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

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FACTS -- REFUSING TO FACE

0803 -- REFUSING TO FACE FACTS

I have read somewhere of a British scientist in India who years ago, was greatly troubled by the Hindu custom of drinking the water of their sacred river Ganges. He knew the water was full of impurities and most harmful to those who persisted in taking it. He wondered what he could do to stop the stupid practice. So he arranged an experiment and invited a leading Hindu priest,

supposing that if he could only show the good man conclusively what foul drinking water it was, the priest would use his influence to save his people from disease.

The day came. By means of powerful glasses the scientist magnified the foreign bodies in the water and invited the priest to look through the eyepiece and see what dreadful dangers were there. It was terrible water. It was like the water Kipling mentions in Gunga Din. "It was crawling, green, and stunk." But in the midst of the examination, when the scientist turned his back to get another specimen glass, swift as thought, the Hindu priest snatched the apparatus from the bench and dashed it to a dozen pieces on the floor. It was the answer of ignorance, and only the strong-nerved could see him and not shudder.

Frederick Treves, the distinguished author and surgeon, in whose kindly care the Elephant Man spent the last years of his life, had an iron rule that no mirror of any kind ever be allowed in the Elephant Man's room. In that grotesque body there dwelt, as Treves discovered, a shy and sensitive soul. "At all costs," said Frederick, "he must not see himself." There is no counterpart to that in the spiritual world. There is no one of us whom God will shield from the truth. He holds the mirror of Jesus before us, and, when we see ourselves in Him it is absurd to turn in anger or cowardice away from him. He reflects to us what is our true, spiritual likeness -- the likeness which we must face at the Judgment.

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FAILURE -- SPIRITUAL

0804 -- ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S FAILURES

One of the things that impresses me is that when Abraham Lincoln went off to the Black Hawk War he was a captain and, through no fault of his own, when he returned he was a private. That brought an end to his military career.

Then his little shop in a country village "winked out" as he used to say, marking his failure as a businessman. As a lawyer in Springfield, Illinois, he was too impractical, too unpolished, too temperamental to be a success.

Turning to politics he was defeated in his campaign for the legislature, defeated in his first attempt to be nominated for Congress, defeated in his application to be Commissioner of the General Land Office, defeated in the Senatorial election of 1854, defeated in his aspirations for the Vice Presidency in 1856, defeated again in the Senatorial election of 1858.

Then in 1861, over 100 years ago, found him in the White House as President of the United states. How did Lincoln interpret this strange succession of failures and frustrations which finally culminated in terrific personal victory? He said, "That the Almighty directly intervenes in human affairs is one of the plainest statements in the Bible. I have had so many evidences of His direction, so many instances when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will that I have no doubt that this power comes from above."

God knows what is good for us better than we ourselves. Let us not make the mistake of judging God's overall plan for our lives by that portion which happened to be revealed today. God has all eternity in which to bring His plans to fulfillment for our lives. Think not in terms of today, but in terms of eternity. After all, that's where we'll spend most of our life. -- William Summerour

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FAILURE -- SPIRITUAL

0805 -- FAILURE IN SUCCESS

Clarence Darrow, the great criminal lawyer of another day, had among his friends a young minister. This seems strange, because, as you remember, Darrow was usually thought of as an atheist, infidel, agnostic or what have you.

They were talking one day and Mr. Darrow became reminiscent. He talked of his career and some of the famous trials in which he had been the lawyer for the defense. He said, "This has been an exciting life." He made at least a comfortable fortune and he guessed he might be regarded as somewhat of a success.

Then Mr. Darrow asked, "Would you like to know my favorite Bible verse?" His friend said, "Indeed I would." Mr. Darrow said, "You will find it in Luke 5:5. 'We've toiled all the night and have taken nothing.'" He added, "In spite of my success that verse seems to sum up the way I feel about life."

No matter what one does in life, no matter what position he may obtain, no matter what he might come to own...if he leaves God out, the time will come when life itself will rise up and mock him with the word -- nothing -- nothing! "What shall a man profit if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" -- William Pettrigrew

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FAILURE -- SPIRITUAL

0806 -- FAILURE -- THE STEPPING STONE TO SUCCESS

Failure is never pleasant. It certainly isn't enjoyable to lose a job, see a relationship falter, or fail a test. But the immediate disappointment we feel when we face defeat can be turned into the joy of success if we take the right attitude. Thomas Edison was busy working in his laboratory at 2 o'clock one morning when an assistant came into the room and noticed that the inventor was smiling broadly. "Have you solved the problem?" he asked. "No," replied Edison, "that experiment didn't work at all. Now I can start over again." Edison could have such a confident attitude because he knew that the road to success is often paved with disappointments that serve to extend the road -- not to block it. Each failure brought him a little closer to success.

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FAILURE -- SPIRITUAL

0807 -- HE CLOSED THE GATES BEHIND HIM

After a round of golf, British statesman David Lloyd George and a friend walked through a field in which cows were grazing. They were so absorbed in conversation that they forgot to close the gate when they left the fenced area. David Lloyd George happened to notice the open gate, however, and went back to close it.

David Lloyd George told his friend that this little incident reminded him of a doctor who, when dying, was asked by a minister whether there was anything he wanted to say before he slipped away. "No," the doctor replied, "except that through life I think I have always closed the gates behind me." The dying man meant by this that he had learned the secret of putting past failures and disappointments behind him so they wouldn't rob him of his joy and peace.

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FAILURE -- SPIRITUAL

0808 -- IT WAS ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Have you failed trying to accomplish something? Imagine, how easy it would have been for this young man to have bowed his head and given up. He failed in business in '31, he was defeated for the legislature in '32, he was elected to the legislature in '34. His sweetheart died in '35, he had a nervous breakdown in '36, he was defeated for speaker in '38, he was defeated for elector in '40, he was defeated for Congress in '43, he was elected to Congress in '46, defeated for Congress in '48, defeated for Senate in '50, defeated for vice president in '56 and for Senate in '58. But fortunately he was elected president in 1860. His name was Abraham Lincoln. He proves that failure need not be permanent.

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FAINTHEARTEDNESS

0809 -- HE WAS ALWAYS PUSHED

Someone asked an ex-paratrooper how many jumps he had made. He responded by saying, "None! I was pushed out 18 times!" For some Christians, that story describes their initiative or lack thereof.

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FAITH

0810 -- BEGIN WITH FAITH

Vance Havner, a Baptist evangelist, related the story of an elderly lady who was greatly disturbed by her many troubles both real and imaginary. Finally she was told in a kindly way by her family, "Grandma, we've done all we can do for you. You'll just have to trust God for the rest." A look of utter despair spread over her face as she replied, "Oh, dear, has it come to that?" Havner commented, "It always comes to that, so we might as well begin with that!"

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FAITH

0811 -- CONDUCT CONFIRMS REAL FAITH

Paul Harvey has rightly said, "If you don't live it, you don't believe it."

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FAITH

0812 -- FAITH IS NOT CLINGING, BUT LETTING GO

Somewhere we have read a story like this. A traveler upon a lonely road was set upon by bandits who robbed him of his all. They then led him into the depths of the forest. There, in the darkness, they tied a rope to the limb of a great tree, and bade him catch hold of the end of it. Swinging him out into the blackness of surrounding space, they told him he was hanging over the brink of a great precipice. The moment he let go he would be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. And then they left him. His soul was filled with horror at the awful doom impending. He clutched despairingly the end of the swaying rope. But each dreadful moment only made his fate more sure. His strength steadily failed. At last he could hold on no longer. The end had come. His clenched fingers relaxed their convulsive grip. He fell -- six inches to the solid earth at his feet. It was only a ruse of the robbers to gain time in escaping. And when he let go it was not to death, but to the safety which had been waiting him through all this time of terror. -- James H. McConkey

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FAITH

0813 -- I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH

The renowned conductor Reichel was leading a great orchestra and choir in the final rehearsal of Messiah. They had come to that point where the soprano soloist takes up the refrain, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." With the chorus quiet, her elegant voice rang out. It was marked by perfect technique in breathing and enunciation. She sang with near perfection.

As the final note faded into silence, the entire orchestra expected to see Reichel's nod of approval. But instead, he stepped down from the podium and made his way to the singer. With a

look of sorrow, he said, "My daughter, you do not really know that your Redeemer lives, do you?" "Why, yes," she blushing replied. "Then sing it!" cried Reichel. "Tell it to me so that I will know, and all who hear you will know that you know the joy and power of it!" Turning to the orchestra, he motioned to begin again. This time the soloist sang the truth as she knew it in her own soul. Those listening wept under the powerful witness.

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FAITH

0814 -- PATON'S TRANSLATION OF THE WORD "FAITH"

When John Paton was translating the Bible for a South Seas island tribe, he discovered that they had no word for trust or faith. One day a native who had been running hard came into the missionary's house, flopped himself in a large chair and said, "It's good to rest my whole weight on this chair." "That's it," said Paton. "I'll translate faith as 'resting one's whole weight on God.'"

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FAITH

0815 -- PAY THE MONEY AT ONCE

Among those who served in the court of Alexander the Great was a famous philosopher who had outstanding ability but little money. He asked Alexander for financial help and was told he could draw whatever cash he needed from the imperial treasury. When he submitted to the treasurer a request for an amount equal to \$50,000, he was promptly refused. The treasurer had to verify that such a large sum was indeed authorized. But when he asked Alexander, the ruler replied, "Pay the money at once. The philosopher has done me a singular honor. By the largeness of his request he shows that he has understood both my wealth and generosity."

People who exercise great faith by asking God to provide for their needs demonstrate a similar understanding of His vast wealth and goodness.

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FAITH

0816 -- THE TRUE TEST OF FAITH

How can a person "sell" Big Ben, the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, and the statue of Lord Nelson in London's Trafalgar Square? Ask a Scotsman named Arthur Ferguson, who in the 1920s did just that to unsuspecting buyers! Ferguson used his amazing sales ability to extract \$30,000 from a well-to-do American for Nelson's statue, and got \$5,000 from another American for Big Ben. By the time the law caught up with Ferguson and he was sent to prison, he had not

only sold the landmarks listed above, but had taken \$10,000 as a down payment on Buckingham Palace!

What was wrong with Ferguson's "transactions?" He was dealing in things he never possessed. Anyone can claim faith, but the true test is not words. It's the life that faith produces.

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FAITH -- AIDS TO

0817 -- TOLD BY A WRITER

I once knew a young man, who, by an unfortunate combination of difficulties, found himself in financial straits without knowing which way to turn or what to do to escape adversity. It so happened that his father learned of his difficulty and sent him a few words by telegraph that put joy in his heart as soon as he received the message. All the telegram said was: "Draw on me for what you need." But every word was the same as gold to the needy son because he knew his father, and knew that he would never send him such a message as that unless he meant it. Therefore, with his father's word in his hand, he set out for a bank at once and proceeded to act upon it. How many heartaches and weary days it would save us, if we would only receive our heavenly Father's words with the same faith. -- Topical Illustrations

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FAITH -- HONORED BY CHRIST

0818 -- SET THE SAIL

When Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary, first went to China, it was in a sailing vessel. Very close to the shore of cannibal islands the ship was becalmed, and it was slowly drifting shoreward unable to go about and the savages were eagerly anticipating a feast. The captain came to Mr. Taylor and besought him to pray for the help of God. "I will," said Taylor, "provided you set your sails to catch the breeze." The captain declined to make himself a laughing stock by unfurling in a dead calm. Taylor said, "I will not undertake to pray for the vessel unless you will prepare the sails." And it was done.

While engaged in prayer, there was a knock at the door of his stateroom. "Who is there?" The captain's voice responded, "Are you still praying for wind?" "Yes," "Well," said the captain, "you'd better stop praying, for we have more wind than we can manage." And sure enough, when but a hundred yards away the cannibals were cheated out of their human prey. -- Oriental Missionary Standard

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0819 -- FAITH SEES HIS LIKENESS

The painting "Christ Before Pilate," was on display in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. A rough sailor came to the door and asked, "Is Christ here? How much to see Christ? I suppose I'll have to pay it!" He sat down in front of the painting. Eventually, he took off his hat. He studied the picture for an hour. "I came here to see Christ because my mother asked me to," he said, finally. "I never believed in such things, but the man who painted that picture, he must have believed it."

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0820 -- HAVE ADDED COMMITMENT TO YOUR FAITH?

How true faith in Christ demands commitment to Him is quite well illustrated in the following stories:

Years ago there lived a famous tightrope walker, named Blondin, who performed most astonishing feats. On one occasion he walked from one end of the center transept of the Crystal Palace, in London, to the further side, along a rope stretched across at a tremendous height, and not only so, but he stopped in the middle and cooked an omelet.

On another occasion a rope was stretched across a shipbuilding yard, also very high, and Blondin carried a man across, at this dizzy height, on his back, thousands of spectators gazing with awe and wonder at the remarkable performance. When he had completed his perilous journey, and descended to terra firma, he noticed a boy gazing at him in speechless amazement and admiration.

So, approaching the lad, he said, "You saw me carry a man across safely, do you think I could carry you?" "Certainly you could, for I'm only a little fellow, and he's a big man." "Well, then," returned Blondin, "jump up, and I will take you," whereupon he suited the action to the word, and bending down, said, "Well, jump up!" But the boy instead of doing so, speedily disappeared into the crowd. He did not care to trust himself to him; he was afraid to do so. --
Sunday School Times

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0821 -- HE BEARS

Gypsy Smith in one of his sermons tells of being in South Wales and lodging in a house on a side of a lovely mountain in the Rhondda Valley. One morning he received a letter from a man who said he had heard Gypsy preach three months before. He had never had a day of peace since, for it had revealed to him his sinful double life, and, though he had abandoned it, he could not find peace. "Do you think there is hope, that God will have mercy on me?"

Gypsy laid down the letter and watched the snowflakes dancing before his window until he imagined one paused midway in air and said to the mighty mountain opposite: "O mountain, I want a place to rest. If I fall, can you bear me?" and the mountain answered: "Little snowflake, I have my roots in God. Fall on me, and see."

Then Gypsy penned this parable to the man, and later a letter came saying. "I am on the mountain, and the mountain bears." Can a mountain bear a snowflake? Venture on God. He made the snowflake and the mountain, and will make a new creature of you if you will trust Him. --
Sunday School Times

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0822 -- RETRIEVING REVERSES BY FAITH

C. H. Spurgeon once said: "A dog used to come through a broken fence in my garden, doing gardening I did not like. One day I flung a stick at him. The creature seized the stick and laid it at my feet. He beat me by trusting. I patted him on the head, and said, "Good dog; come as often as you like." Faith will bring even God's thunderbolts and lay them at His feet." -- C. H. Spurgeon

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0823 -- THE OMNISCIENT CAPTAIN

A story is told that once the passengers of a vessel steaming along the St. Lawrence River were very angry because, in spite of the fact that heavy fog was encircling the boat, full speed ahead was maintained. At last they went to the first mate, and complained. "Oh, don't be afraid!" the mate replied, with a smile. "The fog lies low, and the captain is high above it, and can see where we are going."

Are you tempted to complain of the way your Great Captain is leading you? Believe that He can see the end of the way. Then, declare, "Thou, Lord makest me dwell in safety." -- Sunday Circle

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FAITH -- IN CHRIST

0824 -- WHEN OUR FAITH IN PRAYER IS GONE

Dr. McCormick, in "The Heart of Prayer," tells of a good woman whose daughter had died after a painful illness. She came to her minister and said, "I fear I have lost my faith in prayer. I used to believe that anything I asked for in the name of Christ I would receive. When my child was

sick I besought God with an agony of desire for her recovery. I believed that God would grant my prayer. When she died I was stunned, not merely because of my grief, but because it seemed to me that God had failed me. I pray still, but the old faith in prayer is gone."

This good woman was the victim of wrong teaching. She had in a word been led to substitute faith in prayer for faith in God. If our faith in prayer is uppermost, then any disappointment will shake that faith. But if faith in God is the great fact of life, then no matter what may be the outcome of our petitions we will still trust. -- The Presbyterian

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FAITH -- JUSTIFICATION BY

0825 -- WHITEFIELD'S CONVERSION

The necessity of the new birth is vividly portrayed in the life of George Whitefield. At 16 he became deeply convicted of his sin. He tried everything to become acceptable to God. He wrote, "I fasted for 36 hours twice a week. I prayed formal prayers several time a day and almost starved myself to death during Lent, but only felt more miserable. Then by God's grace I met Charles Wesley, who put a book in my hand that showed me from the Scriptures that I must be 'born again' or be eternally lost." Finally, Whitefield understood that he had to trust in Jesus Christ. He believed and was both forgiven and changed. After he became a preacher, he spoke at least a thousand times on the subject, "You must be born again." Have you ever had a spiritual birthday?

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0826 -- A FALSE TESTING OF FAITH

Joseph Smith, the Mormon, false prophet, took his followers to a deep stream, that they might see him walk dryshod over it. "Have you faith," said Smith, "that I can walk across without wetting my feet?" "We have, we have!" cried his enthusiastic people. "Then," said the false prophet, "that is as good as if I were to do it fifty times. The end is gained." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

What end was gained? No other than the continued deception of those who were so foolish as to believe such a false testing of faith. Christ asks us only to believe what He actually can do, has done, is doing, and shall do. Thus, when our faith is rested upon His word, it does not stand upon a false foundation. -- Duane V. Maxey

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0827 -- EDISON'S LIGHT

On October 18, 1879, a young inventor by the name of Thomas A. Edison sat in his laboratory. He was weary from 13 months of repeated failure in his search for a filament that would stand the stress of electric current. To add to his problems, the men who had backed him financially were now refusing to put up any additional funds. Having tried every known metal in his experiment, Edison was admittedly baffled. Casually picking up a bit of lampblack, he mixed it with tar and rolled it into a thin thread. Suddenly the thought struck him, why not try a carbonized cotton fiber? For 5 hours he worked on the first filament, but it broke before he could remove the mold.

Two entire spools of thread were used in similar fruitless efforts. At last a perfect strand emerged, only to be ruined when he tried to place it inside a glass tube. Still Edison refused to admit defeat. He continued to work without sleep for two more days and nights. Eventually he managed to insert one of the crude carbonized threads into a vacuum-sealed bulb. "When we turned on the current," he said, "the sight we had so long desired to see finally met our eyes!" His persistence in the face of the most discouraging odds gave the world one of its greatest inventions -- the electric light!

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT

0828 -- ELIJAH'S GOD LIVES

In his book "Miracles in Black", Dr. John C. Wengatz tells of an African convert who was left at a new mission station to carry on the Lord's work with a cannibal tribe. It was the dry season when Joao Mbaxi took over, but soon the tropical rains would be coming. Month after month went by, however, without a cloud appearing in the sky. Then came the time for the normal dry period. By now everyone was suffering, and many were on the brink of starvation. In all the years they had worshipped their ancient gods, the rains had never failed them, and so Joao was told that he must leave the country and take "the white man's God" with him. The courageous Christian refused to go. Then, flushed with anger, the chief sullenly warned, "If your God is as good as you say and so powerful that He rules the sky, why doesn't He send us the needed showers? If it doesn't rain by sunrise tomorrow, we will drink your blood and eat your flesh!" Recalling the Biblical account of Elijah, Joao went to his hut and prayed for divine help with the same urgency as that of the ancient prophet.

Meanwhile the members of the tribe waited for the dawn when the Christian leader would become the victim of their horrible feast. Just before daylight, thunder was heard in the distance, lightning flashed across the sky, and abundant rain refreshed the entire region! As a result, the believer was able to continue his work for Christ. Elijah's God still lives! Let us therefore face our moments of crisis with faith instead of fear. Those who pray like the prophet of old will find the Lord pouring out His blessings with the same plenteous supply!

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0829 -- LINCOLN'S HARDEST TRIAL

Strong faith in God does not come all at once. It is often gained through willing submission to His love and goodness in the midst of trial.

In February 1862, President Lincoln's son Willie died, and his son Tad became seriously ill. A Christian nurse attending the sick child recalled that the President watched by his bedside and often paced, saying, "This is the hardest trial of my life. Why is it? Why is it?" She told him that she was a widow and that her husband and two children were in heaven. She saw the hand of God in it all and never loved Him so much as she did after her great trials. "How is that brought about?" inquired Lincoln. "Simply by trusting in God and knowing that He does all things well," she replied. "Did you submit fully under the first loss?" he asked.

"No," she answered, "not fully. But as blow came upon blow, and all were taken, I could and did submit." Lincoln replied, "I'm glad to hear you say that...I will try to go to God with my sorrows." After a few days, she asked him if he could trust God. He replied, "I think I can. I will try. I wish I had that childlike faith you speak of, and I trust he will give it to me."

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0830 -- PUT IN YOUR HAND

Faith in Christ is more than mere intellectual assent. It is believing with the heart, with the will, with adoration and with action. Years ago a party of visitors at the national mint were told by a workman in the smelting works that if you first dipped your hand in water, a ladle of molten metal might be poured over the palm of the hand without burning it. A husband and wife were part of this party of visitors. "Perhaps you would like to try it," the workman said to the husband. The husband drew back sharply, "No thanks," he said, "I'll take your word for it." The workman turned to the wife, "Perhaps you would like to try it." She replied, "Certainly." She pulled up the sleeve of her blouse and thrust her hand into a bucket of water. Calmly she held her hand out while the metal was poured over it. Which of the two really believed the workman? The husband believed at one level -- but he wasn't willing to put his belief to the acid test. The wife, on the other hand, was willing to take the kind of risk faith in Christ demands.

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0831 -- SOME THROUGH THE FLOOD

A study by the Laboratory for Statistical and Policy Research at Boston College makes a good observation. A devastating flood hit Toccoa Falls, Georgia, in 1977, killing 39 and causing

\$1.5 million in damage. The researchers compared the survivors of that Bible college community with those who lived through similar catastrophes in four other states.

The report stated, "On the whole, the people at Toccoa Falls came out very well. They were in better mental health than those in communities who weren't hit so hard. Their very strong religious commitment gave them an understanding of what happened."

Author Leslie B. Flynn gave this summary: "In other words, inner strength from their Christian faith enabled the survivors at Toccoa to fare better than others who suffered similar...calamities."

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0832 -- THE ACID TEST

True faith never loses by being tested; and God loves us greatly when He tests false faith and reveals it to us that we may forsake it before it is too late.

A ring came into a lady's possession, the value of which she knew nothing. It was exquisite in workmanship and very beautiful in design. She took it to a jeweler who said that the only way of being sure about it being genuine was to put it into acid. "If it is genuine," he said "it will suffer no injury, but if it is an imitation the acid will corrode and destroy it."

The lady looked tenderly at her ring. It was so beautiful that it seemed a pity to run the risk, but if it was genuine there would be no harm and she would value it so much more after it had borne the test. "Put it in," she said, almost breathlessly.

The jeweler dropped the ring into the acid while its owner looked on anxiously. In a few minutes, she received back her treasure, looking brighter and clearer for the ordeal, and perfectly sound. -- Topical Illustrations

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FAITH -- OBSTACLES THAT TEST

0833 -- UNBELIEF AND FAITH COMPARED

Unbelief puts our circumstance between us and God, but faith puts God between us and our circumstances. -- F.B. Meyer

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FAITH -- VICTORIOUS

0834 -- I SELL FAITH

Sholem Asch in his book "Kiddush Ha-Shem" tells of an incident that happened during the terrible massacre of Jews in Russian Poland in the seventeenth century. Men, women, and children were slain; families were divided and destroyed. Only death seemed active. One of the survivors was walking down the streets in the denuded, deserted town, trying to understand the meaning of it all. As he passed the market place, he saw merchants with their booths already set up, selling articles of food and clothing. In one booth an old Jew sat in rags. The strange thing about it was that his booth was completely empty of food or clothing, absolutely nothing to sell. And he sat there. In amazement the survivor went up to the man and asked, "But your booth is empty. What do you sell?" The old Jew turned and looked at him with a sad smile and said slowly, "I sell faith. I sell faith."

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FAITH -- VICTORIOUS

0835 -- WHY HE CAME

Sometimes we do handicapped persons a disservice when we offer them too much sympathy. They need courage, not sympathy. Some soldiers in ancient Greece once were twitting another soldier because of his withered foot. The twitting stopped when he said, "I am here to fight, not to run."

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FAITH -- WEAK

0836 -- BEYOND BOUNDARY STREET

Evangelist Billy Walker told a story about the city fathers of New York as they contemplated the future growth of the city. They laid out the streets and numbered them from the center outward. When they began, there were only six or seven streets. In their planning maps, they projected how large they thought the city might grow.

Reaching beyond their wildest imagination, they drew streets on the map all the way out to 19th Street. They called it "Boundary Street" because they were sure that's all the larger New York City would become. But history has proven them to be shortsighted. At last count, the city had reached 284th Street -- far exceeding their expectations!

We, like those city fathers, sometimes set the boundaries too close in our spiritual expectations.

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FAITH -- WEAK

0837 -- THERE ARE DEGREES OF FAITH

I recall a story about a man who had to cross a wide river on the ice. He was afraid it might be too thin, so he began to crawl on his hand and knees in great terror. He thought he might fall through at any moment. Just as he neared the opposite shore, all exhausted, another man glided past him nonchalantly sitting on a sled loaded with pig iron.

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FAITH -- WEAK

0838 -- WESLEY'S COW SERMON

One day John Wesley was walking with a troubled man who expressed his doubt as to the goodness of God. He said, "I do not know what I shall do with all this worry and trouble." At the same moment Wesley saw a cow looking over a stone wall. "Do you know," asked Wesley, "why that cow is looking over the wall?" "No," said the man. Wesley said, "The cow is looking over the wall because she cannot see through it. That is what you must do with your wall of trouble. Look over it and avoid it." Faith enables us to get above circumstances and look to Christ who is over all, blessed forever. -- Wonderful Word

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FAITHFULNESS

0839 -- A DAILY GOAL

While touring Italy, a man visited a cathedral that had been completed on the outside only. Once inside, the traveler found an artist kneeling before an enormous wall upon which he had just begun to create a mosaic. On some tables nearby were thousands of pieces of colored ceramic. Curious, the visitor asked the artist how he would ever finish such a large project. The artist answered that he knew how much he could accomplish in one day. Each morning, he marked off an area to be completed that day and didn't worry about what remained outside that space. That was the best he could, and if he did his best, one day the mosaic would be finished.

Sometimes we forget that the massive population of the world will be reached one person at a time, and one day the job will be finished.

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FAITHFULNESS

0840 -- FAITHFUL TO HIS POST

The old Russian army had a tradition that when a sentinel had been posted he could be relieved or withdrawn only by the officer who had posted him, or by the czar himself. During the first World War, there was the story of a Russian soldier who was posted as a sentinel in a dangerous position. The officer who posted this sentinel was killed in battle, and the soldier refused to leave his post until an order came from the czar himself.

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FAITHFULNESS

0841 -- FAITHFULNESS TESTED

The sign in the window read: "Boy Wanted". Young John Simmons, though he was lazy, saw his opportunity and applied. He was quickly hired by elderly Mr. Peters. The pace was leisurely so he enjoyed the job. Toward the middle of the afternoon however, he was sent up to the attic -- a dingy place full of cobwebs and infested with mice. "You will find a long, deep box there," explained Mr. Peters. "Please sort out the contents and see what should be saved."

John was disappointed. It was a large container, and there seemed to be nothing in it but old junk. After a few minutes he went back to the ground floor. Asked by the proprietor if he had completed his work, he replied, "No, sir, it was dark and cold up there and I didn't think it was worth doing."

At closing time he was paid and told not to return. The next morning the old sign "Boy Wanted" appeared in its usual place. Crawford Hill was the next to be employed. When he was asked to tidy up the same box, however, he spent hours separating the usable nails and screws from the things to be discarded.

Suddenly he raced down the stairs all excited. "At the very bottom I found this!" he exclaimed, holding up a 20-dollar bill. At last the store owner had discovered a conscientious boy to whom he could entrust his business when he retired. Years later Mr. Peters said, "This young man, who is now my successor, found his fortune in a junk box!" Then, correcting himself, he added, "No, he actually found it in his mother's Bible because he heeded the verse she made him memorize: 'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much!'"

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FAITHFULNESS

0842 -- I CAN'T CRITICIZE CHRIST

The narrow lane led deep into the heart of Canton, China. As Fergus Bordewich picked his way through the jam of pedestrians he finally found the right address. Climbing two flights of steps, he entered a room packed with handmade pews. There were racks of Bibles and piles of hymnals. Twenty or more students, businessmen, and elderly women were kneeling on the concrete floor. Their voices swelled, and old Christian hymns echoed through the room. This was

the Chinese underground church. According to a Reader's Digest article by Bordewich, everyone in the attic church knew the gathering was illegal. Police might burst in at any time to beat them and drag away their pastor, Lin Xiangao. Years before, Xiangao had been asked to denounce Christ. He refused, saying, "Even if you prolong my sentence or kill me, I can't criticize Christ."

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FAITHFULNESS

0843 -- MAYBE NEXT YEAR YOU'LL PASS

When I proudly told my 8-year-old granddaughter I'd been attending Bible class for almost 50 years, she looked at me sympathetically and patted my hand. "Don't worry, Grandma," she said. "Maybe this year you'll pass." -- Marlys Huffman

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FAITHFULNESS

0844 -- MIND THE LIGHT

Years ago John Walker was the keeper of the light on the Robin's Reef at Staten Island under the United States Government. There he lived happily in the faithful discharge of his duties for four years. He was then taken with severe pains and Catherine his wife sent to the shore for medical help. When this was forthcoming the physician ordered that John should be removed to a hospital at once. As he was being carried to the boat which was to bear him to the shore he called to his wife, as a parting direction, "Mind the light." He was faithful to his trust to the end. The poor fellow never returned to the lighthouse.

Catherine stayed on to "Mind the light," and carried out the duties so well that she was appointed keeper. Then for more than thirty years she stayed in that lonely spot, caring for the warning beacon to keep mariners from damage on the cruel rocks.

"Mind the light." The words recall for us our duty and privilege as Christians. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation we are set to "Shine a lights in the world." -- Gospel Herald

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FAITHFULNESS

0845 -- NO GOOD TO ANYBODY

A certain minister is said to have been unable to say, "No," to any request that came to him. He was invited to speak for other ministers, and at clubs and banquets and other gatherings, until his own church had but a small fraction of his time, and his home was neglected. One day, while walking alone by a lake, he met a man who was about to drown a small dog. "What's wrong with

the dog?" he inquired. "Well, you see," said the man, "When Gypsy was a pup, he was all right. But he has grown to be a regular nuisance. We are always losing him. He follows everyone. And a dog that follows everybody is no good to anybody." The last sentence struck the minister like a blow. He begged for the dog and took him home, saying, "Gypsy you and I will learn faithfulness together!" And then and there began a new era in his life and usefulness. Sunday School Times.

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FAITHFULNESS -- OF CHRIST

0846 -- THE PRIME MINISTER'S PROMISE

Lord Palmerston, Queen Victoria's Prime Minister, was crossing Westminster Bridge when a little girl ahead dropped a jug of milk. The jug broke into fragments, and she dissolved into tears. Palmerston having no money with him dried her eyes by telling her that if she came to the same spot next day at that hour he would pay for both jug and milk. The following morning, in the midst of a cabinet meeting, he suddenly remembered his promise to the little girl, left the bewildered ministers, dashed across the bridge, popped half a crown into the waiting child's hand and hurried back. -- All Nations Missionary Review

Even thus, we can depend upon Christ to always keep his promises, no matter how unimportant they may seem to some. -- Duane Maxey

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FAITHFULNESS -- OF GOD

0847 -- STILL, THE NIGHTINGALE SANG

British preacher Charles Spurgeon once vacationed at an isolated spot in England because he had been told that many nightingales lived there. To his great disappointment, however, it started to rain just as he arrived at the hotel. The weather turned unseasonably cold and Spurgeon feared that the primary purpose of his trip had been spoiled. But as he sat by his open window, he suddenly heard a delightful melody -- a nightingale perched on a branch outside. The only light was a dim lamp burning at the entrance to the hotel. The nightingale, oblivious to the rain and cold, was exulting in that tiny bit of light. Spurgeon wrote of his experience, "I do not expect to listen to anything so sweet and thrilling again until I hear the angels sing in glory. The God of that nightingale is the same loving Savior I serve. In spite of darkness, storm, or thorns, He always provides some ray of light and gives a song in the night."

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FALSE PROFESSION

0848 -- CAN YOU FACE THE MUSIC?

The expression "face the music" is said to have originated in Japan. According to the story, one man in the imperial orchestra couldn't play a note. Being a person of great influence and wealth, he had demanded that he be given a place in the group because he wanted to "perform" before the emperor. The conductor agreed to let him sit in the second row of the orchestra, even though he couldn't read music. He was given a flute, and when a concert would begin, he'd raise his instrument, pucker his lips, and move his fingers. He would go through all the motions of playing, but he never made a sound. This deception continued for two years.

Then a new conductor took over. He told the orchestra that he wanted to audition each player personally. One by one they performed in his presence. Then came the flutist's turn. He was frantic with worry, so he pretended to be sick. However, the doctor who was ordered to examine him declared that he was perfectly well. The conductor insisted that the man appear and demonstrate his skill. Shamefacedly he had to confess that he was a fake. He was unable to "face the music."

In the realm of Christian service, many professing believers go through the motions, but they are only pretenders. Someday they will be called upon to stand before the Judge of heaven and earth, and their deception will be revealed. God will then separate the "phonies" from the real Christians. No one will be able to hide in the crowd. Each will be made to "face the music."

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FALSE PROFESSION

0849 -- WHY GHANDI WAS LOST TO CHRISTIANITY

Profession without practice was not only the curse of the Jews; it has been throughout the ages the curse of the Church. During his early days in South Africa (in Pretoria) Gandhi inquired into Christianity. For several Sundays he attended a Christian Church, but, he says, "the congregation did not strike me as being particularly religious; they were not an assembly of devout souls, but appeared rather to be worldly-minded people going to Church for recreation and in conformity to custom." He, therefore, concluded that there was nothing in Christianity which he did not already possess -- and so Gandhi was lost to the Christian Church with incalculable consequences to India and to the world. -- William Barclay

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FALSE PROPHETS

0850 -- THAT BUG IS A HUMBUG

A group of students at Harvard once tried to fool the famous professor of zoology Agassiz. They took parts from a number of different bugs and with great skill attached them together to make a creation they were sure would baffle their teacher. On the chosen day they brought it to him and asked that he identify it. As he inspected it with great care, the students grew more and more sure they had tricked this genius. Finally, Professor Agassiz straightened up and said, "I have identified

it." Scarcely able to control their amusement, they asked its name. Agassiz replied, "It is a humbug." A person with genuine life from God will detect the counterfeit and think, "Humbug".

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FALSE RELIGION

0851 -- HERE THEY DO BOTH

My cousin-in-law told me that his ancestors had to leave England for stealing sheep. They went to Holland, but had to leave for practicing their religion. So they came to America, where they could steal sheep and practice their religion simultaneously! -- Sarah M. Watson

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FALSE RELIGION

0852 -- INOCULATED AGAINST TRUE CHRISTIANITY

Chad Walsh wrote an intriguing book entitled Early Christians of the Twenty-first Century, in which he placed a burr in many a mental saddle with these words: "Millions of Christians live in a sentimental haze of vague piety, with soft organ music trembling in the lovely light from stained glass windows. Their religion is a pleasant thing of emotional quivers, divorced from the will, divorced from the intellect and demanding little except lip service to a few harmless platitudes. I suspect that Satan has called off his attempt to convert people to agnosticism. After all, if a man travels far enough away from Christianity, he is liable to see it in perspective and decide that it is true. It is much safer, from Satan's point of view, to vaccinate a man with a mild case of Christianity so as to protect him from the real disease."

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FALSE RELIGION

0853 -- THE PERVERTED GOSPEL IS POISON

On a cold winter day in 1986, Diane Elsroth entered a store in Bronxville, New York looking for something to relieve her pain. She bought a bottle of medicine, not knowing that someone had opened the bottle's tamper-resistant wrapping, tainted the capsules with cyanide, and returned them to the store's shelf. Within a short time after Elsroth left the store, the cyanide-laced capsules killed her.

Like a medicine mixed with cyanide, a perverted gospel has the power to kill rather than make whole.

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FALSE RELIGION

0854 -- TOLD BY A DETROIT LAWYER

I suppose it was wrong, but I couldn't afford to let the opportunity pass. My wife has become a convert to the mind over fad, and for the last month I have heard nothing but the power of mind over matter. I was hoping that she would tire of it and drop it, but I was doomed to disappointment for the longer she harped on it the worse she became.

This morning, she discovered that a waterpipe was leaking and she went at it with that universal woman's tool, a hairpin, with the result that she only made the hole larger and caused a small jet of water to be shot into the room. Clapping a finger over the hole to stop the flow of water, she called loudly for me, and when I appeared on the scene, I took the situation in at a glance.

while I hold the water back." "There is no leak there, if you will only think so," I said soothingly. "Put your mind on it, and remove your finger." "John Henry," she began, but at that moment her finger slipped and a jet of water hit her in the eye, and the valuable remarks that she was about to make were lost for all time. "John," she snapped "can't you see that the wall paper will be ruined if I let go?" "Well, my dear," said I, ignoring her question, it is time I was going downstairs; besides I am afraid that if I remain here I may interfere with the calm reposeful working of your mind. Convince yourself, my dear, that there is no leak and remove your finger."

With that I left her. I took the precaution, however, to send up a plumber, but from what I heard when I left I am afraid that her mind was far from being in a reposeful mood." -- Detroit Free Press

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FALSEHOOD

0855 -- A VERY PRESENT HELP?

A little boy asked his mother, "Mommy, what is a lie?" His mother answered by saying, "Son, a lie is an abomination unto the Lord ... but a very present help in time of need!" Sad to say too often we teach a similar pattern to our children. Let's be careful to model clearly what we teach with our lips.

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FALSEHOOD

0856 -- CAUGHT IN A LIE

The following item was printed in "The Search Light:" Joe the butcher was closing the store one Saturday night when his best customer Mrs. Brown came in and asked for a nice roasting chicken. Joe put the last one he had on the scales. "It's 2 pounds 4 ounces -- that will be \$1.35." "That's too small," she answered, "do you have a larger one?" He went to the cooler and then returned with the same chicken. Weighing it, he said, "Just 3 pounds. That will be \$1.80." Still not satisfied, his customer said, "I think I'll take them both!" Joe was speechless. He had been caught, in a lie.

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FALSEHOOD

0857 -- DAMAGED BY A FALSE AIDS RUMOR

At a flower shop in rural West Virginia, Campbell's Creek, an isolated mining hollow, the owner is a chap named Bill Grayolis, 41. A while back Mr. Grayolis lost weight and whispers started around town that he had AIDS. And then there was some graffiti and there were threats, he was labeled a queer, a carrier of AIDS. Customers that he had known for 20 years stopped coming to his store. One long time woman customer drove up and stopped and threw her check inside the flower shop but then she returned hastily to her car and drove away. Well, that did it. Mr. Grayolis gave up the diet with which he'd purposely been losing weight. He got himself blood-tested for AIDS and proved that he does not have the virus. He posted the medical report on the window of his shop, but the whispers persist. West Virginia Attorney General says shame on the cruel people of Campbell's Creek, but still the whispers persist. Now his delivery van has been trashed, his windows have been smashed, his business is depleted. Bill Grayolis does not have AIDS, but he is being destroyed by contagious ignorance.

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FALSEHOOD

0858 -- FATAL FALSIFICATION

There is a joke that lawyers do not like to hear repeated about the lawyer who went to heaven and complained to Saint Peter "There must be some mistake, I am only 35, I am too young to die!" Saint Peter said he would check the records. He checked records and announced, "According to the hourly work reports you've been turning in you are 97!" -- Associated Press

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FALSEHOOD

0859 -- HALF-TRUTHS THAT ARE WHOLLY WRONG

On a sailing vessel the mate of the ship, yielding to a temptation, became drunk. He had never before been in such a state. The captain entered in the log of the ship the record for the day: "Mate drunk today."

When the mate read this entry he implored the captain to take it out of the record, saying that when it was read by the owners of the ship it would cost him his post, and the captain well knew that this was his first offense. But the obdurate captain refused to change the record and said to the mate, "This is the fact, and into the log it goes!"

Some days afterward, the mate was keeping the log and after he had given the latitude and longitude, the run for the day, the wind and the sea, he made this entry: "Captain sober today."

The indignant captain protested when he read the record, declaring that it would leave an altogether false impression in the minds of the owners of the vessel, as if it were an unusual thing for him to be sober. But the mate answered as the captain answered him, "This is the fact, and into the log it goes!"

This is a good example of how, by an accuracy of statement, but by misrepresentation of circumstances, one can injure the reputation of another. -- McCartney

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FALSEHOOD

0860 -- SOME TEST FINDINGS ABOUT HONESTY

Apparently, people applying for jobs just aren't as honest as they used to be. The Stanton Corporation, after giving written honesty tests to nearly 3 million job-seekers, reported that 18 to 31 percent of the applicants were untrustworthy, compared with 10 to 12 percent in the mid-sixties. Among other things, the tests found that women outdid men in honesty by 56 to 48 percent, and that honesty increases with age.

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FALSEHOOD

0861 -- THE FAST START OF FALSEHOOD

D.L. Moody's first great evangelistic campaign in the British Isles was followed by more of the rumors and criticism that dogged him and Ira Sankey. Moody was scorched for his motives and even his English. Because the Moody-Sankey hymnbook was selling well in Britain and America, rumors arose that the two were growing rich off the royalties. In truth, every dollar was put back into the work; neither man made one penny of personal profit. Some even alleged that Moody was being backed by circus showman P.T. Barnum! No wonder Mr. Moody said, "A lie will get half round the world before the truth gets its boots on!"

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FALSEHOOD

0862 -- THOUGHT HE DIED YEARS AGO

Have you read the newest issue of Grit about the school teacher who asked little Rodney "did you write this poem?" And he said "yes, ma'am." And the teacher said, "Did you write this poem all by yourself?" And he said, "yes, ma'am!" And the teacher said, "All of it, by yourself?" and Rodney said, "yes ma'am." And the teacher said, "Then I am thrilled to meet you, Mr. Robert Lewis Stevenson, because I thought you had died years ago." -- Associated Press

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FALSEHOOD

0863 -- WHICH TIRE WAS FLAT?

Four high school boys were late to their morning classes one day. They entered the classroom and solemnly told their teacher they were detained due to a flat tire. The sympathetic teacher smiled and told them it was too bad they were late because they had missed a test that morning. But she was willing to let them make it up. She gave them each a piece of paper and a pencil and sent them to four corners of the room. Then she told them they would pass if they could answer just one question: Which tire was flat??? -- Paul Harvey

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FALSEHOOD -- LIARS CONDEMNED

0864 -- LYING BY INFERENCE

An incident comes back to me out of my young manhood which illustrates how good men are tempted to lie, and to do it in a way that does not altogether commit them on the record. The man whom I have in mind was a rancher in Colorado. He was a godly man and a good and kind man a man who had family prayers with his "help" on the ranch every morning. At the end of the season, which had been a very bad one, I drove with him, with a colossal load of alfalfa hay, to a nearby town. The hay was what was called "third cutting," and therefore inferior. When the bales were being hoisted into the barn, the purchaser pulled out a few wisps and examining them exclaimed, "This is not first cutting as I have given instruction!" The rancher looked at him with a look of injured integrity and exclaimed "That is what you ordered isn't it?" -- conveying the impression that as an honorable man he would deliver to the purchaser only the hay which he had ordered, which was first cutting. I can recall the deep silence after the man thus spoke, for all three knew that it was a falsehood.

"That night, as we stood on the road, the man paid me off before I started east to return to college. His conscience evidently troubled him, for as he handed me the gold pieces that meant so

much to him and for which I had worked so hard, he said, calling me by the name they gave me on the ranch, "I didn't tell that man it was first cutting, did I?" Literally, of course, he had not, but actually, he had. -- McCartney

This leaves one wondering if this man repented and confessed his lie. If he did not, whatever moral integrity he may have had prior to that time was corrupted by that falsehood, and surely he could not have remained in right standing with God, if indeed he was a Christian before that lie. -- Duane V. Maxey

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FALSEHOOD -- WARNINGS AGAINST

0865 -- THROW IT OUT

The story is told of a peevish old fellow who boarded a train, occupied the best seat, and then tried to reserve still another for himself by placing his luggage upon it. Just before the crowded vehicle started, a teenage boy came running up and jumped aboard. "This car is full," said the man irritably; "that seat next to me is reserved for a friend of mine who has put his bag there." The youth paid no attention but sat down saying, "All right, I'll stay here until he comes." He placed the suitcase upon his knees while the elderly man glared at him in vain. Of course, the "friend" didn't appear, and soon the train began to move. As it glided past the platform, the young fellow tossed the bag through the open window remarking, "Apparently your friend has missed the train. We mustn't let him lose his luggage too!" With a horrified expression on his face the old gentleman began to fume and sputter. The lie has cost him his possessions!

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FAME

0866 -- HE AND HIS FAME BOTH DIED

I remember when I was a student in Paris, there was a young medical doctor who had exhibited wonderful skill in surgical operations, and who had pursued an original line of investigation, which had interested many of the professors, and which had thrown new light on the branch of medical science that he had made his specialty. He had studied, and investigated, and experimented, toiling for glory. He had pursued the bubble, reputation. He had worked late and early, and at last, fame. He had it! The papers in the boulevards were full of the fame of the young doctor, and it was decided that he should get, what is the aim and ambition of every Frenchman, the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour.

He was on his deathbed, and far gone in consumption, gaunt and ghastly, with his eyes in a flame, yet with his mind searching and investigating to the last, and thinking: "Surely this will bring undying fame," when there came to him a messenger with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor. When the eyes of the young man rested upon it, he said: "This is what I have been toiling, for undying honour."

He took it up, and, feeling the hand of death upon him, he raised himself in the bed and exclaimed: "I will not die! I will not die! I will not die!" and he fell back and died with the decoration in his hand. Ah! the waters prevailed. -- McCartney

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FAME

0867 -- MORE WOULD COME TO SEE HIM HANGED

Winston Churchill knew that public favor was no proof of real success. Once, after he gave a speech for which 10,000 people came out, a friend asked, "Winston, aren't you impressed that 10,000 people came to hear you speak?" Churchill replied, "Not really. 100,000 would come to see me hang."

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FAME

0868 -- NOW HE'S GONE TOO

Sometimes we wish for wealth, fame, and power. They look so inviting and seem to hold great promise for happiness. But when we make them the goal of our existence, we take a very short-range view of life.

Secretary of State James A. Baker spoke about this in his message at the National Prayer Breakfast on February 1, 1990. He said that the fleeting nature of political or economic power came to mind one morning as he looked down Pennsylvania Avenue. He saw a former Chief of Staff walking all alone, "no reporters, no security, no adoring public, no trappings of power -- just one solitary man alone with his thoughts." His power and fame had evaporated!

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FAMILY -- TROUBLE

0869 -- DIDN'T KNOW WHERE THEIR PARENTS WERE

Students involved in a research project at the University of Illinois called 2000 homes at random between midnight and 2 A.M. on a Friday night in the city of Chicago to see if parents knew where their children were. In 75% of the homes called, a child answered and didn't know where the parents were. -- David L. Hocking

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FANATICISM

0870 -- HE WAS NOT A FANATIC (ENTHUSIAST)

Once at Wotton, Rowland Hill was carried away by the impetuous rush of his feelings and exclaimed: "Because I am in earnest, men call me an enthusiast; but I am not; mine are the words of truth and soberness. I once saw a gravel pit fall in and bury three human beings alive. I shouted so loudly for help that I was heard at the distance of a mile. Help came, and rescued two of the poor sufferers. No one called me an enthusiast then. When I see eternal destruction ready to fall on poor sinners, and about to entomb them irrevocably in an eternal mass of woe, and call aloud to them to escape, shall I be called an enthusiast now?" -- Rev. W. W. Landrum

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FANATICISM

0871 -- HOME DIFFICULTIES

In his biography Pierre Loti tells how, as a small boy, reading stories of sainthood led him to aspire to become a saint. He resolved to imitate Simeon Stylites, who lived on top of a pillar and thereby won a great reputation for sanctity. Accordingly, he mounted a high stool in the kitchen and announced his plan to remain there for forty years. His mother and the cook, however, would have none of his sanctity, and at the end of an hour he wistfully recorded in his diary: "Thus I discovered that it is exceedingly difficult to be a saint while living with your own family.

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FATHERHOOD -- OF GOD

0872 -- SEEING THE FATHER IN CHRIST

John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

A touching story is told of the child of a French painter. The little girl lost her sight in infancy, and her blindness was supposed to be incurable. A famous oculist in Paris, however, performed an operation on her eyes and restored her sight. Her mother had long been dead, and her father had been her only friend and companion. When she was told that her blindness could be cured, her one thought was that she could see him; and when the cure was complete, and the bandages were removed, she ran to him, and, trembling, pored over his features, shutting her eyes now and then, and passing her fingers over his face, as if to make sure that it was he.

The father had a noble head and presence, and his every look and motion were watched by his daughter with the keenest delight. For the first time his constant tenderness and care seemed real to her. If he caressed her, or even looked upon her kindly, it brought tears to her eyes. "To

think," she cried, holding his hand close in hers, "that I had this father so many years and never knew him!" -- Rev. Harry Rogers

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FAULTFINDING

0873 -- BLACK DOT ON WHITE

A speaker held up a blank sheet of paper and asked, "What do you see?" The reply was, "A piece of paper." He then placed the paper on the podium, made a tiny dot in the center and held it up again. "What do you see now?" "A dot," was the unanimous reply from the audience. "Imagine this blank paper is a person," the speaker said. "The small dot you saw is his/her biggest fault. The white surrounding the dot represents all of this person's worthwhile qualities which we so easily fail to see. Often a fault seems bigger than it really is and we allow it to overshadow the many positive aspects of that person's personality."

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FAULTFINDING

0874 -- HER OWN WINDOWS WERE DIRTY

How often we overlook our own failures and sins while criticizing the faults in others! In fact, our judgment may reflect our own flaws, which usually are more serious than those we see in someone else.

A woman named Ruth Knowlton told how she came to see this truth. The building across the alley was only a few feet away, and she could easily look into her neighbor's apartment. Ruth had never met the woman who lived there, but she could see her as she sewed and read each afternoon. After several months, she noticed that the figure by the window had become indistinct. She couldn't understand why the woman didn't wash her windows.

One sunny day Ruth decided to do some housecleaning, including washing her own windows. Later that day, she sat down to rest by the window. To her amazement, she could clearly and distinctly see her neighbor sitting by her window. Ruth said to herself, "Well, finally she washed her windows!" By now you've guessed what really happened: Ruth's own windows were the ones that needed washing.

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FAULTFINDING

0875 -- IT WAS A LIVE OWL

I like the story of the young man whose habit of criticizing backfired on him. One evening, while waiting for a bus, he was standing with a crowd of people looking in the window of a taxidermist shop. In the center of the window was a large owl that attracted the attention of all who passed by. The self-appointed expert began to criticize the job done on it. "If I couldn't do better than that," he said pompously, "I'd find another business. Just look at it. The head is out of proportion, the pose of the body is unnatural, and the feet are pointed in the wrong direction." Just then the owl turned his head and gave the fellow a broad wink. The crowd laughed as the critic slinked away.

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FEAR

0876 -- DON'T LET FEAR COUNSEL YOU

During World War II, a military governor met with General George Patton in Sicily. When he praised Patton highly for his courage and bravery, the general replied, "Sir, I am not a brave man -- the truth is, I am an utter craven coward. I have never been within the sound of gunshot or in sight of battle in my whole life that I wasn't so scared that I had sweat in the palms of my hands." Years later, when Patton's autobiography was published, it contained this significant statement by the general: "I learned very early in my life never to take counsel of my fears."

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FEAR

0877 -- FEAR KILLED THE OTHERS

According to an ancient legend, a man driving one day to Constantinople was stopped by an old woman who asked him for a ride. He took her up beside him and as they drove along he looked at her and became frightened and asked "Who are you?" The old woman replied: "I am Cholera." Thereupon, the peasant ordered the old woman to get down and walk; but she persuaded him to take her along upon her promise that she would not kill more than five people in Constantinople. As a pledge of the promise she handed him a dagger, saying to him that it was the only weapon with which she could be killed. Then she added: "I shall meet you in two days. If I break my promise you may stab me."

In Constantinople, 120 people died of the cholera. The enraged man who had driven her to the city, and to whom she had given the dagger as a pledge that she would not kill more than five, went out to look for the old woman. Meeting her, he raised his dagger to kill her, but she stopped him saying: "I have kept my agreement. I killed only five. Fear killed the others."

This legend is a true parable of life. Where disease kills its thousands, fear kills its tens of thousands. The greatest miseries of mankind comes from the dread of trouble rather than from the presence of trouble. From the cradle to the grave, fear casts its baleful shadow. Fear betrays man's

spirit, breaks down his defense, disarms him in the battle, unfits him for the work of life, and adds terror to the dying bed. -- McCartney

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FEAR

0878 -- HOLY FEARLESSNESS IS NOT VAIN BOASTING

At the siege of Khartoum, when some one suggested to General Gordon that they stop up the windows of his headquarters with sand, he became angry. Putting lighted candles on the table, he said: "When God was proportioning out fear to all the peoples in the world, at last it came to my turn and there was no fear left to give me. Go, tell all the people in Khartoum that Gordon fears nothing, for God has created him without fear."

To me, this sounds more like boasting than it does like a true, God-given confidence. Serving God "without fear in holiness" does not have in it the proud smack of egotistical bragging. -- Duane V. Maxey

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FEAR

0879 -- PRISONERS OF FEAR

Needy miners and settlers in British Columbia, engaged in stripping abandoned Fort Alcan of lumber, electrical appliances, and plumbing, made an amazing discovery. While dismantling the jail they found that the mighty locks were attached to the heavy doors, and two-inch steel bars covered the windows, but the walls of the prison were only patented wallboard of clay and paper, painted to resemble iron. A good old heave against the walls by a man not as strong as a football tackle would have burst the wall out. Nobody ever tried it because nobody thought it possible.

Many Christians are prisoners of fears that are nothing when pushed against. Satan cannot do anything against a child of God, but he loves to put barriers of paper-mache in the path of a believer to make him think that there is no progress in the direction of the will of the Lord. When by faith we push against it we will be free. -- Eternity

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FEAR

0880 -- PROPER FEAR IS A SAFEGUARD

Biologists say that fear is not only a universal emotion, but the first of the emotions to be developed in man and beast. The whole creation is under the dominion of fear. Man comes into

this world stamped with fear before he is born, and those fears are multiplied as he increases in knowledge and experience.

As a boy, did you never catch a robin or an oriole and, holding the bird in your hand, feel the rapid, terrified beating of the little heart: The bird had had no experience or acquaintance with you or any other man. It had no reason to fear you but that of instinct. It was in dread of everything but its mother and its companion birds. As the creation is at the present time, the sense or the instinct of fear is a very necessary part of the equipment of beast and man.

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FEAR

0881 -- THE NIGHT NIAGARA FALLS STOPPED

On the night of March 29, 1848, Niagara Falls stopped completely -- unheralded, unassisted and unbelievably. As the rapids dwindled and the falls disappeared, silence flooded the surrounding countryside so overwhelmingly that it wakened sleeping people and brought them to their doors, frightened by a phenomenon they couldn't identify. As the realization came that the falls had stopped, they snatched up clothing and ran to the river. There, the flare of torches showed stretches of mud and boulders gleaming nakedly between scattered pools of black water. By the next afternoon spectators lined the river banks, exploring the exposed river bed and turning up ancient tomahawks and other implements of Indian warfare. For the first time in history, a detachment cavalry rode the river bed, and people walked dry-shod from shore to shore.

While the matter-of-fact looked for a scientific explanation for the phenomenon, the superstitious regarded it as an ominous portent. Nightfall found most of the churches jammed with people praying or talking in frightened voices about the end of the world. Fear began to assume the proportions of panic. And then, from up the river bed came a low growling, spreading out and reaching forward until the earth and air seemed to tremble and vibrate. In an unbroken wall of water, the torrent of Niagara surged forward to crash over the brink of the falls. Again the familiar roar filled the air, and faces that had been white and strained softened, and fingers clenched in fear relaxed.

The explanation for the awful silence came later. During the day of March 29 a heavy wind had started the Lake Erie ice field in motion and tons of ice jammed at the river's entrance near Buffalo, damming up the river for almost 30 hours till the ice shifted and the dam broke up. -- Edgar D. Smith

How much greater shall be the fear of those who are unprepared to meet the Lord when the portents really do point to His return and the end of this world. -- Duane V. Maxey

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FEAR

0882 -- TURN THE LIGHT ON, PLEASE

One rainy Sunday afternoon, my daughter and I were discussing her Sunday school lesson on the 23rd Psalm. Afterward, we walked into the kitchen, darkened by the storm outside. My daughter turned to me and said, "Mommy, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. But can you turn the light on, please?" -- Veta L. Allen

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FEAR -- OF MAN

0883 -- PUBLIC SPEAKING

Back in the days of the Roman Empire during a circus in the Coliseum, a Christian was thrown to a hungry lion. As the spectators cheered, the wild beast pounced. But the Christian quickly whispered something in the lion's ear and the beast backed away in terror. After this happened several times, the emperor sent a centurion to find out what magic spell could make a ferocious lion cower in fear. A few minutes later the guard returned and said, "The Christian whispered in the lion's ear, 'After dinner you'll be required to say a few words.'"

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FEAR -- OF MAN

0884 -- THEIR REPLY WAS: "IF"

Phillip II, king of Macedon and father of Alexander the Great, subdued or formed alliances with all of the major Greek city-states except the stubbornly independent Sparta. Finding diplomacy of no use, Philip sent Sparta this threat: "You are advised to submit without further delay, for if I bring my army into your land, I will destroy your farms, slay your people, and raze your city."

Sparta's reply was simple: "If." As one writer says, "Recalling Sparta's glorious military past, Philip thought better of it and left them alone." -- Moody

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FEAR -- OF MAN

0885 -- WHO HAS THE KEYS?

One day in Central Africa a missionary and I visited an outstation where a short time before the witch doctor, Kalamba, had accepted the Saviour. The implements of his craft, constituting a fortune to those people, he had publicly buried. We found him in sore fear and distress. His heathen neighbors, now that he had no "medicines" for defense, were predicting his speedy death. "Our medicines will "eat you," they said. And in dreams, to which pagan peoples

have always attached a dread significance, he had been hearing his wife say to him, "I have dug your grave." The missionary spent an hour or more trying to talk him out of his agony of fear, but the terror was still visibly there.

I then suggested to the missionary that he turn, in his Baluba Testament, to Revelation 1:17, 18, and show Kalamba, who could not read, the Saviour's assurance, "Fear not; I...have the keys of... death." "Have him put his finger on it," I said, "have him memorize it, and explain to him that those keys are held not in the hand of his enemies, or of dreams, or of hostile medicines, but in the hand of his Saviour, whose personal word to him is, "Fear not, Kalamba, I, your Friend and Saviour, have the keys of death."

This was done, and as Kalamba placed his finger and glued his eyes on that assurance and heard it explained, most beautiful it was to see the anguish of fear lifted and his face grown radiant with peace and courage and joy. -- Paul's Ways In Christ

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FEELING

0886 -- FICKLE FEELING

A man in a large city desiring to visit the zoological park, boarded a crowded car marked "Zoo". He paid his fare and began reading his paper, feeling like he was going to the Zoo. Presently the passengers began leaving the car, and when there were but two others besides himself in the car, he began wondering if the Zoo was not open. Finally, the car stopped and, seeing the conductor turning the trolley pole, he looked about but saw nothing that resembled a park. "Conductor," said he, "doesn't this car go to the Zoo?" "Yes sir, it certainly does," replied the obliging conductor, "but it is just nine miles from here." He was six miles farther from the park than when he boarded the car. All the while he had been feeling like he was going to the Zoo, but was going directly from it. He arose turned his seat, again paid his fare, and then knew that he was going to the Zoo. Brother, you can not feel your way to Heaven. Do not trust your fickle feeling. Trust Jesus! -- O. A. Newlin

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FELLOWSHIP

0887 -- NOW I'M IN TUNE

Ted Malone, whose radio show came on early in the morning, told of the Idaho shepherd who wrote: "Will you, on your broadcast, strike the note 'A'? I'm a shepherder way out here on a ranch, far away from a piano. The only comfort I have is my old violin. It's all out of tune. Would you strike 'A' so that I might get in tune?" Malone honored the request. Later he received a "thank you" note from the distant shepherd saying, "Now I'm in tune." One of the purposes and responsibilities of personal and public worship is to enable the aspirant to keep tuned to the Great Shepherd. One of the joys of the Christian life is to help others recapture the missing note!

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FELLOWSHIP -- WITH CHRIST

0888 -- THAT SINGLE THREAD

J. Stuart Holden was being shown through a large factory where hundreds of looms were spinning very fine linen thread. The manager of the mill said to Mr. Holden, "So delicate is this machinery that if a single thread of the entire 30,000, which at this moment are being woven, should break, all of these looms would instantly stop." He stepped to one of the machines and broke a single thread. Suddenly every loom was still and remained so until the thread was rejoined, whereupon the machinery was again in motion. The mechanical wonder exhibited in the factory that day clearly illustrates that which is spiritual. It is through one act of disobedience, one departure from the will and fear of God, that the blessings of our fellowship with Him are stopped. Not until that thread is rejoined will the joy of the Lord flow again in our hearts. -- Good News Broadcaster

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FIDELITY

0889 -- TRUE TO HIS PROMISE

The new errand boy was sent out by the proprietor of a store to deliver a suit of clothes. When he reached the place of delivery he found it was a saloon. He asked a man to tell the proprietor to come outside to get his package. The saloonkeeper was angry and telephoned his indignation to the clothing store. Upon his return the boy was threatened with the loss of his job if he ever disobeyed orders again. "Job or no job," replied the lad, "I won't go into such a place. I promised my mother that I would never go into a saloon; and I won't." The time came when that boy owned that same clothing store. -- Free Methodist

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FIDELITY

0890 -- WESLEY'S PLANS UNALTERED BY IMPENDING DEATH

Most of us will not play such a crucial role in history. But we are called to serve Christ faithfully day by day regardless of what we do. John Wesley was asked by a friend, "John, suppose you knew you were going to die by midnight tomorrow. How would you spend your time until then?" I would spend it," Wesley replied, "exactly as I expect to spend it now. I would preach tonight in Gloucester, get up early tomorrow morning and proceed to Tewkesbury, where I would preach in the afternoon. Then I would go to the Martins' house in the evening, talk with Mr. Martin, pray with the family, retire, putting myself in the Father's care, and wake up in heaven."

Whether we labor in the routine of the business world, work with the family in the home, or engage in some specialized occupation, we need to view our daily duties as appointed by God. Whether our impact is large or small, we're part of God's play. Let's use our time for His glory and the good of others.

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FIDELITY -- REWARDS OF

0891 -- HE KEPT HIS WORD

J. H. Crowell went to work on a sailing vessel at the age of 16. He was the only Christian among a crew of 12. Before leaving home, he had promised his mother he would continue his devotions and pray three times a day. When the other sailors discovered his piety, they taunted him and poured buckets of water upon his head, but they could not put out the fire in his soul! As time passed the intensity of the persecution increased. One day they bound him to the mast and beat him with 39 stripes, but still he prayed. Finally they tied a rope around his waist and threw him overboard. Realizing he might drown, he asked God to forgive his tormentors, and pleaded with them to send his body home to his mother. "Tell her I was faithful and died for Jesus!" he said. When they thought he was dead, they pulled him back on deck, but to their surprise he regained consciousness. Conviction from the Holy Spirit came upon some of the sailors, and two of them were gloriously saved. Later the captain and several others were also converted. This unusual experience highlights the wonderful power of faithfulness.

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FINISHED -- PAYMENT OF OUR RANSOM

0892 -- OUR RANSOM IS FINISHED (PAID)

Professor Beare of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, points out (in The Presbyterian Record) that the last word of our Lord on the cross, "tetelestai," "it is finished," is properly so translated in John 19:30, yet that this word "tetelestai" is found repeatedly in tax receipts in the sense of "paid." The word "tetelestai," on a papyrus tax receipt, is the exact equivalent of an English rubber stamp, "Received Payment." I wonder if the man of those days would not be apt to take the word on the lips of Jesus also as meaning "It is paid," the account is settled, the debt is wiped out, the Redeemer of mankind has paid the price of redemption." -- Sunday School Times

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FINISHED -- WORK OF INVITATION SHALL BE

0893 -- GENERAL SHAFTER'S HORSES AND MULES

"The Lord is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" and salvation. 2 Peter 3:9 Moses was instructed: "Make thee two trumpets

that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly." Nu. 10:2 Christ came to call sinners to repentance, and since His ascension He has made trumpets out of many, many preachers of His gospel. Across the centuries, He has used them to continue sounding out His call from sin to salvation and "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven." Heb. 12:23

During the Spanish-American War, some transports with supplies for General Shafter's army found it impossible to secure anchorage off the coast of Cuba, and were compelled to steam slowly back and forth along the coast. This made it difficult to land the horses and mules, and it was finally decided upon to push them overboard and allow them to swim ashore.

So, they were pushed into the water and soon the sea was black with animals. Some instinctively swam toward the shore; others completed circles in the water; but others, more frightened than the rest, started out to sea. It was a distressing situation, and the ship's officers showed much concern.

Finally, the men who were aboard the transports espied a soldier on shore hastily making his way toward a rocky promontory. The stripes upon his uniform denoted the bugler. The jutting rocks reached, he raised the bugle to his lips and emitted one after another of the bugle-calls which the army horses and mules had learned to know so well.

The sound traveled far out to sea, and was heard by every bewildered, struggling creature. Instinctively, they turned and swam toward the call. The bugler stood there and sounded those calls until his lips were blue, but when he finally did cease, every confused and trembling animal was safe! -- 1000 Illustrations

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FIRE OF THE SPIRIT -- KEEPING THE

0894 -- FINISHING WITH THE FIRE

The Athenians used to have a race in which the runners carried lighted torches. The victors who were crowned were those who arrived at the goal with their torch still burning. May you come to your goal and reach the end with your torch still burning! -- McCartney

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FLATTERY

0895 -- NOT ALL THAT CROSS-EYED

The brilliant physician and writer Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., and his brother John represent two radically different views on the subject of flattery. Dr. Holmes loved to collect compliments, and when he was older he indulged his pastime by saying to someone who had just praised his work, "I am a trifle deaf, you know. Do you mind repeating that a little louder?" John,

however, was unassuming and content to be in his older brother's shadow. He once said that the only compliment he ever received came when he was six. The maid was brushing his hair when she observed to his mother that little John wasn't all that cross-eyed!

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FOLLOWING -- BLINDLY

0896 -- HE LEAD THEM ALL ASTRAY

When all must "face the music" at the Judgment, multitudes will discover that they are out of tune with God because they have tuned their lives by the devil's sour pitch: A high school orchestra was preparing for a concert that featured a pianist in a rendition of Grieg's A-minor concerto. Before the performance, it was customary for the orchestra to tune up with an "A" sounded by the oboe player. But the oboist was a practical joker, and he had tuned his instrument a half step higher than the piano. You can imagine the effect. After the pianist played a beautiful introduction, the members of the orchestra joined in. What confusion! Every instrument was out of tune with the piano.

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FOLLOWING -- BLINDLY

0897 -- HER GUIDE WAS SINCERE, BUT MISTAKEN

The following true story illustrates how following wrong direction can be fatal: I was going west one time during the winter. The train had two engines plowing along. There was a woman with a little baby in her arms who wanted to leave the train at a certain small station where they stop the train if you come from a distance. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station when we were getting near it. The woman said: "Don't forget me." and he replied, "Sure."

There was a man there who said, "Lady, I will see that the brakeman doesn't forget you. Don't you worry." A little later, he said: "Here's your station." She hopped out of the train into the storm. The train had gone on about three quarters of a mile when the brakeman came in and said: "Where's that woman?" The traveler said: "She got out." The brakeman said: "Then she has gone to her death! We only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine." They called for volunteers and went back and looked for her. They searched for hours. Finally, they found her on the prairies. She was covered with a shroud of snow and ice with the babe folded to her breast. She followed the man's directions, but they were wrong. -- H. F. Sayles

In order to avoid any blame in the eternal death of souls, the preacher must take heed to guide them only according to the unerring counsel of God's Word, and not according to human suppositions and notions. And, in order to avoid the eternal death of blind followers of the blind, every soul who intends to make it safely home to heaven should weigh all spiritual guidance in light of the scriptures and be sure that spiritual directions are coming from God, and not from mistaken men or from false impressions. -- D. V. M.

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FOLLY

0898 -- AN HISTORIC EVENT PURPOSELY OVERLOOKED

Orville and Wilbur Wright had tried repeatedly to fly a heavier-than-air craft. Finally one December day, off the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina they did what man had never done before. They actually flew. Elated, they wired their sister Katherine, "We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas."

Hastily she ran down the street, shoved the telegram -- the news scoop of the century -- at the city editor of the local paper. He read it carefully and smiled. "Well, well! How nice the boys will be home for Christmas." -- Maxwell Droke

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FOLLY

0899 -- FOLLY MAY BE LIFE LONG

"I never in my life committed more than one act of folly," said a man one day in the presence of Talleyrand. "But when will it end?" inquired Talleyrand. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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FOLLY

0900 -- THE ONE-WORD NOTE

When D. L. Moody was conducting evangelistic meetings, he frequently faced hecklers who were in violent disagreement with him. In the final service of one campaign, an usher handed the famous preacher a note as he entered the auditorium. It was actually from an atheist who had been giving Mr. Moody a great deal of trouble. The evangelist, however, supposed that it was an announcement, so he quieted the large audience and prepared to read it. Opening the folded piece of paper he found scrawled in large print only one word: "Fool!" The colorful preacher was equal to the occasion. Said Moody, "I have just been handed a memo which contains the single word -- 'Fool'. This is most unusual. I've often heard of those who have written letters and forgotten to sign their names, but this is the first time I've ever heard of anyone who signed his name and then forgot to write the letter!" Taking advantage of the unique situation, Moody promptly changed his sermon text to Psalm 14:1 "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God!"

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FOLLY

0901 -- WHAT A FOOL I HAVE BEEN

Harold L. Fickett, Jr., wrote about a wealthy businessman who on his deathbed was filled with deep remorse. When his pastor called, he opened his heart and shared the burden he was carrying. He said that 10 years earlier he had been given the opportunity to teach a Sunday school class of 9-year-old boys. Thinking he didn't have the time, he declined the offer. Now, however, deeply conscious that his life would soon be over, he confessed to the pastor that his most painful regret was that he had missed such a golden opportunity to serve the Lord by investing his life in the lives of those 9 year olds. He estimated that at least 100 boys would have passed through that class. "My investments in stocks and bonds will stay behind when I leave," he declared. "What a fool I have been."

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FOOTWASHING -- MORE THAN A CEREMONY

0902 -- FOOTWASHING -- CEREMONY? OR SERVICE?

I Wonder. You know, Lord, How I serve You with great emotional fervor in the limelight. You know how eagerly I speak for You at a Women's Club. You know my genuine enthusiasm at a Bible study. But how would I react, I wonder, if You pointed to a basin of water and asked me to wash the calloused feet of a bent and wrinkled old woman day after day, month after month, in a room where nobody saw and nobody knew? -- Ruth Calkin

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FOOTWASHING -- MORE THAN A CEREMONY

0903 -- JOSE'S FEET (PART ONE)

It was turning out to be a bad night at the Marin County shelter for the homeless in San Rafael, California. With rain pouring down and a temperature in the 40s, our gym-sized armory was nearing its capacity of 125. All the cots and sleeping mats had been assigned, but people were still coming, and in no time there were complaints about the shortage. Soon some of the blacks and Latinos started accusing my fellow workers and me of racial favoritism. We were white. I was working at the shelter as a full-time counselor. Actually my duties were more like those of a handyman, but the money I earned was helping me pay my way through seminary.

When the arguments started, I knew we were in trouble. The armory echoed with shouts and profanity. Some of the street people were trying to take sleeping mats away from others. When Bobbie, a black woman who worked late, found we hadn't saved her a mat as usual, she began to object loudly and accuse me of prejudice. In the midst of all this, a Latino man named Jose, who had received one of the last sleeping mats, made his bed in the middle of the armory. He threw down his mat, fell on it, removed his tattered boots and collapsed in a drunken stupor.

The stench of Jose's feet filled the air. The street people, ordinarily not picky about odors, now began to raise a great protest. I had been passing out towels when a group of men -- blacks and whites -- came to me insisting I had to do something about Jose. (See Part Two for the conclusion)

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FOOTWASHING -- MORE THAN A CEREMONY

0904 -- JOSE'S FEET (PART TWO)

(Continued from Part One)

The obvious solution was to persuade him to take a shower, but when two other workers and I tried to wake him, it was no use. He was breathing, but nothing would rouse him. We discussed carrying him to the shower, but he weighed more than 200 pounds, deadweight, and we could hardly move him. When someone suggested we drag him back out to the sidewalk, a howl of protest swept through the other Latinos.

"God, how am I supposed to handle this situation?" I prayed in desperation. "I don't know what to do!" Only a few nights earlier one of my fellow workers had been attacked and choked during one of the frequent melees at the armory. Then a thought occurred to me: If I can't get Jose into the shower, maybe I can bring the shower to him. We didn't have a washbasin, but in the kitchen I found a large bowl and a container of lemon-scented dishwashing liquid.

Armed with a washcloth, towel and the bowl full of warm soapy water, I headed back toward Jose. From all over the armory, stares of anger and suspicion followed me. Back at Jose's mat, I knelt, rolled up his pants legs, and began to remove his filthy socks, which were soggy on the bottom but dried to cardboard stiffness on top. I finally managed to tug them off, leaving the weave of the fabric imprinted on his skin. The stench would have been overwhelming if it had not been for the scent of the lemon bubbles in the bowl. It took some persuasion, but one of the men who helped with the mats finally agreed to throw the socks away and take Jose's boots outside to air.

Then I went to work with the lemon soap and washcloth. For several minutes I carefully cleaned Jose's calves and ankles, feet and toes. In no time the water was black. I took the towel and dried the area, then, still on my knees, turned to pick up the bowl. As I did, I saw a forest of legs and knees surrounding me. Have they come to throw us both out: I wondered.

Slowly, warily, I stood up. My eyes came to rest on the face of one of the black men who had been protesting the loudest. And he was grinning! I had never seen him smile before! I looked from face to face. I was stunned. They were smiling -- men and women of all races. And Bobbie, with tears in her eyes, stepped forward, took my soapy hands in hers and kissed them.

Nothing could have prepared me for what I experienced at that moment. No sermon, no seminary class. It was as if Jesus' words had come to life in me: "Whosoever will be chief among

you, let him be your servant" (Matthew 20:27). It had not been intentional; I was simply doing my job. But by carrying out this unpleasant task, I had won over an entire auditorium of street people, and gained their respect. A quiet hush fell on the National Guard armory in San Rafael that night. The shouting and the threats were gone. Someone who had both a mat and a cot gave his mat to Bobbie. And after some looking around, we even came up with a fresh pair of socks for Jose. -- Rodney Roberson

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FORBEARANCE -- DIVINE

0905 -- AN ATTITUDE LIKE THAT OF JONAH

An old man and his wife in Flintshire were much annoyed by their neighbor's cattle going over their fences into their wheat and grass, and thus causing great loss to the poor old people. David, the old man, got impatient at last, and one day, entering the house, he said to his wife: "Our neighbor's cattle have been again in our wheat. I'll make him pay the damage this time." "Don't talk about paying, David, 'I will repay, saith the Lord.'" "No, indeed, He won't," said David; "He is too ready to forgive a great deal to do that." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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FORGETFULNESS

0906 -- GOD FORGOTTEN

A Glasgow minister was sitting on a coach beside the driver on a lonely Highland road, and saw in the distance an old woman, who looked wistfully toward the coach. As it came near, her face showed by turns, anxiety, hope, and fear, and as the coach passed, the driver, with down-cast eyes and sad expression, shook his head, and she returned, disappointed, to her cottage.

Being much affected by what he saw, the minister asked an explanation of the driver. The driver said that for several years she had watched daily for the coach, expecting either to see her son, or to receive a letter from him. The son had gone to one of our great cities, and had forgotten the mother who loved him so dearly. But the mother went every day to meet the coach, trusting that one day her son would return to her. Such a tale makes our hearts bleed for the parent who was cruelly forsaken, but many forget how badly they are treating their heavenly Father when they forsake Him, and refuse to return to Him. -- J. Bibb

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FORGIVENESS

0907 -- A NOVEL WAY TO ASK FORGIVENESS

At a dinner party one night Lady Churchill was seated across the table from Sir Winston, who kept making his hand walk up and down -- two fingers bent at the knuckles. The fingers appeared to be walking toward Lady Churchill. Finally, her dinner partner asked, "Why is Sir Winston looking at you so wistfully, and whatever is he doing with those knuckles on the table?" "That's simple," she replied. "We had a mild quarrel before we left home, and he is indicating it's his fault and he's on his knees to me in abject apology." -- Alan McGinnis

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FORGIVENESS

0908 -- FORGIVENESS DELAYED

We had, in Philadelphia, a young man belonging to one of the better families so called, who by his wayward actions disgraced his father and finally broke his heart. After a little, he left his home went to Baltimore. From there he went to Washington, and after months of wandering determined to return. He was ashamed to meet the members of his family, but he knew that if he made a peculiar sound at the door at the midnight hour there was one who would hear and understand; and when he stood before the door it was swung open, and without a word of reproach his mother bade him welcome. The next morning, he did not come down from his room. The second morning, he was ashamed to come, but the third morning as he descended the stairway his brother, a physician, met him and said, "Edward, mother is dying. She had been suddenly stricken down and was anxious to see him. He made his way into her room, knelt beside her bed, and sobbed out, "Oh, mother, I beseech you to forgive me!" With her last departing strength, she drew close to his ear and said, "My dear boy, I would have forgiven you long ago if you had only accepted it."

This is a picture of God. With a love that is infinite, and a pity beyond description, He waits to save every one who will but simply receive His gift of life. -- J. Wilbur Chapman

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FORGIVENESS

0909 -- FORGIVENESS IS NOT COVERED RESENTMENT

Genuine forgiveness runs deep. It is not a thin surface patch on a relationship, but an inner change of heart toward the offender. Too often we think we have extended forgiveness when we have only covered over our resentment.

Rabbi David A. Nelson likes to tell the story of two brothers who went to their rabbi to settle a long-standing feud. The rabbi got the two to reconcile their differences and shake hands. As they were about to leave, he asked each one to make a wish for the other in honor of the Jewish New Year. The first brother turned to the other and said, "I wish you what you wish me." At that, the second brother threw up his hands and said, "See, Rabbi, he's starting up again!"

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FORGIVENESS

0910 -- FORGIVING OURSELVES

C.S. Lewis had this to say about forgiveness: "I think that if God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him."
-- C.S. Lewis

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FORGIVENESS

0911 -- WHAT CHRIST DID FOR STEPHEN

Joseph Parker, as a young man, used to debate in the mining fields of England, and on the town green, with infidels and atheists. An infidel once shouted at him, "What did Christ do for Stephen when he was stoned?" Parker said the answer that was given him was like an inspiration from heaven. "He gave him grace to pray for those who stoned him." Stephen had the mind of Christ; and hearing him pray for those who did him wrong at once recalls the prayer of Jesus Himself under like circumstances: "Father forgive them."

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FORGIVENESS -- DIVINE, PROMISED

0912 -- GONE AND FORGOTTEN

There is a charming old Celtic legend which says that the Angel of Mercy was sent to a certain saint to tell him that he must start for the Celestial City. The saint received the messenger and his message with gladness, and at the appointed hour they set off together. As they passed up the shining way beyond the bounds of this world, the saint was suddenly troubled with the thought of his sins. "Mercy," he said, addressing his angelic guide, "where did you bury my sins?" "I only remember that I buried them," he replied, "but I cannot tell where." Then he added, "As for the Father, He has forgotten that you ever sinned." What a wonder is divine forgiveness! How absolutely complete! -- Sunday School Chronicle

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FORGIVENESS -- DIVINE, PROMISED

0913 -- NO FISHING

D. L. Moody once said, "There are two ways of covering our sins: man's way and God's way. If you seek to hide them, they will have a resurrection sometime; but if you let the Lord cover them, neither the devil nor man will ever be able to find them again."

George Woodall was a missionary to London's inner city. One day a young woman he had led to the Lord came to him and said, "I keep getting worried. Has God really forgiven my past?"

Mr. Woodall replied, "If this is troubling you, I think I know what God would say to you. He would tell you to mind your own business." "What do you mean?" She inquired with a puzzled look. He told her that Jesus had made her sins his business. When he took them away, he put them behind his back, dropped them into the depths of the sea, and posted a notice that reads, "No fishing!"

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FORGIVENESS -- DIVINELY PROMISED

0914 -- THE BEST EPITAPH

Not far from New York, there is a cemetery where there is a grave which has inscribed upon its headstone just one word: "Forgiven." There is no name, no date of birth or death. The stone is unembellished by the sculptor's art. There is no epitaph, no eulogy, just that one word: "Forgiven." But that is the greatest thing that can be said of any man or written upon his grave, "Forgiven."

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0915 -- HE WHO PARDONS IS NEVER UGLY

A mother once came to President Lincoln seeking the pardon of her son, under sentence of death. The result of her pleading was that Lincoln issued a pardon. After leaving him, as she passed through a corridor, she exclaimed to Thaddeus Stevens, who accompanied her, "I knew it was a lie!" Stevens asked: "What do you refer to?" She replied with vehemence, "Why, they told me he was an ugly-looking man, but he is the handsomest man I ever saw in my life." -- Historical Lights

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0916 -- HIS FORGIVENESS WON HIM

In the home of Dr. Goheen, a missionary in India, a native was dusting the furniture and carelessly upset a beautiful vase, which fell to the floor, breaking in many pieces. The frightened

native dropped on his knees before Doctor Goheen, begging for mercy. The doctor smiled and said, "Never mind; I forgive you." The astonished servant looked for a moment upon the quiet face of the Christian man, where there was not the slightest trace of anger; then leaping to his feet he cried, "I believe! I believe!" He then told how, as a servant in the home, he had been gradually coming to know Christ through the doctor, and now his readiness to forgive had won him completely to the Master. -- Christian Work

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0917 -- KILLED BY KINDNESS

When the first missionaries came to Alberta, Canada, they were opposed by a young Cree Indian chief named Maskepetoon. But eventually he responded to the gospel and accepted Christ. Shortly afterward, a member of the Blackfoot tribe who hated Maskepetoon killed his father. The chief rode into the murderer's village and demanded that he be brought before him. Confronting the guilty man he said, "You shall ride my best horse and wear my best clothes."

In utter amazement and remorse his enemy exclaimed, "My son, now you have killed me." The hate in his heart had been erased by Maskepetoon's forgiveness and kindness.

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0918 -- TEN DAYS WITHOUT SLEEP

Lamesa, Texan Don Nut says he and his wife have been married fifty years. He says that the secret is that they never went to bed without settling any differences between them. But Don concedes there have been times when he went ten days without sleep. -- Associated Press

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0919 -- WHAT CHRIST HAD DONE FOR HER

The wife of a Zulu chief attended a Salvation Army meeting and heard and responded to the call of Jesus. When her husband heard of this he forbade her to go again on pain of death. However, eager to hear more about Jesus, she dared to go, and when her husband knew of this he met her on her return journey and beat her so savagely that he left her for dead. By and by his curiosity moved him to go back and look for her. She was not where he had left her, but he noticed broken twigs and found her lying under a bush. Covering her with his cruel eyes, he leered, "And what can your Jesus Christ do for you now?" She opened her eyes, and looking at him, said gently, "He helps me to forgive you!" -- Mrs. M. L. Carpenter

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FORGIVENESS -- EXAMPLES OF HUMAN

0920 -- WITH A HANDSHAKE

Corrie Ten Boom shares this true story in her book, "The Hiding Place": It was a church service in Munich that I saw him, the former S. S. man who had stood guard at the shower room door in the processing center at Ravensbruck. He was the first of our actual jailers that I had seen since that time. And suddenly it was all there -- the roomful of mocking men, the heaps of clothing, Betsie's pain-blانched face.

He came up to me as the church was emptying, beaming and bowing. "How grateful I am for your message, Fraulein," he said. "To think that, as you say, He has washed my sins away!" His hand was thrust out to shake mine. And I, who had preached so often to the people in Bloemendaal the need to forgive, kept my hand at my side. Even as the angry, vengeful thoughts boiled through me, I saw the sin of them. Jesus Christ had died for this man; was I going to ask for more?

Lord Jesus, I prayed, forgive me and help me to forgive him. I tried to smile, I struggled to raise my hand. I could not. I felt nothing, not the slightest spark of warmth or charity. And so again I breathed a silent prayer. Jesus, I cannot forgive him. Give me Your forgiveness. As I took his hand the most incredible thing happened.

From my shoulder along my arm and through my hand a current seemed to pass from me to him, while into my heart sprang a love for this stranger that almost overwhelmed me. And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world's healing hinges, but on His. When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself.

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FORGIVENESS -- HUMAN, COMMANDED

0921 -- A STRAY DOG WHO FORGAVE

Sir Walter Scott had difficulty with the idea of "turning the other cheek." But Jesus' words took on special meaning one day when Scott threw a rock at a stray dog to chase it away. His aim was straighter and his delivery stronger than he had intended, for he hit the animal and broke its leg. Instead of running off, the dog limped over to him and licked his hand. Sir Walter never forgot that touching response. He said, "That dog preached the Sermon on the Mount to me as few ministers have ever presented it." Scott said he had not found human beings so ready to forgive their enemies.

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FORGIVENESS -- HUMAN, COMMANDED

0922 -- HE HAD TO CHANGE JUDAS' FACE

When Leonardo da Vinci was painting the "Last Supper," he had an intense, bitter argument with a fellow painter. Leonardo was so enraged that he decided to paint the face of his enemy into the face of Judas. That way the hated painter's face would be preserved for ages in the face of the betraying disciple. When Leonardo finished Judas, everyone easily recognized the face of the painter with whom Leonardo quarreled.

Leonardo continued to work on the painting. But as much as he tried, he could not paint the face of Christ. Something was holding him back. Leonardo decided his hatred toward his fellow painter was the problem. So he worked through his hatred by repainting Judas' face, replacing the image of his fellow painter with another face. Only then was he able to paint Jesus' face and complete the masterpiece.

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FORGIVENESS -- HUMAN, COMMANDED

0923 -- MORE THAN TRYING TO FORGIVE IS REQUIRED

When the minister was examining Andrew Jackson as to his faith and experience, he asked him a question that probably not many ministers would have asked him. He said: "General, there is one more question which it is my duty to ask you. Can you forgive your enemies?" The question was in view of the many feuds, duels, and personal bitternesses of Jackson's stormy career. After a moment's silence Jackson responded: "My political enemies I freely forgive; but as for those who abused me when I was serving my country in the field, and those which attacked me for serving my country, and those who slandered my wife, doctor that is a different case." The minister made it clear to him that none who willfully harbored ill feelings against a fellow being could make a sincere profession of faith. Again there was silence, until at length the aged candidate affirmed that he would try to forgive all his enemies. This done, his name was written upon the rolls of the church and he received the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. -- McCartney

But, was his name written in the Lamb's book of Life? That is the real question. We must do more than try to forgive our enemies in order to have our name written there. We must actually do so. -- Duane V. Maxey

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FORGIVENESS -- HUMAN, COMMANDED

0924 -- WHY HE COULDN'T FORGIVE HER

Ethel and Tom are two children in a family. Ethel quarrels with Tom, and their father is grieved by their quarrel. Ethel is very unhappy. So, in tears she goes to her father and says, "Daddy, I am truly sorry. I can see I have made you unhappy." But while her father's arms go round her, the minx is putting out her tongue at Tom behind his back. The father wants to forgive her, but he cannot forgive her if she will not forgive Tom. "You've got to make it up with Tom first," the father wisely says. "If you shut Tom out, you keep me out, for I love Tom as well as you." "If ye forgive not men their trespasses," said the Master, "neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." -- Leslie D. Weatherhead

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FORGIVENESS -- ONLY THROUGH CHRIST

0925 -- MAY I LOOK AT YOUR HAND?

In R. Moffatt Gautrey's book entitled, "The Glory of Going On," he gives this incident: "Not many months ago in an Oxfordshire village, an old saint lay dying. For over eighty years she had been on pilgrimage to Zion, until her face had grown bright with heavens approaching glory. An Anglo-Catholic priest, under the misapprehension that none of his parishioners could find access to the celestial city unless he unlocked the gate, came to visit her. "Madam," he said, "I have come to grant you absolution." And she, in her simplicity, not knowing what the word meant, inquired, What is that? "I have come to forgive your sins," was the reply. "May I look at your hand?" she answered. Gazing for a moment at the hand of the priest, she said, "Sir, you are an impostor." "Impostor!" the scandalized cleric protested. "Yes, sir, an impostor." The Man who forgives my sin has a nail print in His palm." -- Indian Christian

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FORM -- WITHOUT LIFE

0926 -- THE FROZEN CAPTAIN AND CREW

Some years ago, the captain of a Greenland whaling vessel found himself at night surrounded by icebergs and "lay-to" till the morning, expecting every moment to be ground to pieces. As the morning dawned, he sighted a ship at no great distance. Getting into a boat with some of his men, he carefully picked his way through the lanes of open ice towards the mysterious looking craft. Coming alongside, he hailed the vessel with a loud "Ship ahoy!" But there was no response. He looked through the porthole and saw a man, evidently the captain, sitting at a table as if writing in a log-book. He again hailed the vessel, but the figure moved not. It was dead and frozen!

On examination, the sailors were found, some frozen among the hammocks, others in the cabin. From the last entry in the log-book, it appeared the vessel had been drifting the Arctic seas for thirteen years -- a floating sepulcher, manned by a frozen crew.

There are souls today who have refused the divine offer of life, forsaken the centers where they were warmed with hallowed influences and drifted into the chilling regions of Arctic darkness and frost. Many of these have certain appearances of Christian life, and a name to live, but are dead! -- Christian Journal

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FORMALISM

0927 -- DECEPTIVE, HOLLOW FORM

On the farm of Manorlees in Fifeshire, and in the house of Mr. Alexander Gibson, a large and very tempting ham hung from one of the rafters running across the ceiling. In the same house there was a rat whose taste lay strongly in the direction of the ham, and this rat, with rare instinct, gnawed a hole in the woodwork directly over the tempting morsel, and descending, ate itself into the inside of it. How long the excavating went on is not known, but one day the housewife found it necessary to commence operations on the ham when, on lifting it down, out bolted the rat. The ham was a perfect shell, skin and bone only remaining, to show its form. The animal, after feeding sumptuously, had commenced to build a nest inside.

This anecdote is not simply amusing; it serves well to illustrate the operation of secret sin eating away our spiritual life, till nothing remains but a deceptive form of godliness, the mere rind and shell of religion. -- Christian Herald

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FRIENDSHIP

0928 -- WHAT IS A FRIEND?

An English publication offered a prize for the best definition of a friend. Among the thousands of entries received were the following: "One who multiplies joys, divides grief"; "One who understands our silence"; "A volume of sympathy bound in cloth"; and "A watch which beats true for all time and never runs down." But the entry which won the prize said, "A friend -- the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out."

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FRIENDSHIP -- AMONG BELIEVERS

0929 -- AN ENDURING MEMORIAL

The Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt stands as a monument to the pride of the Pharaoh Khufu (also known as Cheops). The pyramid's base covers 13 acres. This awe-inspiring memorial is estimated to contain 2.3 million blocks of stone, each weighing from 2 to 15 tons.

Some 100,000 men spent 20 years building the Great Pyramid, but the winds of time have worn away its surface and thieves have stolen its treasures.

Unlike that memorial, the one initiated by our Lord on the night of His betrayal speaks not of pride, but of love and sacrifice. Its beauty can't be diminished by time, or its treasures pilfered by thieves. Each time believers share the bread and cup together, the power of Jesus' memorial is as fresh as the night it was first observed.

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FRIENDSHIP -- AMONG BELIEVERS

0930 -- PLEASE RECOGNIZE ME HERE!

I heard of a minister once who preached a sermon of the recognition of friends in heaven. He came down the aisle, and a lady put out her hand and said, "Sir, I thank you very much for that sermon. Now I wish you would preach a sermon on the recognition of friends on earth, for I have been attending church here three years, and nobody has spoken to me." -- Albert P. Graves

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FRIENDSHIP -- AMONG BELIEVERS

0931 -- SEQUOIAS SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER

Suffering comes to all of us, and no one can suffer for us. Even so, we can be supported in those difficult times by the prayers and understanding of loved ones and friends. It's when we are too proud to admit our need to others that we are in the greatest danger.

The Sequoia trees of California tower as much as 300 feet above the ground. Strangely, these giants have unusually shallow root systems that reach out in all directions to capture the greatest amount of surface moisture. Seldom will you see a redwood standing alone because high winds would quickly uproot it. That's why they grow in clusters. Their intertwining roots provide support for one another against the storms.

Support is what Jesus wanted from Peter, James, and John in Gethsemane as he faced Calvary. On the cross as the world's sinbearer He would experience His Father's wrath and abandonment. That was the awful cup He prayed would be taken from Him. In that dark hour, He looked to His disciples for prayerful alertness and compassion. But oh, how they disappointed Him! Somehow the sight of His sleeping disciples must have made the isolation of Gethsemane that much more painful.

If Jesus looked to human support in His crisis hour, how much more do Christians need one another when they suffer! Let's be willing to ask someone to pray for us and with us. Let's be alert for opportunities to lend our support to others who are suffering.

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FRIENDSHIP -- EXAMPLES OF TRUE

0932 -- A COMPARISON MADE BY QUEEN VICTORIA

Our English word friend comes from the same root as the word freedom. A genuine friend sets us free to be who and what we are. We can pour out our doubts and talk freely about the wolves howling at the door of our life.

A faithful friend also affirms our worth. Queen Victoria said of William Gladstone, "When I am with him, I feel I am with one of the most important leaders in the world." But of Benjamin Disraeli she said, "He makes me feel as if I am one of the most important leaders of the world."

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FRIENDSHIP -- EXAMPLES OF TRUE

0933 -- FEELING SAFE WITH A PERSON

"Oh, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh your thoughts nor measure words, but to pour them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness blow the rest away." -- George Eliot

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FRIENDSHIP -- EXAMPLES OF TRUE

0934 -- YOUR MERCENARY? OR, YOUR FRIEND?

A barbarian prince once came to Athens seeking to place himself under Cimon, the Athenian admiral who had consolidated Athens's supremacy over the other Greek cities. To ensure his welcome the prince brought two vessels -- one filled with gold pieces and the other with silver -- and placed them before Cimon's door. Cimon looked at them and smiled, "Would you prefer to have me as your mercenary or as your friend?" he asked.

"As my friend," replied the man.

"Go," Cimon replied, "and take these things away with you. For if I am your friend, your money will be mine whenever I have need of it." -- Moody

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FRIENDSHIP -- FALSE

0935 -- FATAL FRIENDSHIPS

"Amnon had a friend." That was his epitaph. It is the true epitaph of many a broken life. That brief sentence tells the story of many a man who has disappointed his own hopes and the prayers of those who loved him and dreamed for him. It tells the secret of the bitterness of many a sad and heavy-hearted person who today goes mechanically about his work, his mind all the while turning with bitterness back to the ill-starred day when he met the friend who slew him. In many a person that once followed Jesus Christ and honored him as Saviour and King, but who now has no faith and no hope, or is following some of the gods made by the fancies and desires of men, that is the secret of the backsliding and apostasy -- he had a friend. -- McCartney

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FRIENDSHIP -- FALSE

0936 -- THE WRONG KIND OF FRIENDS

Heraclea, in ancient Greece, was noted for its honey. Beyond all other honey, it was sweet to the taste and exhilarating to him who ate it. But this was because it was poisoned by the juice of aconite. So, there are friends who entertain and thrill and excite, but like Heraclea's honey, have deadly poison in them.

In the life of Robert Burns, we can trace the evil influence of the wrong kind of friends. At the age of nineteen he fell in with some rough fast young men in a nearby town. There was one unprincipled youth in particular who exerted a strong fascination over Burns. Burns said of him, "He was the only man I ever knew who was a greater fool than myself when woman was the presiding star. But he spoke of lawless love, with a levity which hitherto I had regarded with horror."

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FRIENDSHIP -- OF CHRIST

0937 -- CHRIST, THE TRUE FRIEND

When Bishop Beveredge was dying, one of his closest friends said to him, "Bishop Beveredge, do you know me?" The bishop asked, "Who are you?" And when the name was mentioned he said, "No." Then they said to him, "Don't you know your wife?" "What is her name?" he again asked. His wife came forward and said, "I am your wife, do you not know me?" "No, I did not know I had a wife." The old man's mental machinery was breaking down. Then one knelt by him and whispered in his ear, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" At that the dying man's face lighted up, and he answered, "Yes, I have known him for the last forty years, and I can never forget him." Ah, yes; when memory's cords are all snapping, and the mind wanders in a maze, still the name of this Friend, the name of Jesus, will sound with sweet meaning in the believer's ear. The cord of memory that binds to Christ will still hold, and along it will flash messages of cheer and strength which shall establish your soul in the last darkness. -- McCartney

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FRIENDSHIP -- OF CHRIST

0938 -- CLOSER THAN SUCH A BROTHER

There is a Bible verse which says: "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Prov. 18:24) That is saying a great deal, for a good brother will stick through thick and thin.

In a battle in Scotland, there were two brothers in the same regiment. Their army was beaten and was leaving the field. One of the brothers lay on the ground desperately wounded; but the other brother, also wounded, was still able to walk. Disregarding the entreaties of his brother, that he leave him to die and flee with the others, he stooped down and lifted him to his back and thus left the field. By and by, the warmth of the body of the brother who carried him revived the spirit and strength of the unconscious one; but the brother who carried him, when he had reached a place of safety, staggered and fell dead beneath him. One brother had given his life for another. Yet, we are told that there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. -- McCartney

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FRIENDSHIP -- OF CHRIST

0939 -- FRIENDS OF HIS

A Christian lady visited a young girl who was blind. The lady taught her to read the Bible in raised letters. "I went into her room one morning, and before I had time to reach her hand and let her know that someone was present, I found her speaking to Christ about the verse which she had just spelled out, 'Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you'. Lifting her sightless eyes to the Lord, she said, 'Oh, I like to hear You say that! You only told me before that You were my Friend, the sinner's Friend. I did not know that we were friends of Yours.'" Isn't it wonderful to know that if we do those things which He has told us to do, He calls us His friends?

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FRIENDSHIP -- OF CHRIST

0940 -- SEVENTY-ONE AND NO FRIENDS

A clergyman visiting in the sick wards of a workhouse in a crowded city was asked by one of the nurses to say a word to a sick man whose bed was near the door of the ward. He said, "With pleasure, nurse, but he is asleep." "No," she said, "he is dying." The clergyman went to the bed and noticed the namecard at the bed-head. "Robert Browning, aged seventy-one; no friends." "What does this mean, nurse?" he asked. "Just what it says," she answered. "If he dies tonight we do not know anyone who knows him. Do speak to him." The clergyman bent over the bed and quietly said, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." In a moment the closed eyes opened,

and a joyous whisper was heard. "Yes, Jesus is my Saviour, my Friend." "No friends," said the card; but the poor man claimed the friendship of the matchless Son of God. The promise of this ever-present, never-failing Friend is sure: "And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you!" (Isa. 46:4) -- W. B. K.

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FRUIT -- SPIRITUAL

0941 -- ANSWER DELAYED, BUT GRANTED

In the city of Washington, many years ago, a teacher had in his class a mischievous boy who not only would not listen, or behave well, but who interfered with the other scholars' giving their attention. The teacher became discouraged regarding that boy. Later on the boy left Washington for the West, and there wasted his life in reckless dissipation. Years afterward he came to Baltimore and spent the night in debauchery, and next morning, while under the weakening spell of his dissipation, he started walking along the streets of Baltimore. He soon found himself in one of the city's cemeteries and suddenly noticed on a tombstone the name of his old Sunday school teacher.

A Flood of memories rushed upon him. Things that the teacher said came back to him. His heart melted, he pulled himself over the little railing, went to the grave, and there he gave his life to Christ as he knelt down and kissed the very dirt on the grave of his faithful old teacher. He entered the ministry and became the pastor of one of the most prominent churches in Virginia, and one of the most greatly beloved of all the Virginia pastors. And yet his old teacher had gone to his grave years before, feeling that his work was a failure as far as that boy was concerned. -- Sunday School Times

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FRUIT -- SPIRITUAL

0942 -- FRUIT OUT OF FAILURE

A missionary in Urfa, Mesopotamia, labored thirteen years before he baptized a single convert. Everything was discouraging, even hopeless, to human appearance. Then came an epidemic of cholera. People fled in panic, deserting the sick and the dying. The missionary, forgetful of self, waited upon the sufferers, tenderly and tirelessly. The living and the dying blessed his name. Worn and weary he at last himself fell a victim to the disease.

All the survivors carried his body reverently and sorrowfully to a little grove outside the city walls. It now seemed that the work of the missionary was at an end. A successor was appointed, however, and he was met nine miles away by a large company and conducted to Urfa with honors. Large numbers turned to Christ, and a substantial house of worship was built and

dedicated to the memory of "The man who died for us." The "corn of wheat" had fallen into the ground, and precious was the harvest. -- Baptist Teacher

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FRUITFULNESS

0943 -- A GRAPEVINE NEARLY 1000 YEARS OLD

Donald Grey Barnhouse cites an amazing example of lasting fruitfulness. In Hampton Court near London, there is a grapevine under glass; it is about 1,000 years old and has but one root which is at least two feet thick. Some of the branches are 200 feet long. Because of skillful cutting and pruning, the vine produces several tons of grapes each year. Even though some of the smaller branches are 200 feet from the main stem, they bear much fruit because they are joined to the vine and allow the life of the vine to flow through them.

Christ is the vine, and we are the branches. And when we need pruning, the goal is always more fruit.

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THE END