your father had come with big strong arms and carried you away. "Kenneth, death is just like that. We just wake up some morning to find ourselves in the other room, our own room where we belong, because the Lord Jesus loved us."

The lad's shining, trusting face looking up into hers told her that the point had gone home and that there would be no more fear, only love and trust in his little heart as he went to meet the Father in Heaven. He never questioned again, and several weeks later he fell asleep just as she had said. -- Catharine Marshall

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DEATH

0651 -- MORE BEYOND BODILY DEATH

In his autobiographical sketch, W. H. Hudson, tells of an incident of his early life in South America. The family dog, Caesar, had died and been lowered into a grave dug for him. The schoolmaster looked around on the boys assembled at the grave and said solemnly: "That's the end. Every dog has its day, and so has every man, and the end is the same for both. We die like old

Caesar, and are put into the ground and have the earth shoveled over us." That is the materialist's view of death. -- McCartney

That is not the Bible's view of death! Read Hebrews 9:27. Beyond death shall come, eternal judgment for all, and eternal, conscious, existence for all -- in either the everlasting bliss of the redeemed or the everlasting burning of the damned. -- Duane V. Maxey

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DEATH

0652 -- NO FUNERAL MESSAGE BY CHRIST

As a young man, D. L. Moody was called upon suddenly to preach a funeral sermon. He hunted all throughout the four Gospels trying to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but searched in vain. He found that Christ broke up every funeral he ever attended. Death could not exist where he was. When the dead heard his voice they sprang to life. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life."

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DEATH

0653 -- THE SHADOW CAN'T HURT US

Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse was one of America's great preachers. His first wife died from cancer when she was in her thirties, leaving three children under the age of twelve. Barnhouse chose to preach the funeral himself. What does a father tell his motherless children at a time like that? On his way to the service, he was driving with his little family when a large truck passed them in the highway, casting a shadow over their car.

Barnhouse turned to his oldest daughter who was staring disconsolately out the window, and asked, "Tell me, sweetheart, would you rather be run over by that truck or its shadow?" The little girl looked curiously at her father and said, "By the shadow, I guess. It can't hurt you." Dr. Barnhouse said quietly to the three children, "Your mother has not been overrun by death, but by the shadow of death. That is nothing to fear." At the funeral he used the text from the twenty-third Psalm, which so eloquently expresses this truth.

* * *

DEATH -- BEING DEAD IN SIN

0654 -- DEAD BUT STILL STANDING

Whilst visiting the beautiful island of Tasmania my attention was often called, nay, arrested, to huge trees which appear as bleached ghosts of the forest. They stand out in the brilliant

moonlight with a weirdness alike surprising and magnificent. The reason of their condition is as follows: On account of their great size and the heavy cost of what is called 'grubbing up,' the settler leaves them in the ground and proceeds to hew round the trunk at the height of about four feet from the ground. The axe cuts through the bark, and about an inch into the tree. The effect is, that when next spring comes the sap from the 'gashed wound' exudes, and the giant of the forest dies. The branches wither, the leaves fall off, the bark strips, and a single year suffices for these trees to join the army of the upright dead.

The farmer can now plough the ground between, sow his corn, and reap the harvest in the huge mausoleum of the forest. No sheltering foliage hinders the sun's rays, and the wheat plant thrives and ripens amidst hundreds of towering trees whose only voice is the silence of the dead. (Dict. of Ill. #1459)

Even thus, individual Christians and entire denominations can lose the life of God's Spirit and be left standing physically, or organizationally, alive but dead spiritually. -- Duane V. Maxey

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DEATH -- BEING DEAD IN SIN

0655 -- LEGALLY DEAD

A prisoner, who had been sentenced to death for murder, was sitting in his cell one day when the doctor passed. The prisoner requested him to secure some paper and pen and ink for him, as he had forgotten to make his will, and wished to do it before he was executed. "But," said the doctor, "that will be of no use. It is too late now for you to make a will. Ever since the judge passed sentence of death upon you, you have been a dead man in the eyes of the law. The fact that the sentence has not been actually executed makes no difference. No court of law in the land can regard as valid any document that you may now produce." The poor fellow buried his head in his hands as he realized his condition. He was dead, even though he lived. Trace this important principle through the Bible, and you will discover that here are two things which God hath joined together, and no one can part them asunder: sin and death. -- London Christian Herald

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DEATH -- BEING DEAD IN SIN

0656 -- PARASITE SIN

A Burmese Christian tells the following parable: A little banyan seed said to a palm tree one day, "I am weary of being tossed about by the wind; let me lodge in your branches." "Remain as long as you like," was the reply. Soon the tree forgot all about its tiny guest, but the seed did not remain idle. Immediately it began to work its roots under the bark and into the heart of the trunk itself. Finally the tree cried out, "What are you doing?" "I'm only the little seed you allowed to rest among your boughs," came the reply. "Get out!" exclaimed the palm. "You've become too large and strong!" "I cannot leave you now," said the banyan. "We have grown together, and I

would kill you if I tore myself away." The tree tried desperately to shake itself loose, but to no avail. Eventually its graceful leaves turned brown, and its trunk wasted away; but the banyan continued to thrive until its host could no longer be found.

Yes, a little seed can develop into a parasitic plant and do great damage. In like manner, a tiny sin that is not confessed and forsaken can grow into an overpowering habit that chokes a Christian's spiritual vitality and ruins his life.

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DEATH -- BEING DEAD IN SIN

0657 -- PRIESTS FROM THE "CEMETERY" NOT WANTED

A lady wrote to Catholic Digest recently to tell about her six year old grandson. Their pastor had died. A retired priest was temporarily serving as a replacement. One day he announced that the bishop would soon be sending the church a new young priest directly from the seminary. When her grandson heard this announcement that the bishop would soon be sending the church a new young priest directly from the seminary, he told his parents that when the new priest came he would no longer be going to Mass. "What are you talking about?" his parents wanted to know. The young fellow replied, "When they get priests direct from the cemetery, I'm staying home."

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DEATH -- COMPARED TO A SLEEP

0658 -- NOTHING TO FEAR

A child of God who was seriously ill and lacked assurance of salvation said to his physician, "Doctor, although I'm a Christian, I'm afraid to die. Exactly what happens to us in the hour of death?" The surgeon, who was also a believer, thought for a moment and then replied, "I'm afraid I can't give you an exact answer to that question!" As he walked across the room to leave, he desperately wished he could say something comforting. Pausing briefly before opening the door, he heard the sound of scratching and whining on the other side. Suddenly he realized that he had left his car window open and his little dog had jumped out.

With the patient's permission he let in his pet poodle who leaped on him with an eager show of gladness. In a flash the doctor's mind was awakened to a scriptural truth he had never before put into words. Turning to the sick man, he said, "Did you see how my dog acted? He's never been in this room before. He had no idea what was inside; yet when I opened the door, he sprang in without fear, for he knew his master was here! As Christians we have not been told about the glories that await us on the other side of death. But one thing we do know; our Master is there, and that is enough!

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0659 -- ADAM CLARKE'S TESTIMONY AT AGE 84

How different is the broad road of the wicked. Kenneth Cober points out that the worldly man's way of carnal desire terminates in frustration and despair. Lord Byron abandoned himself to the pursuit of pleasure; yet at the age of 35 he wrote:

"My days are in the yellow leaf. The flowers and fruits of love are gone. The worm, the canker, and the grief Are mine alone."

Compare those lines with the words of Adam Clarke, a Christian saint and biblical expositor. At 84, he said, "I have passed through the springtime of my life. I have withstood the heat of its summer. I have culled the fruits of fall. I am even now enduring the rigors of its winter, but at no great distance I see the approach of a new, eternal springtime. Hallelujah!"

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0660 -- ALL I NEED TO KNOW

In his book *The Best is Yet to Be*, Henry Durbanville told the story of a man who lay dying and was fearful, even though he was a born-again Christian. He expressed his feelings to his Christian doctor. The physician was silent, not knowing what to say. Just then a whining and scratching was heard at the door. When the doctor opened it, in bounded his big, beautiful dog, who often went with him as he made house calls. The dog was glad to see his master. Sensing an opportunity to comfort his troubled patient, the doctor said, "My dog has never been in your room before, and he didn't know what it was like in here. But he knew I was here, and that was enough. In the same way, I'm looking forward to heaven. I don't know much about it, but I know my Savior is there. And that's all I need to know!"

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0661 -- AN 18-YEAR-OLD DIES 6 MONTHS AFTER BEING SAVED!

Many years ago, in an Eastern city, as I stood by my pulpit, there came a charming girl of eighteen and put out her hand. "Pastor, will you tell me what I must do to be saved?" I pointed her to Christ. I had the happy thought that minute that if she became a Christian she might become a very useful girl and woman; but I had also another thought, that she might soon go hence. She united with our church. My deacons and others said, "What a useful member Mary will be, she will have such a blessed influence over the younger members of the church."

Six months passed quickly by. Early one morning there came to my study door a hasty knock. I opened the door, "Pastor, Miss Mary H___ is very sick this morning; won't you come and see her?" I hastened, not mistrusting that I was to close her eyes in death. I reached the door. A friend at the door said, "Step right up stairs as quick as you can." I stepped upstairs. The door was a little ajar, and there stood the father, leaning his back against the wall, almost convulsed, weeping as only a loving father can to see a loving daughter of eighteen years old near the Jordan of death.

I stepped through the door, and there stood the mother leaning over the foot of the bed. I believe I never witnessed a scene like that before not since. It seemed as if that woman was utterly convulsed, looking down into the face of Mary, wiping away tear after tear, and then giving an outburst of terrible throes of agony. My eyes rested upon that lovely Christian girl -- so sweet, so serene and heavenly. It seemed as if the halo of God's glory had gathered around that bed.

"Ma," she said. "don't weep so for me. I am going to be with Jesus, and you will come soon -- don't you see them? Why, here are the angels, and here is Jesus." A Bright and glorious scene seemed bursting upon her vision. It seems to me as if it were an hour ago. I remember saying, "My Lord and my God, is this dying with the love of Christ? Then make me a better minister, that I may lead more young ladies to Thee." -- Albert. P. Graves

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0662 -- ANCHORED AT DEATH

A dying sailor was near his end, and the death-sweat stood upon his brow. A friend said, "Well, mate, how is it with you now?" The dying man, with a smile, made answer, "The anchor holds! The anchor holds!" God grant that every one of us may be able to say this, for His name's sake. Amen. -- A. G. Brown

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0663 -- ASCENDED

Joseph Parker (1830-1902) was a beloved English preacher in the Congregational denomination. When his wife died, he didn't have the customary wording inscribed on her gravestone. Instead of the word died followed by the date of her death, he chose the word ascended.

Joseph Parker found great comfort in being reminded that though his wife's body had been placed in the grave, the "real" Mrs. Parker had been transported to heaven, into the presence of her Savior. When Parker himself died, it's no wonder that his friends made sure that his gravestone read: Ascended November 28, 1902.

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0664 -- CHRISTIANS ASCEND WHEN EARTH'S CORDS ARE SEVERED

Charles Simeon wrote, "One time it was my privilege to watch the ascent of a balloon. It was bound to the earth by many cords. As the process of filling it with gas began, it struggled to get free. The first line was cut, and immediately that side was lifted from the earth. Then the second and third ropes were loosened, and finally the others. When the last cord was snapped asunder, the balloon rose majestically toward the heavens, showing the high destination for which it struggled to get free.

I thought to myself, that's a picture of the attitude I should possess as a Christian -- one whose affection is set on Heaven. In proportion as my heart is filled with the Holy Spirit's presence, I will demonstrate my aspiration and earnest longing for an eternal inheritance. As one by one the carnal cords are cut that bind my soul to earth, it will rise in its affection to Heaven where it so greatly desires to be."

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0665 -- DANIEL WEBSTER'S DEATH

A person is not really ready to live until he is ready to die. It was a dark night in Marshfield, October 24, 1852. Daniel Webster was dying. He was ready. His physician, a very sensitive man named Dr. Jeffries had ministered as much medicine as he could and as was practically possible. He realized that death was near and he chose to be a friend rather than a physician at that moment and he picked up an old rather well worn hymn book that Webster had often sung from and he chose to read the words of one of his favorite hymns:

"There is a fountain filled with blood

Drawn from Immanuel's veins,

And sinners plunged beneath that flood

Lose all their guilty stains."

He read every stanza, when he got to the last, Webster's lips were moving, though no sound came:

"When this poor lisping, stammering tongue

Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save.

And he looked at Webster, their eyes met, and Webster uttered three final words: Amen,
Amen, Amen!

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0666 -- DWIGHT L. MOODY'S PASSING

A few hours before Dwight L. Moody died, he caught a glimpse of the glory awaiting him. Awakening from a sleep, he said, "Earth recedes, heaven opens before me. If this is death, it is sweet! There is no valley here. God is calling me, and I must go!" His son who was standing by his bedside said, "No, no father, you are dreaming."

"No," said Mr. Moody, "I am not dreaming; I have been within the gates; I have seen the children's faces." A short time elapsed and then, following what seemed to the family to be the death struggle, he spoke again: "This is my triumph; this my coronation day! It is glorious!"

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0667 -- HOW SOME SUNDAY SCHOOLERS FACED DEATH

On Jan. 10, 1860, the Pemberton mill, a large cotton factory at Lawrence, Mass., suddenly fell into ruins, burning the operatives in the debris. Some were rescued alive; others would have been, but a broken lantern set the ruins on fire and the rescuers were driven from their work. As they turned away, they distinctly heard some imprisoned girls who had been brought up in the Sunday school singing the precious hymn of William Hunter's:

"My heavenly home is bright and fair."

And up from the flaming jaws of death there came the brave chorus:

"I'm going home to die no more."

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0668 -- JUST AWAY

I cannot say, and I will not say
That she is dead. She is just away!
With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand
She has wandered into an unknown land.

And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be since she lingers there.
And you -- oh you, who the wildest yearn.
For the old-time step and the glad return.

Think of her faring on, as dear
In the love of There, as the love of Here.
Think of her still as the same, I say,
She is not dead -- she is just away.

-- James Whitcomb Riley

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0669 -- KOIMETERION, A REST HOUSE

If you are a believer, the minute you leave this body, you're going home. And the body is put to sleep. That's the way the early Christians spoke of their own who died. In fact, they called the place of burial, the graveyard, the koimeterion, and that really means a rest house for strangers. It was the word for the inn that was closed to Mary and Joseph. Such places were all through the Roman Empire, and we get from it our word cemetery today. A cemetery is a resting place, a sleeping place. What do we call sleeping places today? We call them motels and hotels. You don't weep, do you, when your loved ones write, "We're going to spend a week at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco?" We congratulate them and think it's wonderful. We miss them if they're close to us and are going to be away from us, but they're asleep up in the Hilton Hotel. Well, that was the feeling of the early church. They took their loved ones and put them out in the cemetery, in the ground, when they were asleep in death, and called it the koimeterion. -- J. Vernon McGee

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0670 -- LIFE NOT FINISHED AT DEATH FOR CHRISTIANS

Christians need to remember 2 Cor. 5:8 "That to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Victor Hugo once wrote: When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others: I have finished my work, but I cannot say I have finished my life. My day's work will begin

the next morning. My tomb is not a blind alley. It is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open in the dawn.

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0671 -- NO BLIND ALLEY AFTER ALL

Some people have the idea that when their life has run its course and they take their last breath, they will no longer exist. But more -- much more -- lies ahead!

Frank W. Boreham (1871-1959) illustrates this in his book *Wisps of Wildfire*. "A few weeks ago, in a small boat, I was making my way up one of the most picturesque of our Australian rivers. The forestry on both banks was magnificent beyond description. A canoe glided ahead of us. Presently, the waters seemed to come to an end. We watched the canoe, and to our astonishment, it simply vanished! When we came to the point at which the canoe had so mysteriously disappeared, we beheld a sudden twist in the river artfully concealed by the tangle of bush. The blind alley was no blind alley after all!"

Then, making reference to believers who had died, Boreham observed, "(They) have gone on -- like the canoe. It had turned a bend in the river; they have turned a bend in the road."

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0672 -- SONGS AND THANKSGIVING AT DEATH

In AD 125, a man named Aristides sent a letter to an acquaintance to give this explanation for the rapid spread of Christianity: "If any righteous man among the Christians passes from this world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body with songs and thanksgiving as if he were setting out from one place to another nearby."

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0673 -- THE SUN IS UP

Al Bryant, in his book *Time Out*, tells about an elderly man who was dying. One evening, as it began to darken outside, he asked that all the lights in the house be turned on. After it had grown very dark, however, he made a strange request. He asked that all the lights be turned off. "We don't need them any longer," he whispered. With a smile on his face he declared, "The sun is up!" Those were his last words before slipping away into the sunlight of God's eternal presence.

Later, a friend who had heard the dying man's comments told an acquaintance what had happened and remarked, "Wasn't that strange?" At this point in his book, Bryant writes, "No, it was not strange, for there is a light in the valley of the shadow for God's people."

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0674 -- THE DEATH OF ALBERT GRAVES' WIFE (PART A)

Years ago, when there was not a foot of railroad in Minnesota, I went as a missionary to that State. I labored very hard; often riding long distances on Sunday, besides my week's work, preaching three times and attending two or three Sabbaths schools. Month after month I worked on for the frontier settlers. I loved their souls, and had the warmest sympathy with them in their trials and troubles. I came home one night about one o'clock and took my bed, utterly exhausted. The next morning I said to my dear wife, "I am going to rest today;" and that was a good deal for me to say.

Toward night I stepped out of the door to attend to some little home cares and dropped. I managed to get back to my bed, and there long, long weeks the fever burned my brow. By and by, after my wife had gone through an anxious period of watching over me, besides nursing and caring for her dear little children, about sunset one evening my deacons came in and said, "Dear pastor, you will probably never preach to us again. The doctors have had a council and think you can not live till morning." What a moment was that! What a message was that! I tell you, friends, there was heaven in that house. I had a chance then to test the doctrines I have preached to you.

About midnight, I remember, my faith's perceptions were quickened, and I seemed to look across the river and beheld the teeming multitudes coming up; and I said in my heart, (I remember it as if it were an hour ago) "Jesus, if I should survive I will be a better minister, and lead more sinners to Thee." The morning dawned. Just a little after sunrise, I turned my head upon my pillow, and there sat my dear wife, bending over a chair. I said in my heart in a instant, "My dear wife is sick."

Very soon a lady of the church came in and said: "Mrs graves, you are not well; you had better take you bed." She took her bed, and in five days crossed the dark river. Twice I was taken from my bed, bolstered up with stimulants, to look in her sweet face, and hold her hand in mine. The last time, as I sat about twenty minutes at her bedside, it seemed as if I was reading the very record of holy loveliness in the sight of God and heaven; while her spirit was just gathering up the strength of holy wings to pass away to the better land.

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0675 -- THE DEATH OF ALBERT GRAVES' WIFE (PART B)

I held her hand in mine and said, "My dear, do you want anything?" The reply was, "Can they sing 'Rest for the weary?'" A dear minister, who stood by the bed, struck up that little hymn:

In the Christian's home in glory,
There remains a land of rest,
There my Savior's gone before me,
To fulfill my soul's request.
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for you.

When he got through singing she said, "Can you bring the children?" Our dear little children, one after another, were lifted to the bed, and received a dying mother's kiss. I kissed her hand, and she said sweetly, "Precious Savior, I am ready," and slept as sweetly in His love as a child in its mother's arms. I have never murmured. I felt it keenly. I had known her more than eight years in married life and otherwise. I never knew her to speak an unkind word to man, woman or child; so lovely and holy, and I have often said, "She was too good to stay any longer in this world." It seemed as if God gave her to me just long enough to mold my life. I go to visit her grave as often as I can, and I believe I come away always to be a better man, because of the holiness that gathered around that hour, and that home, and her life. Let no man say to me, "Your doctrine of the blood is an idle tale." Oh no.

Oh, the blood, the precious blood,
That was shed on Calvary.
Though sin hath left a crimson stain.
He washed it white as snow.
-- Albert P. Graves

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0676 -- THE DEATH OF JOHN NEWTON

Many people say they do not fear death, but the process of dying. It's not the destination, but the trip that they dread.

John Newton, a one-time slave trader, was converted and became a great preacher and hymn writer in the Church of England. Two years before his death, in 1807, he was so weak that he could hardly stand in his pulpit; someone had to support him as he preached. Shortly before he died, when he was confined to his room and unable to move, he told a friend, "I am like a person going on a journey in a stagecoach, who expects its arrival every hour and is frequently looking out of the window for it -- I am packed and sealed, and ready for the post."

You may have heard of Newton; he wrote some words which are sung around the world: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." -- Billy Graham

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0677 -- THE GRAVE IS NOT DARK NOW

A little girl was very ill. She asked: "Papa, does the doctor think I shall die?" With a very sad heart, her father said: "My darling the doctor thinks you cannot live." Then, her pale face grew very sad. She thought of the dark grave and her eyes filled with tears as she said: "Papa the grave is very dark. Won't you go down with me into it?" With a bursting heart, her father told her he could not go with her till the Lord called him. "Papa, won't you let mamma go with me?" It almost broke her father's heart to tell her that, much as her mother loved her, she could not go with her either. The poor child turned her face to the wall and wept. But she had been taught about Jesus, the Friend and Saviour of sinners, so she poured out her little heart to him with a child's full faith, and He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not," put his arms round her and comforted her. Soon, she turned again to her father with her face all lighted up with joy and said: "Papa, the grave is not dark now; Jesus will go with me." -- Topical Illustrations

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0678 -- WELCOME JOY UNSPEAKABLE!

Donald Cargill was a bright star in history of Scottish persecutions. He was condemned by the government and sentenced to the gallows. When he came to the scaffold, Cargill said these moving words, although it was said that the drums were beaten in an attempt to drown out his voice: Now I am near to getting to my crown, which shall be sure; for I bless the Lord, and desire all of you to bless Him that He hath brought me here, and makes me triumph over devils, and men, and sin -- they shall wound me no more. I forgive all men the wrongs they have done to me, and pray the Lord may forgive all the wrongs that any of the elect have done against Him. I pray that sufferers may be kept from sin, and helped to know their duty -- farewell reading and preaching, praying and believing, wanderings, reproaches, and sufferings. Welcome joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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DEATH -- OF THE RIGHTEOUS

0679 -- YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME

The late Dr. John McFerrin, who in his day was a tower of strength among the Methodists of the South, was lying on his deathbed, calmly awaiting the summons to come up higher. His son, who had charge of a circuit twenty miles away, was by his bedside and when Saturday came was reluctant to leave his dying father, as his Sabbath duties seemed to require. Whereupon, the venerable minister said: "My son, I feel a little stronger and you had better return and fill your

appointment tomorrow. If, while you are away, John, I should happen to slip off, you know where to find me." -- The Sunday Circle

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DEATH -- PREPARATION FOR

0680 -- CONTRASTS AT DEATH

One of our old ministers, two hundred years ago, lay dying. At his bedside, were several of his beloved brethren watching his departure. Opening his eyes, he spoke to them these singular words: "Fellow passengers to glory, how far am I from the New Jerusalem?" "Not very far," was the loving answer; and the good man departed to be with Christ.

"I'm dying," said one of a different stamp, "and I don't know where I'm going." "I'm dying," said another, "and its all dark." "I feel," said another, "as if I were going down, down, down!" "A great and a terrible God," said another, three times over; "I dare not meet Him!" "Stop that clock!" cried another, whose eye rested intently on a clock which hung opposite his bed. He knew he was dying, and he was unready. He had the impression that he was to die at midnight. He heard the ticking of the clock and it was agony in his ear. He saw the hands, minute by minute, approaching the dreaded hour, and he had no hope. In his blind terror, he cried out: "Stop that clock!"

Alas! What would the stopping of the clock do for him? Time would move on all the same. Eternity would approach all the same. The stopping of the clock would not prepare him to meet his God. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DEATH -- PREPARATION FOR

0681 -- FACING DEATH

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself." John 14:3 One evening when a mother was tucking her small daughter into bed, the child pleaded, "Mother, stay with me while I go to sleep. " Remembering all the tasks that still awaited her, she hesitated. But she knew of the child's dread of the darkness, so she sat beside the bed and took her daughter's hand in her own. Soon the child was asleep. As the mother sat there, the Lord brought to her mind a comforting thought. She bowed her head and prayed, "O Lord, when life's evening shall come, bring before me all Your promises so that by grace I may be able to say with childlike trust, Father, take my hand. Stay with me while I go to sleep, guide me safely in the valley, and receive me when I awaken in Glory!"

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DEATH -- PREPARATION FOR

0682 -- IN WHOSE FAITH SHALL I DIE?

"The damps of death are coming fast,
My father, o'er my brow;

The past with all its scenes are fled,
And I must turn me now

To that dim future which in vain
My eyes seek to descry;

Tell me, my father, in this hour,
In whose belief to die.

My father, shall I look above,
Amid the gathering gloom,

To Him whose promises of love
Extend beyond the tomb,

Or curse the Being who has blessed
This checkered life of mine?

Must I embrace my mothers faith,
Or die, my sire, in thine?

The frown upon that warrior's brow
Passed like a cloud away,

And tears coursed down the rugged cheeks
That flowed not till that day.

"Not, not in mine," with choking voice,
The skeptic made reply,

"But in thy mother's holy faith,
My daughter, mayest thou die."

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DEATH -- PREPARATION FOR

0683 -- PREPARED TO LIVE WHEN PREPARED TO DIE

"Today we are told how to look young, stay trim, keep healthy, have a good image, think positively, make more money, have more friends. All these -- indicate that we are trying

desperately to cling to this present world. The truth is, life is transitory. 'What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes' (James 4:14b)... If we want to make the most of life, we need to face the fact that it is going to end. My father-in-law, Dr. L. Nelson Bell, wrote many years ago, 'Only those who are prepared to die are really prepared to live.' The uncertainty is not the dying, it's the preparation." -- Billy Graham

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DEATH -- SPIRITUAL

0684 -- BODY OF DEATH

In Virgil, there is an account of an ancient king, who was so unnaturally cruel in his punishments that he used to chain a dead man to a living one. It was impossible for the poor wretch to separate himself from his disgusting burden. The carcass was bound fast to his body -- its hands to his hands; its face to his face; its lips to his lips. It lay down and rose up whenever he did; it moved about with him whithersoever he went, till the moment when death came to his relief. Many suppose that it was in reference to this that Paul cried out: "O wretched man that I am!" Whether this be so or not, sin is a body of death which all who are not sanctified wholly carry about with them. -- McCartney

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DEATH -- SPIRITUAL

0685 -- NO REWARD BECAUSE HE WAS DEAD

A soldier who had served his country for a time in the army, by deception had his name returned on the roll as dead. He was so reported from his company to his regiment, and from his regimental headquarters to the General Government. In the great records of the nation, against his name "Dead" was written. After the war was over, and peace restored, the Government began to dispense its bounties and pensions to those who had fought its battles and borne its burdens. This runaway soldier, that had deserted from the service and caused a false report to be returned, appeared for a reward at the hands of the Government. The books were examined, the name was found, but "Dead" was written against it. The Government settles by its official records, and in the knowledge of the Government he is a dead man, and not a living claimant.

In the Christian warfare there is a like danger. Christ has enlisted a great many soldiers that have not answered to the roll call for years. They deserted in time of danger, and the angel scribe has written against their name, "Dead." The books of the Last Day will show erasure, as well as entries, and almost the last words of the Bible warn us of the blotting out of names from the Book of Life. -- Topical Illustrations

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DEATH -- UNIVERSAL

0686 -- DEATH, THE END OF EARTHLY KINGS

Under the great dome of the Church of the Escorial, in Spain, is the high altar with the kneeling figures of Charles V and his wives. There you look through the opening through which the dying Philip could glance with glazing eye toward the altar, and the kneeling effigy of his great father. For fifty days he who had visited so much suffering upon men for conscience sake, lay dying in a little cell, suffering a living hell from the pains of a revolting disease, yet bearing it all with patience, fortitude, and Catholic faith. To his son and heir, he wrote at this time: "I should have wished to save you this trial; but I want you to see how the monarchies of this earth end. Behold! God has stripped me of all the glory and majesty of sovereignty that they may pass to you. In a few hours, I shall be covered only with a poor shroud and girded only with a coarse rope. The kingly crown has already fallen from my brow, and it will soon set it upon yours. The crown will fall from your head one day, as it now falls from mine. You are young, as I have been. My day draws to a close. The tale of your life God alone can see, but it must end like mine."

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DEATH -- UNIVERSAL

0687 -- FACING DEATH

Louis XV, King of France, foolishly ordained and ordered that death was never to be spoken of in his presence. Nothing, that could in any way remind him of death, was to be mentioned or displayed, and he sought to avoid every place and sign and monument, which in any way suggested death. Carlyle said of him: "It is the resource of the ostrich who, hard hunted, sticks his foolish head in the ground and would fain forget that his foolish body is not unseen too." There is no reason why a brave and sensible man should not face all the facts of life, and one of these, the ultimate fact so far as this world is concerned, is the fact of death. Therefore, never let death take you by surprise. -- McCartney

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DEATH -- UNIVERSAL

0688 -- SHE WOULD NOT BELIEVE IT

A young lady was engaged to a sailor lad in England who sailed away to an ocean grave. She would not believe it. Her mind became unbalanced, and she was sent to the asylum. There, until she was seventy, she waited. In her state of mind, time did not exist. She yet believed that she was but twenty, and the delusion was so pathetic that, even Father Time had not the courage to chisel age upon her features. At seventy, her face looked like the maiden of twenty. -- Topical Illustrations

Refusal to face facts and to believe the truth may have various effects upon the mind and body, but such refusal will never change the truth. The fact is that it is appointed unto man once to

die, and this will hold true until the Last Trump. No amount of human mind conditioning and belief of errors like those of Christian Science can bring eternal life in this world. Eternal life is the gift of God alone, and its bodily realization will come only to those who are in Christ's kingdom, and only after death is destroyed at Christ's return. -- Duane V. Maxey

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DEATH TO SELF

0689 -- ARE YOU DEAD YET?

When dying out to self, we are to announce this to Christ, instead of waiting and waiting for Him to tell us that we are dead: There is a memorable passage in the history of St. Francis that may throw light on this subject. The grand rule of the order which he founded was implicit submission to the superior. One day a monk proved refractory. He must be subdued. By order of St. Francis, a grave was dug deep enough to hold a man; the monk was put into it; the brothers began to shovel in the earth, while their superior, standing by, looked on, stern as death. When the mold had reached the wretch's knees St. Francis bent down, and fixing his eyes on him, said, "Are you dead, yet? Is your self-will dead? Do you yield?"

There was no answer; down in that grave there seemed to stand a man with a will as iron as his own. The signal was given, and the burial went on. When at length he was buried up to the middle, to the neck, to the lips, St. Francis bent down once more to repeat the question, "Are you dead yet?" The monk lifted his eyes to his superior, to see in the cold grey eyes that were fixed on him no spark of human feeling. Dead to pity and all the weaknesses of humanity, St. Francis stood ready to give the signal that should finish the burial. It was not needed; the iron bent; he was vanquished; the funeral stopped; his will yielding to a stronger, the poor brother said, "I am dead." -- Dictionary of Illustrations

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DECISION

0690 -- HE SETTLED IT -- THE WRONG WAY!

A young man at the close of a religious service was asked to decide the matter of his soul's salvation. He said, "I will not do it tonight." The Christian man who kept talking to him said, "I insist that tonight you either receive or reject the offer of God's salvation." Well," said the young man, "if you put it in that way, I will reject it. There now, the matter's settled."

On his way home on horseback, not knowing that a tree had fallen aslant of the road, he struck against that obstacle and dropped lifeless. -- Talmage

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DECISION

0691 -- INSTANT CHOICE DEMANDED

When Agesilaus, King of Sparta had crossed the Hellespont, he marched through Thrace without asking leave of any of the barbarians. He only desired to know of each people whether they would have him pass as a friend or as an enemy. He sent some of his people to put the same question to the King of Macedon, who answered, "I will consider of it." "Let him consider," said he; "in the meantime, we march." The king, surprised and awed by this spirit, desired him to pass as a friend. -- Plutarch

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DEFILEMENT

0692 -- NOT BURNED, BUT STILL BLACKENED

Sophonius, a wise teacher, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright. "Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day, when he forbade her and her brothers to visit the volatile Lucinda, "you must think us very childish if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it." The father took, in silence, a dead coal from the hearth and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child; take it." Eulalia did so, and behold her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened and as it chanced her white dress also. "We cannot be too careful in handling coals," said Eulalia, in vexation. "Yes, truly," said the father, " You see, my child, that coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the vicious." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DELAY -- FATAL

0693 -- BEHIND TIME

A railroad train was running at almost lightning speed. A curve was just ahead; and the train was late, very late; still the conductor hoped to pass the curve in safety. Suddenly, a locomotive dashed in sight. In an instant there was a collision. A shriek, a shock, and fifty persons killed; and all because an engineer had been behind time.

The battle of Waterloo was being fought. Column after column had been precipitated upon the enemy; the sun was sinking in the west, reinforcements for the enemy were already in sight; it was necessary to carry the position with one final charge. A powerful corps had been summoned from across the country. The great conqueror, confident of its arrival, formed his reserve into an attacking column and gave the word to advance. The whole world knows the result. Napoleon died in exile, a prisoner at St. Helena, because one of his marshals was behind time.

It is continually so in life. The best-laid plans are daily sacrificed because they are "behind time." There are others who put off , salvation, year after year, till death seizes them, and they perish unrepentant, because forever "behind time." -- Rev. C. Perrin

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DELAY -- FATAL

0694 -- PERIL OF DELAY

Yonder to the great Northwest, a young civil engineer went to construct a bridge across a mountain chasm and after weeks and months with his groups of helpers he had almost finished the bridge at the close of a certain day. He said to his men: "Come back men, after supper and, we will finish it in about an hour and I will pay you a day's wages for the extra hour." "No," they said, "we have made other arrangements." He said "Come back and I will give you two day's wages." They said, "No; but why do you urge it." He said: "If a great storm should come down tonight on the mountains it would sweep this unfinished bridge away. We have not quite secured the bridge." But they went their way saying: "It won't rain in months." But the clouds were filled with rain that very night and emptied their floods upon the mountains, and the floods came down, resistless in their power, and swept the unfinished bridge utterly away. Oh, men and women, that is a parable and picture of the soul that knows and wishes, and yet presumes and delays and waits. -- George W. Truett

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DELAY -- FATAL

0695 -- PROCRASTINATION

The steamship Central America on a voyage from New York to San Francisco sprung a leak in mid-ocean. A vessel seeing her signal of distress bore down toward her. Perceiving the danger to be imminent, the captain of the rescue ship spoke to the Central America, asking: "What is amiss?" "We are in bad repair and going down; lie by till Morning" was the answer. "Let me take your passengers on board now." But as it was night, and the commander of the Central America did not want to send his passengers away lest some might be lost, and thinking that they could keep afloat awhile longer replied: "Lie by till morning."

Once again, the captain of the rescue ship called: "You had better let me take them now!" "Lie by till morning, " was sounded back through the trumpet. About an hour and a half later, her lights were missed and, though no sound was heard, the Central America had gone down and all on board perished because it was thought they could be saved better at another time. -- Pulpit Treasury

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DELAY -- FATAL

0696 -- THE FOLLY OF PROCRASTINATION

It is recorded of Archias, a chief magistrate in one of the Grecian states, that he was unpopular in his government and excited the hatred of many of the people who conspired against his life. The day was arrived when a fatal plot was to be executed Archias was more than half dissolved in wine and pleasure when a courier from Athens arrived in great haste with a packet which contained, as it afterwards appeared, a circumstantial account of the whole conspiracy.

The messenger, being admitted into the presence of the prince said: "My Lord, the person who writes you these letters conjures you to read them immediately; they contain serious affairs." Archias replied laughing: "Serious affairs tomorrow;" and so continued his revelry. On the same night, in the midst of that noisy mirth, the assailants rushed into the palace and murdered Archias with his associates; leaving to the world a striking example of the evil of procrastination.

In ten thousand affecting instances, something like this has been the conduct and the fate of men respecting the concerns of eternity. They have been warned, but, like the unhappy prince whose case we have recited, they have said: "Serious things tomorrow," and when in an unexpected hour their souls have been required. They have left the world exclaiming: "How have I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof !" -- S. Lowell

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DELAY -- FATAL

0697 -- TOO LATE TO SURRENDER

Mclan of Glencoe meant to surrender, no doubt about it, when in 1691 William the Third gave the word that all royalists must take the oath or take the consequences. Mclan meant to surrender -- to go to the place where all the Highland chieftains were to go and take the oath of allegiance -- but he said, "I will be the last. I will go at just the last moment. The others have gone ahead; the others have been at Inverness weeks ago, to take the oath."

He started a few days before the thirty-first of the last month, really meaning to take the oath: but a snowstorm came on and detained him, struggling and stumbling through the snows. Mclan arrived three days behind the time fixed. and the kings messenger had gone. There was the tramp of the government army northward to Glencoe, and in the morning the valley that had been so peaceful the night before ran red with blood.

Too late! You mean to be saved. Do you know, hell is full of those who meant to be saved, meant to give themselves to Christ, meant to do it, yet are lost? Oh, see to it that you get Christ while there is opportunity given! Oh, close with Him! Why risk eternity? -- John Robertson.

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DELIVERANCE

0698 -- DELIVERANCE BY LOOKING STEADFASTLY UNTO JESUS

A lady had a dream, in which she fancied herself at the bottom of a deep pit. She looked around to see if there were any way of getting out, but in vain. Presently, looking upward, she saw, in that part of the heavens immediately above the mouth of the pit, a beautiful bright star. Steadily gazing at it, she felt herself to be gradually lifted up ward. She looked down to ascertain how it was, and immediately found herself at the bottom of the pit. Again her eye caught sight of the star, and again she felt herself ascending. She had reached a considerable height. Still, desirous of an explanation of so strange a phenomenon, she turned her eyes downward, and fell to the bottom with fearful violence. On recovering from the effect of the shock,

She bethought herself as to the meaning of it all, and once again turned her eyes to the star, still shining so brightly above, and yet once again felt herself borne up ward. Steadily, did she keep her eyes upon its light, till at length, she found herself out of the horrible pit, and her feet safely planted on the solid ground above. It taught her the lesson that, in the hour of danger and trouble, deliverance is to be found, and found only, by looking unto Jesus. -- T. Guthrie

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DELIVERANCE

0699 -- FREEDOM REGARDLESS OF THE COST

It is said that some years ago the king of Abyssinia took a British subject prisoner whose name of Campbell. They carried him to the fortress of Magdala, and in the heights of the mountains put him in a dungeon without cause assigned. It took six months for Great Britain to find it out, and then they demanded his instantaneous release. King Theodore refused, and in less than ten days, ten thousand British soldiers were on shipboard and sailing down the coast. They disembarked and marched seven hundred miles beneath the burning sun, up the mountains to the very dungeon where the prisoner was held; and there they gave battle. The gates were torn down, and presently the prisoner was lifted upon their shoulders and carried down the mountains and placed upon the white-winged ship which sped him in safety to his home. It cost the English government twenty-five million dollars to release that man. -- J. Wilbur Chapman

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DESPERATION

0700 -- HOW TO FIND GOD

There is an ancient tale from India about a young man who was seeking God. He went to a wise old sage for help. "How can I find God?" he asked the old man. The old man took him to a nearby river. Out they waded into the deep water. Soon the water was up just under their chins. Suddenly the old man seized the young man by the neck and pushed him under the water. He held the young man down until the young man was flailing the water in desperation. Another minute and

he may well have drowned. Up out of the water the two of them came. The young man was coughing water from his lungs and still gasping for air. Reaching the bank he asked the man indignantly, "What did that have to do with my finding God?" The old man asked him quietly, "While you were under the water, what did you want more than anything else?" The young man thought for a minute and then answered, "I wanted air. I wanted air more than anything else?" The old man replied, "When you want God as much as you wanted air, you will find him."

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DEVOTIONAL LIFE -- MORNING DEVOTIONS

0701 -- TAKE TIME

A gallant officer was pursued by an overwhelming force, and his followers were urging him to greater speed, when he discovered that his saddle girth was becoming loose. He coolly dismounted, repaired the girth by tightening the buckle, and then dashed away. The broken buckle would have left him on the field a prisoner; the wise delay to repair damages sent him on in safety amid the cheers of his comrades. The Christian who is in such haste to get about his business in the morning, that he neglects his Bible and his season of prayer rides with a broken buckle. -- C. Lee Cook

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DILIGENCE

0702 -- A SOCIETY WHICH SCORNS EXCELLENCE

John Gardner, author of Excellence, said, "The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water."

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DILIGENCE

0703 -- DESPISE NOT SMALL BEGINNINGS!

"Let's build a bridge across the Niagara," someone proposed nearly a century ago. Great idea, it would save miles of travel and solve many problems. But how were they to begin? The canyon walls were too steep, and the rapids were too wild to get that first strand across from cliff to cliff. Then someone got a bright idea. They'd offer a ten dollar prize to the kid who could fly a kite from one side to the other. That's how the first string got across. It was then connected to larger string, and it in turn was connected to a slender cable. And the slender cable was connected to the strong cable that made the entire construction possible.

When the project was first announced, the critics laughed at the project. When they heard that a "kite was going to solve the problem," the sophisticated engineers had a field day. Well, history had the last laugh. One young boy, Homan Walsh, flew the first string across the chasm with his kite in 1848. He succeeded and the process worked just as it was envisioned. The boy collected his ten dollars; the great suspension bridge was started with a single string.

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DISCIPLESHIP

0704 -- HOLDING THINGS LOOSELY

Corrie ten Boom, that saintly lady who endured such brutality from the Nazis in Ravensbruck during World War II, once said that she had learned to hold everything loosely in her hand. She said she discovered, in her years of walking with Him, that when she grasped things tightly, it would hurt when the Lord would have to pry her fingers loose. Disciples hold all "things" loosely.

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DISCIPLESHIP

0705 -- IT CAME FROM BEETHOVEN

At age 16 Andor Foldes was already a skilled pianist, but he was experiencing a troubled year. In the midst of the young Hungarian's personal struggles, one of the most renowned pianists of the day came to Budapest. Emil von Sauer was famous not only for his abilities; he was also the last surviving pupil of the great Franz Liszt. Von Sauer requested that Foldes play for him. Foldes obliged with some of the most difficult works of Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann. When he finished, von Sauer walked over to him and kissed him on the forehead. "My son," he said, "when I was your age I became a student of Liszt. He kissed me on the forehead after my first lesson, saying, 'Take good care of this kiss -- it comes from Beethoven, who gave it to me after hearing me play.' I have waited for years to pass on this sacred heritage, but now I feel you deserve it." -- Today in the Word

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DISCIPLESHIP -- CONDITIONS OF

0706 -- PAYING THE PRICE

A. K. Chalmers, in *The Constant Fire*, tells about two men in China. One was a writer of great ability; the other was a working man whose devotion to the cause of revolution made him a trusted leader. These two men were rounded up by the existing government, and put under torture to make them speak their secrets. Released, they were soon again under suspicion and were sought by the authorities. They escaped and eventually reached the seacoast where a boat was waiting to

carry them to safety. There at the water's edge, the worker stopped, held out his hand to the writer and said, "Good-bye." "Why good-bye?" asked the writer. "Because," said the other, "I've decided not to go with you. You must go to America and Europe to interpret to the world by your understanding mind and brilliant pen the meaning of our struggle. But I must go back to face whatever I must with the rest, so that you, dipping your pen into my blood, can make the world understand that we mean what we say." Christian commitment. Do we have it?

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DISCIPLESHIP -- CONDITIONS OF

0707 -- THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

On January 15, 1549, a young Mennonite woman was brought to trial in Holland. Elizabeth was asked to swear under oath whether or not she had a husband. She answered, "I can take no oath." To the question regarding whom she had taught, she would only answer, "I will confess only my faith." They said they would torture her. She replied, "I hope that with God's help I shall keep my tongue and not be a traitor." He asked why she had been re-baptized, she replied, "I haven't been baptized again. I have simply been baptized." "Do you think that saves you?" they asked her. She replied, "No. All the waters in the sea cannot save me. Christ saves me." With this, they tortured her with thumbscrews until blood gushed from her nails and she fainted. Coming to, she still refused to give in to her inquisitors. She was then sentenced to death by drowning. -- Roland H. Bainton

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DISCONTENT

0708 -- NOTHING TO FEED HIS PIGS

There was an inveterate grumbler who couldn't find anything about which to give thanks or praise. Although financially he was a very successful farmer, because of a very sour attitude, no one enjoyed his company. Nothing seemed to please him. His pastor tried to help brighten the outlook, all to no avail. At the time of the potato harvest, the disgruntled farmer enjoyed a bumper crop.

Wanting to strike a more cheerful note, the minister suggested, "Brother I understand you've had a tremendous season with potatoes this year. That certainly must be cause for rejoicing!" The chronic complainer never even smiled, but sourly responded, "Yes, it's true. The harvest was good enough. But my problem is, I don't have any bad potatoes to feed my pigs."

That reminds me. Have you ever heard anyone complaining because their freezer was too full and they had no place to put anything? Or their closet? A thankful heart is not only a virtue, but the parent of all other virtues.

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DISCONTENT

0709 -- PARABLE OF THE CROAKING FROGS

A farmer came to town and asked the owner of a restaurant if he could use a million frog legs. The proprietor asked where he could find so many frogs. "I've got a pond at home just full of them," the farmer replied. "They drive me crazy night and day." After they made an agreement for several hundred frogs, the farmer went back home. He came back a week later with two scrawny frogs and a foolish look on his face. "I guess I was wrong," he stammered. "There were just two frogs in the pond, but they sure were making a lot of noise!

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0710 -- BEING A DISCOURAGER

During the Boer War (1899-1902), a man was convicted of a very unusual crime. He was found guilty of being a "discourager." The South African town of Ladysmith was under attack, and this traitor would move up and down the lines of soldiers who were defending the city and do everything he could to discourage them. He would point out the enemy's strength, the difficulty of defending against them, and the inevitable capture of the city. He didn't use a gun in his attack. It wasn't necessary. His weapon was the power of discouragement.

Encouragement, on the other hand, can be a powerful friend. It strengthens the weak, imparts courage to the fainthearted, and gives hope to the faltering. One of the greatest ministries we can have is to lift the spirits of fellow believers. -- Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0711 -- CHRIST SEES WHAT WE CAN BE, BY HIS GRACE

Margaret Slattery tells of a community in which a stranger came to settle and to engage in the practice of law. He immersed himself in his legal work; and, when he was sometimes seen walking at the eventide, he walked alone with his head down and with the look of mental distress upon his face. One day he confessed to an artist, who had a studio in the town, that he had made one sad and terrible mistake in his life. The artist said nothing, but parted from him and went into his studio.

Weeks afterward, he invited this melancholy and dejected lawyer to come in and view a portrait which he had finished, telling him that it was his masterpiece. The man was surprised and pleased that his judgment should have been sought by the artist, but when he went into the studio to view the portrait he was surprised to see that it was a portrait of himself, only now he stood erect

with his shoulders thrown back and his head up, ambition, desire, and hope written on his face. Regarding it in silence for a few moments, the man said to himself, "If he sees that in me, then I can see it. If he thinks I can be that, then I can be that man; and, what is more, I will be."

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0712 -- DEVIL'S BEST TOOL

It was once announced that the devil was going out of business and would offer all tools for sale to whoever would pay his price. On the night of the sale, they were all attractively displayed and a bad looking lot they were: Malice, Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Sensuality, and Deceit, and all the other implements of evil, were spread out each marked with its price. Apart from the rest lay a harmless looking, wedge shaped tool, much worn and priced higher than any of them. Someone asked the devil what it was. "That's discouragement," was the reply. "Why do you have it priced so high?" "Because," replied the devil, "it is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man's consciousness with that when I could not get near him with any of the others, and when once inside I can use him in whatever way suits me best. It is so much worn because I use it with nearly everybody, for very few people yet know it belongs to me." -- Rev. E. E. Hendricks

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0713 -- EXPECTING MORE OF THE SAME

A rather sickly lady had recently been deserted by her husband. He left her with five pre-school children, a mangy dog, a broken-down second floor flat, and many bills. One morning when she awoke, she discovered that the prize hound had chosen her only good pair of shoes as a chew stick and left a rather large greeting in return. The youngest baby had cried excessively through the night with the colic. As she was trying to prepare the breakfast in the morning, the power went off because the bill had not been paid. Then the dog decided it was time to play tug of war with the tablecloth, pulling all of the dishes and food off on the floor.

At that time she also heard a commotion out in the street. She ran to the kitchen to open the window and a man below yelled out, "Garbage man." Her only reply was, "Okay, send it up."

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0714 -- HE DIDN'T RESIGN

In "Remember All the Way," William C. Townsend related the story of an evangelist who was facing discouragement and criticism. One day he said to a colleague, "'Don Guillermo, I'm going to quit.' Guillermo replied, 'Why do you give your resignation to me? When you began your service, you said the Lord Jesus Christ was calling you to tell others about Him. I think you'd better present your resignation to the One who called you. Let's get down on our knees here, and you tell Him that you are going to quit. Let Him hear what you've just told me -- that it's too hard, that too many people criticize you. Tell the Lord -- He's the One who sent you.' 'Well, I hesitate to do that,' he replied. 'I'm afraid He'll tell me to stay with the job.' 'If that's what He wants, don't you think you'd better stay?' 'Yes, I think I should!'" Taking new courage and refusing to look back, the evangelist went on to 'plow a straight furrow for God.'

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0715 -- IT WAS ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Perhaps you have been there. Maybe you have lived for a while behind closed doors. Many good people have. I was reading recently about a young lawyer who descended into the valley of despond. Things were going so poorly for him that his friends thought it best to keep all knives and razors away from him for fear of a suicide attempt. In fact, during this time he wrote in his memoirs, "I am now the most miserable man living. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell. I fear I shall not." The young lawyer who unleashed these desperate feelings of utter hopelessness? His name was Abraham Lincoln.

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0716 -- KEEP IT UP! KEEP IT UP!

I read of a minister who felt so depressed and defeated that he was ready to give in to discouragement. One morning as he sat dejectedly by the window, he looked outside and noticed a starling perched on the sill. The bird seemed to look steadily at him and chirp what sounded like "Give it up! Give it up!" in starling language. The pastor thought about his seeming failure in the work God had given him. Was the starling sending him a message? As the pastor contemplated this question, his wife entered the room. When he told her what had happened, she went to the window to listen. The starling again chirped the phrase that sounded like "Give it up! Give it up!" The pastor's wife laughed, then turned to her husband and said with a smile, "Why, that starling is saying, 'Keep it up! Keep it up!', not give it up."

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DISCOURAGEMENT

0717 -- SPURGEON'S DEPRESSION BEFORE ACHIEVEMENT

Spurgeon: called to a church at 23, addressing crowds of 5000 at 30. He wrote this: Before any great achievement in my life, some measure of depression is very usual. Such was my experience when I first became a pastor in London; my success appalled me and the thought of that career which seemed to be opening up, so far from elating me, cast me into the lowest depths out of which I uttered my misery. I found no room for a Gloria in Excelsis. Who was I that I should continue to lead so great a multitude? I would slip away to my village obscurity or prefer to emigrate to American and find a solitary nest in the backwoods. It was just then that the curtain was rising on my greatest life's work and I dreaded what it might reveal to me. I hope I was not faithless! But I was timorous and filled with a sense of my own unfitness. This depression sweeps over me whenever the Lord is preparing a larger blessing for my life and ministry. Some of you are right at the door.

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DISEASE

0718 -- SICKNESS -- A STATE OF MIND? NOT ALWAYS!

A Parisian woman was bitten by a dog. Some weeks afterward, a medical student met her and expressed his surprise that she was alive. He told her that the dog was mad. She turned pale went home and died.

Byron was told, when quite young, by a gypsy that he would die at thirty-seven. He did. The physician said that the real obstacle to his recovery was that brooding conviction that he would die.

In New York, a butcher fell and ran a bolt into his side and hung suspended. He was paralyzed with intense pain and terror. The doctor found that the hook had stopped with his clothing. He was only scratched. To him, the pain and paralysis were real, yet only in the mind.

The Christian Scientist says all pain all disease is of that nature. Matter does not exist for the thoroughpaced believer in that false faith.

Mrs. Fadde -- (Faith Curist) How is your grandfather this morning, Bridget?"

Bridget -- He still has the rheumatics mighty bad, mum.

Mrs. Fadde -- You mean he thinks he has the rheumatism. There is no such thing as rheumatism.

Bridget -- Yes mum.

A few days later:

Mrs. Fadde -- And does your grandfather still persist in his delusion that he has the rheumatism?

Bridget -- No mum; the poor man thinks now that he is dead. We buried um yisterday. -- Indianapolis Journal

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DISEASE

0719 -- TWO OPPOSITE MENTAL EFFECTS UPON THE BODY

In "A Journalist's Notebook," Frank F. Moore tells an amusing and significant story of the influence of imagination upon health. A young civil servant in India, feeling fagged from the excessive heat and from long hours of work, consulted the best doctor within reach. The doctor looked him over, sounded his heart and lungs, and then said gravely: "I will write you tomorrow."

The next day, the young man received a letter telling him that his left lung was gone, and his heart seriously affected, and advising him to lose no time in adjusting his business affairs. "Of course you may live for weeks, the letter said, "but you had best not leave important matters undecided." Naturally, the young official was dismayed by so dark a prognosis, nothing less than a death warrant. Within twenty-four hours he was having difficulty with his respiration, and was seized with an acute pain in the region of the heart. He took to his bed with the feeling that he should never arise from it.

During the night, he became so much worse that his servant sent for the doctor. "What on earth have you been doing to yourself?" demanded the doctor. "There were no indications of this sort when I saw you yesterday." "It is my heart, I suppose," weakly answered the patient. "Your heart!" repeated the doctor. "Your heart was all right yesterday." "My lungs, then." "What is the matter with you, man? You don't seem to have been drinking."

"Your letter!" gasped the patient. "You said I had only a few weeks to live." "Are you crazy?" said the doctor. "I wrote you to take few weeks vacation in the hills, and you would be all right." For reply, the patient drew the letter from under the bed clothes, and gave it to the doctor. "Oh, No!" cried the doctor, as he glanced at it. "This was meant for another man. My assistant mis-sent the letters." The young man at once sat up in bed, and made a rapid recovery.

And what of the patient for whom the direful prognosis was intended? Delighted with the report that a sojourn in the hills would set him right, he started at once, and five years later was alive and in fair health. -- Youth's Companion

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DISHONESTY

0720 -- FOREORDAINED TO BE RETURNED

If a man was as dependent upon his environment, as the plant, there could be no such thing as human responsibility. As the story goes, a certain man, when charged with stealing a saddle declared: "There were just so many saddles foreordained to be stolen, and if yours is one of that number, I am not to blame." "However that may be," replied the owner, "if that saddle is not returned before sundown, you will be arrested." "Well," said the thief, "there are a certain number of saddles foreordained to be returned, and if yours is one of the number, and I think it is, your saddle will be brought home by sundown." The owner's saddle was returned, and fate did not interfere with the thief's power and will to do so. -- Topical Illustrations

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DISOBEDIENCE

0721 -- DON'T IGNORE THE RAILINGS

In the winter of 1976, John Jordan, together with three of his friends, decided to photograph Niagara Falls. They went to Goat Island to enjoy the icy beauty. While there Jordan and two others climbed the drifts that covered protective railings, then fell into the ice along the shore about 200 feet upstream from the falls. The other two scrambled back to land, but Jordan was swept down to within fifteen feet of the brink of the Horseshoe Falls. There, somehow, he was able to grasp and cling to a chunk of ice. Patrolman James MacNeill was able to rescue the young man.

Whenever we become silent about God's protective railings, the moral laws of God, we endanger the lives of those under our care. Right now, in the winter time of the Church, little is said about the necessity of obeying God's laws. But the wages of sin is still death. Let us rescue the perishing and care for the dying; but let us preach, too, the function of God's moral law.

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DOERS

0722 -- PREACHED, BUT YET TO BE DONE

A man waiting outside the church asked someone coming out, "Is the sermon done yet?" "No," was the reply. "It's been preached, but it has yet to be done." This story from Irving Jensen's Independent Bible Study makes a good point. Bible knowledge gained in church is not complete until it is applied to life.

The apostle James was concerned about believers who heard the Word but did not let it touch their lives. The person who reads and studies the Bible needs to put it into practice. Otherwise he is like an executive who looks into a mirror on the morning of a crucial meeting, sees a big stain on his tie, then forgets that it's there and goes to the meeting.

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DOOR -- OF HEAVEN

0723 -- THE DOOR IS OPEN

Dr. C. Horton entered an elevator one day and called for the floor at which he wished to stop. Always ready to seize an opportunity to tell what God had done for a world of lost sinners, he turned to the elevator boy, and asked, "Are you bound for heaven or hell?" "I don't know," the startled young man replied. When the desired floor was reached, the elevator stopped, and the door was opened, but Dr Horton made no move to go. The elevator boy waited a moment, and then said to him, "Why don't you go? The door is open." "So is the door of Heaven," answered Dr. Horton, walking out, and leaving the young man to make the very obvious application, -- Sunday School Times

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DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS

0724 -- I CAN LIVE UNDER ANY GOVERNMENT

During the Civil War in America, three Northern officers were appointed on a commission with three Southern officers, after the battle of Prairie Grove, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. While the commission was sitting, an aged farmer strayed into the room, thinking it was the provost's office, His eyes were dim but he quickly noticed the uniforms, and supposing himself in the presence of the Northern staff, began protesting his loyalty to the Union. One of the officers facetiously advised him to be cautious and, pointing to the Southern officers, told him to look at them. The old man put on his spectacles and, recognizing the uniforms, explained that his heart was with the South in the great struggle and that his only son was a soldier in the Southern army.

Gazing around the room, he recognized the Northern uniforms also and was bewildered, At last, he leaned both hands on the table and, surveying the entire party, he said: "Well, gentleman, this is a little mixed; but you just go on and fight it out among yourselves. I can live under any government." -- Christian Herald

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DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS

0725 -- DOUBT AND DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS

In a book titled In Two Minds, Os Guinness points out that the Latin word for doubt, dubitare, comes from an Aryan root meaning "two." Says Guinness, "To believe is to be 'in one mind' about accepting something as true; to disbelieve is to be 'in one mind' about rejecting it. To doubt is to waver between the two, to believe and doubt at once, and so to be 'in two minds.'"

This distinction is seen in Mark 9:24. The distressed father of the demon-possessed boy said, in effect, "Lord, one part of me believes, another part doesn't. Help the part that doesn't." Since Jesus never rewarded unbelief, His action shows that doubt rather than full-fledged unbelief plagued the man's heart.

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DOUBT

0726 -- AUTHORITIES HAD THIS TO SAY

The following statements are taken from official documents, newspapers and magazines widely read during their day. Listen to what the "authorities" had to say: 1840 - "Anyone traveling at the speed of thirty miles per hour would surely suffocate." 1878 - "Electric lights are unworthy of serious attention." 1901 - "No possible combination can be united into a practical machine by which men shall fly." 1926 - (from a scientist) "This foolish idea of shooting at the moon is basically impossible." 1930 -(another scientist) "To harness the energy locked up in matter is impossible." There have always been those who said, "It can't be done." Yes, even the experts can be wrong. But the real tragedy is that 99 percent of the people believed them.

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DRAWN -- BY THE FATHER

0727 -- DRAWN -- AFTER ALL SIN IS THROWN OVERBOARD

A captain is bringing his vessel from the Mediterranean, a comparatively tideless sea, to one of our inland ports. (an English port) At the mouth of the river the telegraphic message is flashed to him: "Lighten your ship; be ready at a certain hour, and the tide will bring you in." He does not understand it; it is against all his previous experiences; -- but he obeyed -- and as a result, is lifted and drawn by the tide into port! -- Dictionary of Illustrations

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DRESS

0728 -- DID HE GO WITHOUT THE TIE?

Dallas Cantu, of Adrian, Michigan, was asked to give the eulogy at the funeral service of a friend. But Mr. Cantu, well, he doesn't dress up much. In fact, Mr. Cantu cannot tie a neck tie. So when he arrived at the funeral chapel the other day, Mr. Cantu asked the funeral director to tie his neck tie for him. To which the funeral director replied, "I would be happy to, could you please lie down?" -- Paul Harvey

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DRIFTING

0729 -- MORE DRIFT OUT THAN FALL OUT

Where one Christian is lost to the Christian life through a particular and special assault of evil, through one break down, there are a hundred who drift away from the life of worship and of faith. More drift out of Christian life than fall out of it.

Some years ago an American liner was wrecked off the Scilly Isles. The sea was calm, the weather was clear, but the ship was caught in a treacherous current which slowly, but surely, lured it out of its course.

In life there are treacherous currents which get the soul in their grip and slowly, but surely, carry it toward the shores of ruin and wreck. Every drift ends in a wreck. When one awakens to the fact that he has been drifting, that there is not the same moral resistance, not the same eager purpose to know the truth and do it, then is the time to put a trumpet to the lips. -- McCartney

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DRIFTING

0730 -- PROGRESSIVE BACKSLIDING

I read of how when Perry's expedition was traveling across an ice-flow toward the North Pole, they traveled for some time, thinking that they were making progress northward. But, to their dismay, when they finally reckoned their position by the polestar, they discovered that the entire ice-flow had been drifting south! Had they thought to read their position by the polestar, instead of judging their position by that beneath, before, behind, and around them, they would have discovered their drift earlier! What a perfect picture of what happens to entire holiness denominations. They begin to drift in relationship to our spiritual "PoleStar," Jesus Christ. But, because they are all together in a group, and take their eyes off of Jesus, they measure their progress by unscriptural, unreliable methods, and they fail to detect their subtle, but often fatal, drift away from Christ and toward the world and hell! -- Duane V. Maxey

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DRINKING

0731 -- A LITTLE SERMON WITH BIG RESULTS

Some time ago I was at my home in New York. Walking up Sixth Avenue a man came along, walked by me, and looking around: "Oh how do you do? how do you do?" said he. "Who are you?" said I. "I know you; I saw you down at the Fulton Street meeting, and I saw you here in Lyric Hall today, leading the meeting." "Well," said I, "Who are you?" Said he: "I live in Albany -- I shall never forget the fourth day of August." "What happened then?" said I.

He replied: " I was a drunkard, and I was home on the floor drunk, and my dear little girl, six years of age, came home from Sunday school, knelt down by my side, put her arm around my body, and I there, drunk, but not so drunk that I did not know what I was about; and she drew her little hand over my face, and said, 'I love you papa;' and then she drew the other hand over my cheek, and said, 'yes, papa, and Jesus loves you too.' That made me angry, and I pushed her off, and got up , and went out angrily."

"The very name of Jesus touched my sinful heart. I went down to the saloon, but every pat of my foot upon the pavement seemed to say, 'Yes, papa, Jesus loves you too,' and when I went into that saloon, and got a glass, and took it up in my hand, something was saying all the time, 'yes, papa, Jesus loves you too.' I could not drink it, and thank God, I did not. I dashed it down and came home, and called for my little girl. Her mother led her out, and I got her up in my arms, and kissed her again and again. I never loved that daughter as I did then. That little little sermon, 'Yes, papa, Jesus loves you too,' led me to give up my cup, and led me to Jesus. I have not drank a drop since; and last Sunday I joined the church with my wife." -- Albert P. Graves

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DRINKING

0732 -- AN EFFECTIVE STAND AGAINST SELLING LIQUOR

Years ago; when I was a junior in the theological seminary at Princeton, the venerable Dr. William Paxton was just closing his career as a professor. He told us one day of an incident which I have never forgotten:

On Sabbath evenings in his Pittsburgh church he had noted a young man of fine appearance sitting in one of the galleries and giving careful and reverent attention to the preacher. Shortly before a Communion season this man called at Dr. Paxton's home and said he wished to make a confession of his faith and unite with the Church. After the conversation was over and the arrangement had been made, just as the man was leaving, Dr. Paxton asked, not out of curiosity, but as a matter of courtesy, what his business was. He was surprised when the man told him that he was a liquor dealer, and gave the name of one of the best-known liquor firms in Pittsburgh. Dr. Paxton asked him to sit down again, and expressed his sorrow that such was the case, explaining to him that with the convictions he held he could not conscientiously receive him into the membership of the Church. But he told him that there was then no church law on the subject, that it was his own personal judgment in the matter, and that there were other ministers, whose opinions he did not judge, who took a different view of the matter.

The young man replied heatedly that he considered the minister's attitude a personal affront. His father and his grandfather before him had been in the liquor business, and he had always regarded it as an honorable calling. With an air that told plainly that he was through with churches and ministers, he took his hat and walked out.

Dr. Paxton never expected to see the man again. He was therefore much surprised when one morning several months afterward the same man came to his study and said, "Dr. Paxton, when

you refused to receive me as a member of your church I felt angry and outraged, and resolved in my heart to have nothing more to do with churches. But when I was leaving you told me that it would be a good thing if I would see what my business was doing in the city. The other day I took your advice. I followed one of our wagons about over the city. I watched it as it went into the private home, the mansion of the rich, the hovel and the tenement of the poor, the rich man's club, the dance hall, and places of amusement and of crime. Now I know what you meant. You were right and I was wrong. I honor and respect you, sir, for refusing to receive me into the membership of your church. But now that I have seen the evils of this business, I have given it up and, confessing my sins, I desire to be received into the Church."

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DRINKING

0733 -- ARE YOU AFRAID OF IT?

"Don't you ever take wine?" said a hospitable, easy-souled bishop to a friend, before whom he pushed the Madeira. "No," replied his wiser friend; "I am afraid of the example." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DRINKING

0734 -- DELIVERANCE FROM DRINK

A few years ago I was going west on a campaign. A gentleman in Michigan saw the announcement in the papers, and he wrote to me at New York: "You are coming west; can not you stop in our town, and have some meetings?" I looked over my railroad directory, and found that I could stop over one day. So I wrote him that I would be there on a certain day. He met me at the depot, took my wife to the house; then he took me in his carriage around the town a little, and came to a place where they were building a large school house, and stopped and shouted, "Mr. A___, come here a minute, will you?" A gentleman came hurrying along to the carriage. "Mr. a___, this is Mr. graves." "Oh, Mr. Graves," said he, "I am glad to see you, glad to see you!" He put out his hands and seemed very much interested, though I had never seen his face. Said he, "I want to tell you my experience." "What is it?"

He said, "I was a drunkard (he was a man, I should say, more than forty), and I had got so low that one morning when I went down to the market, and got some beefsteak for breakfast (I got trusted for that), on my way home my appetite was so strong that I went into a saloon, and pawned the meat for a glass of liquor, and the saloon keeper was wicked enough to take the meat right out of my family's mouths, to let me have some liquor. I got home. My family saw that something must be done. I was a wreck. So they had me put under arrest, and took me down to the House of Reform. I stayed there several weeks, in despair, hopelessly, as I supposed, with no idea that I was ever going to get over that fearful mania for drink."

"By and by, a young man, a Christian, came up and said, 'I have a remedy for you.' 'Have you?' Hope began to spring up in my heart. 'What is it?' 'It is Jesus Christ. He is able to kill out that burning appetite within you. He breaks the power of reigning sin. He set the prisoner free.' He then took his Bible and opened it and pointed out the pure Gospel of Christ. I accepted it. I believed it, that it was able to save me from the dreadful sin into which I had fallen. I stayed there a few weeks after that, but had the appetite no more. I came home, and today I am a happy man, because I have the Gospel, and it has taken away all my appetite for strong drink." -- Albert P. Graves

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DRINKING

0735 -- HE PUT THE ENEMY IN HIS MOUTH

An officer wearing the insignia of a colonel's rank called to see President Lincoln. Lincoln listened with sympathy to the man, for he knew that he had a record for gallantry, but he also knew that the lines on the officer's face told their own story of long and unrestrained indulgence. He rose up, and, as was his habit when deeply moved, he grasped the officer's hand in both of his own and said, "Colonel, I know your story, but you carry your condemnation in your face." The President afterward said. "I dared not restore this man to his rank and give him charge of one thousand men, when he puts an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains." -- Christian Herald

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DRINKING

0736 -- KILL THE DOG!

The plan of licensing the whisky curse is such insanity that it appears an absurdity if applied to anything else in life. Speaking of allowing it, and then seeking to overcome its effects, some one uses this striking picture:

On the main street of a certain town a citizen tied a mad dog with a long tether. Many of the passersby were bitten, and some were dying. The citizens in consultation said: "We must found a hospital and fit it out with the most approved apparatus for the cure of hydrophobia. So, the hospital was built and kept full. A plain man suggested: "Why build a hospital? It would be much better kill the dog!" "Kill the dog!" exclaimed one of the city counsel, "Don't you know, sir, that that man pays well to keep that dog there?" Now, the dog is liquor, and the town is America. -- Topical Illustrations

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DRINKING

0737 -- LOCKING UP THE WRONG PERSON

A story is told of a woman who stood near the magistrate who was hearing a case against her husband. Somehow the pathetic face of the woman touched the judge, and he said to her, "I am sorry, but I must lock up your husband." "Your Honor," she returned, "wouldn't it be better for me and the children if you locked up the saloon and let my husband go to work?" -- Christian Endeavor World

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DRINKING

0738 -- NO TRUE SUCCESS FROM DRINKING

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging." Prov 20:1 A man was asked whether he used strong drink. He replied: "I don't know that I do, and I don't know that I don't. I do know that I don't drink to success." Of course, he meant to say, "I don't drink to excess." The fact is, social drinking often leads to gross excess and chronic alcoholism, but who can show that any amount of drinking ever led to real success? -- Duane V. Maxey

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DRINKING

0739 -- ONE GENERAL WHO DIDN'T DRINK

One of the most outspoken Christians of the Union army was General O. O. Howard. Howard came from the Army of the Potomac to join Sherman in the campaign from Chattanooga. At Atlanta, many of the officers joked about his Christian ways and his total abstinence. On one occasion, one of the high generals urged Howard to go with them and have a drink, and was twitting him with his peculiarity. Sherman, who was present and who himself was not noted for his piety, spoke up in his abrupt, severe manner: "Let Howard alone! I want one general in this army who doesn't drink." -- McCartney

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DRINKING

0740 -- THE MAN SHE MARRIED

A speaker at a temperance meeting told how drink had once caused the downfall of a brave soldier. Sometimes after a debauch the man would be repentant, humble. He would promise his wife to do better. But, alas! the years taught her the barrenness of all such promises. One night when he was getting to be an old man -- a prematurely old man, thin-limbed, stoop-shouldered, with red-rimmed eyes -- he said to his wife, sadly: "You're a clever woman, Jenny; a courageous, active, good woman. You should have married a better man than I am, dear." She looked at him, and thinking of what he had been, she answered in a quiet voice: "I did, James." -- Sunday at Home

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DRINKING

0741 -- WHAT HE HAD TRIED

Judge Ben B. Lindsey was lunching one day -- it was a very hot day -- when a politician paused beside his table. "Judge," said he, "I see you are drinking coffee. That is a heating drink. In this weather you want to drink iced drinks, sharp, iced drinks. Did you ever try gin and ginger ale?" "No," said the judge, smiling, "but I have tried several fellows who have." -- Classmate

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DRINKING

0742 -- YOU CAN TELL A MAN WHO BOOZES

One fair evening in October
When I was far from sober,
And dragging home a load with manly pride,
My poor feet began to stutter,
So I lay down in the gutter,
And a pig came by and parked right by my side.
Then I warbled: "It's fair weather
When good fellows get together."
When a lady passing by was heard to say:
"You can tell a man who boozes
By the company he chooses."
Then the pig got up and slowly walked away!

-- Sunday School Times

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DRUNKENNESS

0743 -- AN EFFECTIVE SOLVENT

Alcohol is a product of amazing versatility.
It will remove stains from designer clothes.
It will also remove the clothes off your back.
If by chance it is used in sufficient quantity,
Alcohol will remove furniture from the home,
Rugs from the floor, food from the table,
Lining from the stomach, vision from the eyes,

And judgment from the mind.

Alcohol will also remove good reputations,
Good jobs, good friends, happiness from children's hearts,
Sanity, freedom, spouses, relationships,
Man's ability to adjust and live with his fellow man,
And even life itself.

As a remover of things, alcohol has no equal.

-- Columbus Dispatch

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DRUNKENNESS

0744 -- I AM AN HONEST MAN

Do you think you will ever see a testimonial advertisement like this in your evening paper?: "Friends and neighbors, I am grateful for past favors and have supplied my store with a fine line of choice liquors. I must inform you that I shall continue to make drunkards, paupers, and beggars for the respectable people of the community to support. My products will incite riot, robbery, and bloodshed. They will diminish your comfort, increase your expenses, shorten your life, and multiply fatal accidents and incurable diseases. They will deprive some of life, others of reason, many of character, and all of peace. I will thus, however, accommodate you, the public. I must face the reality that I have a family to support, that the business pays, and that your attendance encourages it. I have paid my license, and the traffic is lawful! If I don't sell it, someone else will. Please give me your patronage, for as you can see, I am a frank and honest man."

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DUTY

0745 -- CHRIST SEES DUTIES DONE, OR NEGLECTED

There is a touching fact related in a history of a Highland chief, of the noble house of McGregor, who fell wounded by two shots at the battle of Prestonpans. Seeing their chief fall, the clan wavered, and gave the enemy an advantage.

The old chieftain, beholding the effect of his disaster, raised himself up on his elbow, while the blood gushed in streams from his wounds, and cried aloud: "I am not dead, my children; I am looking at you to see you do your duty!"

These words revived the sinking courage of his brave Highlanders. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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DUTY

0746 -- DUTY NEGLECTED

The story has been told of a soldier who was missed amid the bustle of a battle, and no one knew what had become of him, but it was known that he was not in the ranks. As soon as opportunity offered, his officer went in search of him, and to his surprise, found that the man, during the battle, had been amusing himself in a flower garden. When it was demanded what he did there, he excused himself by saying, "Sir, I am doing no harm." But he was tried, convicted and shot! What a sad but true picture this is of many, who waste their time and neglect their duty, and who can give no better answer than, "Lord, I am doing no harm." -- Topical Illustrations

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DUTY -- DAILY

0747 -- EXCUSE FOR NOT GOING TO THE BATTLE

A soldier who went to war took with him some of the small instruments of his craft. He was a watchmaker and repairer, and thought to make some extra money while he was in camp. He found plenty of watches to mend, and almost forgot that he was a soldier. One day, when he was ordered off on some duty, he exclaimed: "Why, how can I go? I've got ten watches to mend." Some Christians are so absorbed in self-seeking that they are ready to say to the Master's call: "I pray thee have me excused." -- Topical Illustrations

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DUTY -- OF MINISTERS

0748 -- HELP WANTED! A PREACHER

Help wanted! A preacher. A preacher that will preach precisely 20 minutes and then sit down. He must condemn sin, he must hurt nobody's feelings, hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. The salary is \$300 a week, on which he is expected to wear nice clothing buy good books, keep his family, drive a good car, and give \$150 a week back to the church. He must have a burning desire to work with young people and spend all of his time with the elderly. He must make 15 visits a day to homes and hospitals and never be absent from his office. Any preacher meeting these qualifications may apply at the church, any church. You're the one they are all looking for. -- Paul Harvey

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DUTY -- TO ENEMIES

0749 -- I HOPE TO HAVE SOME ENEMIES TO LOVE NEXT YEAR

Dear Preacher,

I heard you say to love our enemies. I am only six and do not have any yet. I hope to have some when I am seven.

Your friend,
Love, Amy

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DUTY -- TO ENEMIES

0750 -- THE BITTEREST ENEMY I HAVE

In the days of the American Revolutionary War there lived at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, a Baptist pastor by the name of Peter Miller who enjoyed the friendship of General Washington. There also dwelt in that town one Michael Wittman, an evil-minded man who did all in his power to abuse and oppose this pastor. One day Michael Wittman was involved in treason and was arrested and sentenced to death. The old preacher started out on foot and walked the whole seventy miles to Philadelphia to plead for this man's life. He was admitted into Washington's presence and at once begged for the life of the traitor.

Washington said, "No, Peter, I cannot grant you the life of your friend." The preacher exclaimed, "My friend, he is the bitterest enemy I have." Washington cried, "What? You've walked seventy miles to save the life of an enemy? That puts the matter in a different light. I will grant the pardon." And he did. And Peter Miller took Michael Wittman from the very shadow of death back to his own home in Ephrata -- no longer as an enemy, but as a friend. -- Stephen Olford

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DUTY -- TO NEIGHBORS

0751 -- JOSEPH SIEG'S SACRIFICE

Once Joseph Sieg, engine driver on the Pennsylvania Railway, saved the lives of six hundred passengers by an act of heroism. When the furnace door was opened by the firemen, as the train was going rapidly, the back draught forced the flames out so that the cab of the locomotive caught fire and the engineer and firemen were driven back over the tender into a passenger car, leaving the engine without control. The speed increased and the volume of flame with it. There was imminent danger that all the cars would take fire. Then the engineer plunged into the flames, climbed back over the red-hot tender, and reversed the engine. When the train came to a standstill, he was found in the watertank into which he had dropped, with his clothes entirely burned off, his face disfigured, his hands shockingly burned, and his whole body blistered so badly that he was

not expected to survive. If love of life, or fear of death, had held back Joseph Sieg from doing his duty, he might have been alive today, and yet dead to all that makes a man, a man. -- Samuel Cox

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THE END