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

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GAIN -- THROUGH LOSS

0944 -- GAINING A LOSS BENEFICIAL

One morning a Christian farmer in Rhode Island put two bushels of rye in his wagon and started to the mill to get it ground. On his way to the mill he had to drive over a bridge that had no railings to the side of it. When he reached the middle of this bridge his horse, a quiet, gentle creature, began all at once to back. In spite of all the farmer could do, the horse kept backing till the hinder wheels of the wagon went over the side of the bridge, and the bag of grain was dumped out and fell into the stream. Then the horse stood still.

Some men came to help the farmer. The wagon was lifted back up to a safe position on the bridge, and the bag of grain was fished up from the water. Of course, the grain could not be taken to the mill in that state. So, the farmer had to take it home and to dry it. He had prayed that morning that God would protect and help him through the day, and he wondered why this accident had happened. He found out, however, before long. Upon spreading out the grain to dry, he noticed a great many small pieces of glass mixed up with it.

If this had been ground up with the grain into the flour, it might have caused the death of himself and his family. Jehovah-Jireh was on that bridge. He made the horse back and throw the grain into the water in order to save the farmer and his family from the danger that threatened them.
-- Dictionary of Illustrations

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GAIN -- THROUGH LOSS

0945 -- GAINING A LOSS IS PARADOXICAL

"Nine-year-old Henry struck upon the idea of hiring his little brother as his servant. "I'll give you ten cents a week," he said. Little Tom agreed. Henry then felt he'd offered too much money. "I can only pay you five cents a week, after all," he said. Little Tom agreed, just as cheerfully. Thinking he could get the child for even less, Henry said, "All I can pay is a penny a

week." Hesitantly, his little brother agreed, but protested: "Don't raise it any lower." -- Humorous Stories

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GAIN -- THROUGH LOSS

0946 -- PURPOSELY LOSING THE WAY OUT

When Julius Caesar landed on the shores of Britain with his Roman legions, he took a bold and decisive step to ensure the success of his military venture. Ordering his men to halt on the edge of the Cliffs of Dover, he commanded them to look down at the water below. To their amazement, they saw every ship in which they had crossed the channel engulfed in flames. Caesar had deliberately cut off any possibility of retreat! Now that his soldiers were unable to return to the continent, there was nothing left for them to do but to advance and conquer! And that is exactly what they did.

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GAIN -- THROUGH LOSS

0947 -- THE CHICKEN AND THE PIG

Once a chicken and a pig took a trip together. After many miles and many hours on the road, they got hungry. Finally, the chicken spotted a restaurant. Approaching the door they read a sign which said, "Ham and Eggs: Our Specialty!" "Hold it!" shouted the pig. "What's the matter?" asked the chicken. "Plenty. All they want from you is a little compromise. They are asking me for total commitment!"

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GENEROSITY

0948 -- HE SILENCED THE DEVIL

If you find yourself getting miserly, begin to scatter, like a wealthy farmer in New York State that I heard of. He was a noted miser but later he was converted. Soon after, a poor man who had been burned out and had no provisions, came to him for help. The farmer thought he would be liberal and give him a ham from his smokehouse. On his way to get it, the tempter whispered to him: "Give him the smallest one you have." He had a struggle whether he would give a large ham or a small ham, but finally he took down the largest he could find. "You are a fool," the devil said. "If you don't keep still," the farmer replied, "I'll give him every ham I have in the smokehouse." -- Gospel Herald

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GENEROSITY

0949 -- HE WANTED TO BE THAT KIND OF BROTHER

As the Cadillac owner walked to his car, he saw a boy about 10- years old staring intently through the windows. Wondering what he was up to, the man put his hands on the youngster's shoulders, pulled gently, and asked him what he was doing. The boy said he was interested in cars and had read a lot about different models. He then told him many details about this particular year and body style.

After a bit, the boy asked, "Mister, how much did you pay for this car?" the man replied, "Nothing. My brother gave it to me." The boy responded, "I wish . . ." but stopped in mid-sentence. The man chuckled, "You were going to say, 'I wish I had a brother like that.'" "No, I was going to say, 'I wish I could be a brother like that'. You see, sir, I have a brother who is crippled and I'd like to do a lot of things for him." -- Herb Vander Lugt

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GIFTS -- SPIRITUAL, PROMISED

0950 -- I'D BETTER TAKE OVER

A noted brain surgeon, Dr. Bronson Ray, was taking a stroll when he saw a boy on a scooter smash head-first into a tree. Realizing that the boy was seriously injured, the doctor told a bystander to call an ambulance. As he proceeded to administer first aid, a boy not much older than the injured one nudged through the crowd that had gathered and said to Dr. Ray, "I'd better take over now, sir. I'm a Boy Scout and I know first aid."

As ridiculous as that sounds, it's no worse than someone in the church trying to do something for which someone else is better qualified.

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GIVING

0951 -- FIERY REVIVAL PRODUCES GENEROUS GIVING

The melting of the fiery presence of the Holy Ghost invariably loosens those hidden deposits of earthly riches which are being held by Christians. When real revival comes, there always comes with it a flowing forth of those resources, and those whose hearts are set aflame give freely and generously. Diodorus Siculus relates that the forest of the Pyrenean mountains being set on fire, and the heat penetrating the soil, a pure stream of silver gushed forth from the bosom of the hearth and revealed for the first time the existence of those rich lodes afterwards so celebrated. Let the melting influence of the cross be felt, let the fire of the Gospel be kindled in the Church, and its ample stores shall be seen flowing from their hidden recesses and becoming "the fine gold of the sanctuary." -- Harris

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GIVING -- ACCORDING TO ABILITY

0952 -- BUTTONS IN THE OFFERING PLATE

"My dear brudders an sisters," remarked the pastor, as he carefully cleared the broad table in front of him so that every nickel, cent, and button laid upon it would stand out in startling distinctness, "dere is some of de folks in dis church dat gives accordin to deir 'means,' an some dat gives accordin to deir 'meanness.' Les not have any of de secon class heah dis mawnin!" Then, the procession commenced and everybody reached for his bottom dime. -- Selected

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GIVING -- BLESSED OF GOD

0953 -- SHE CONSIDERED GIVING TO BE A PRIVILEGE

In a recent periodical a minister gives the account of a good man in one of his charges who regularly gave every Sunday, five dollars for the support of the church. A poor widow, also a member of the same church, supported herself and six children by doing washings. She was as regular as the rich man in making her offering, of five cents per week, which was all she could spare from her scant earnings. One day, the rich man came to the minister and said that "the poor woman ought not to pay any thing, and that he would pay the five cents for her every week. The pastor called to tell her of the offer, which he did in a considerate manner. Tears came to the woman's eyes, as she replied: "Do they want to take from me the comfort I experience in giving to the Lord? Think how much I owe to Him. My health is good, my children keep well, and I receive so many blessings that I feel I could not live if I did not make my little offering to Jesus each week." -- Topical Illustrations

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GIVING -- BLESSED OF GOD

0954 -- WHAT ONE CENT DID

It is said a lady was filling a box for India when a child brought her a penny. With it she bought a tract and put it in the box. The gospel tract was given to a Burmese chief and through reading it he was led to Christ.

In turn, the chief told the story of his new God and his great happiness to his friends. They also believed and cast away their idols. Next, a church was built there, and a missionary was sent. Fifteen hundred people were converted from heathenism through one child giving one cent to the Lord! -- Gospel Herald

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GIVING -- GENEROUS

0955 -- ALL FOR JESUS

"See that Jesus gets it all," was the dying wish of a little girl that had saved forty-eight cents to give to the mission school. How different was her last will from that of most! -- Topical Illustrations

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GIVING -- GENEROUS

0956 -- ONLY A COLLECTION

"My son," said the father, "it would be better if you ate that meat yourself and gave Fido some of the scraps which are left. The boy protested, but the father was obdurate. At the conclusion of the meal, the boy took out to Fido a plate heaped with scraps of the roast. "Here Fido," said the boy, "I wanted to make you an offering, but here is only a collection." -- Exchange

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GIVING -- OF PRESENTS

0957 -- A USEFUL EXPOSITORY NOTE!

Samuel Bradburn, an associate of John Wesley, was highly respected by his friends and used by God as an effective preacher. On one occasion he was in desperate financial need. When Wesley learned of his circumstances, he sent him the following letter: "Dear Sammy: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Yours affectionately, John Wesley." Attached to the letter was a 5-pound note (then worth about \$10).

Bradburn's reply was prompt. "Rev. and Dear Sir: I have often been struck with the beauty of the passage of Scripture quoted in your letter, but I must confess that I never saw such a useful 'expository note' on it before."

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GIVING -- OF TITHES

0958 -- PRISONERS PRACTICED TITHING

Soviet Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, the author of Tortured for Christ, suffered terribly for the Lord. Yet he said that even while in prison, he saw fellow Soviet believers practice generous giving. "When we were given one slice of bread a week and dirty soap every day, we decided we

would faithfully 'tithe' even that. Every tenth week we took the slice of bread and gave it to the weaker brethren as our 'tithe' to the Master."

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GIVING -- OF TITHES

0959 -- TITHING, AND DIDN'T KNOW IT

The day the church treasurer resigned the church asked the local grain elevator manager to take the position. He agreed under two conditions. That no treasurer's report would be given for the first year. That no questions be asked about finances during that year. The people were surprised but finally agreed since most of them did business with him and he was a trusted man. At the end of the year he gave his report:

The church indebtedness of \$228,000 has been paid. The minister's salary had been increased by 8%. The Cooperative Program gifts has been paid 200%. There were no outstanding bills. There was a cash balance of \$11,252!

Immediately the shocked congregation asked, "How did you do it? Where did the money come from?" He quietly answered: "Most of you bring your grain to my elevator. Throughout the year I simply withheld ten percent on your behalf and gave it to the church in your name. You didn't even miss it!" "Do you see what we could do for the Lord if we were all willing to give at least the tithe to God, who really owns it?" So the new treasurer had made his point. -- James Carter

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GIVING -- PREACHING ABOUT

0960 -- HE HAS GONE AND SPOILT IT ALL

A farmer went to hear John Wesley preach. the farmer was not a converted man; he cared little about religion; on the other hand, he was not what you call a hard man. His attention was soon excited and riveted. John said he should take up three topics of thought -- by way of speaking greatly about money. His first head was, "Get all you can." The farmer nudged a neighbor and said, "This is strange preaching. I never heard the like of this before. This is very good. Yon man has got things in him; it is admirable preaching." John discoursed of "Industry," "Activity," "Living to purpose," and reached his second division, which Was, "Save all you can." The farmer became more excited. Was there ever anything like this?" he said. Wesley denounced thriftlessness and waste, and he satirized the willful wickedness which lavishes in luxury; and the farmer rubbed his hands, and he thought, "All this have I been from my youth up;" and what with getting, and what with hoarding, it seemed t o him that "salvation had come to his house." But Wesley advanced to his third head, which was, "Give all you can." " Ay dear, ay dear," said the farmer, " he has gone and spoilt it all." There was now no further point of contact, no interest in the farmer's mind --
Preacher's Lantern

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0961 -- AUGUST FRANCKE

August H. Francke, the well-known German preacher of the 17th century, founded an orphanage to take care of the homeless children who roamed the streets of Halle. One day when he desperately needed funds to carry on his work, a destitute Christian widow came to his door begging for one gold ducat. Because of his financial situation, he politely but regretfully refused. Disheartened, the woman sat down and began to weep. Moved by her tears, Francke asked her to wait while he went to his room to pray about the matter. Seeking God's guidance, he felt that the Holy Spirit wanted him to grant the request. Trusting the Lord to meet his own pressing needs, he gave her the money.

Two mornings later he received a warm letter of thanks from the widow saying that because of his generosity she had asked the Lord to shower the orphanage with gifts. That same day he received 12 ducats from a rich lady and two from a friend in Sweden. He thought he had been amply rewarded, but shortly afterward he was informed that Prince Lodewyk Van Wurtenburg had died, and in his will had directed that 500 gold pieces be given to the orphanage! Francke wept in gratitude. In sacrificially providing for that needy saint, he had not been impoverished but enriched.

We should always give with pure motives, "hoping for nothing again" (Luke 6:35); yet God does promise, "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack!"

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0962 -- BANKBOOK OR ACCOUNT BOOK?

A woman, working as a housekeeper, sent \$300 to the mission in the Sudan. She had received this sum as a legacy. Later, after her death, relatives, who had regarded her as being over-religious, and had had very little to do with her, came to her funeral, and asked for her possessions. They went through her trunk looking for a book, evidently a bankbook, for she had been long employed at good wages. The little book they found was quite a different one, and told its own story, On the one side she had entered her wages, month after month, and on the opposite side, following the small amounts of her expenditures, were such entries as these: "For Bible woman in India, \$50." "For native worker in China, \$50." Turning over the pages to the date she had received her \$300 legacy, they found opposite it, "Paid out for the Sudan, \$300." She needed no executors; all had been administered right up to date.

Some day we will wish we could produce such a book in the presence of Him to whom we must all account for our stewardship. -- Evangelical Christian

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0963 -- HER LORD'S TREASURY

Years ago Dr. Henry Jessup, a faithful missionary in Syria, was calling on Mr. John H. Converse of Philadelphia, seeking help for the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut. After giving him a generous check, Mr. Converse handed him the name and address of a friend, asking Dr. Jessup to call on her, saying he believed that she would help him financially. Dr. Jessup was astounded to locate her residence on the top floor of a tenement house. Entering the door he found an elderly lady putting bristles in the wood backs of scrubbing brushes. Eagerly she listened to his story. Taking one of two bags from a nail on the wall, she said: "This is the Lord's treasury. I am able to lay by something for Him, after I have met my needs. Whatever is in His bag today is for you." She counted out thirty-seven cents into his hands, as the tears rolled down his face, saying she was so glad to be able to give it, and that she was certain the Lord would bless its use. They knelt in prayer together. Then Dr. Jessup took those thirty-seven cents up and down this land and told their story. They brought thousands of dollars for his Syrian college.

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0964 -- IS THIS OUR SPIRIT IN GIVING?

The Rev. J. M. Baker, a missionary of South India, wrote of this pathetic incident: An old man, thirty-five miles north of a certain city, had a great desire to give something to Jesus. The only thing he had to give was a magnificent pumpkin he had grown with great care and had protected a long time from thieves. But how was he to get it to the Lord? The hamlet had no Christian teacher to tell him, and the touring evangelist of that section was not liable to visit his village for some time. He decided to take it to the missionary, thinking that he will know what to do. In India this vegetable is worth about four cents. The old man walked seventy miles, and one-half of the distance carried on his head a weight of about thirty pounds and the food for his journey, that he might present to the Lord an acceptable gift of four cents. -- Christian Endeavor World

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0965 -- PRIMING THE PUMP

A hiker was thirsty for a drink, but could not find water, until he came to an abandoned house. There he found a pump, and proceeded to pump with all the strength he had remaining. No water came forth. Then he saw a small jug with a cork at the top and a penciled note, directing that

the water in the jug be poured into the pump to prime it. At first the thirsty man questioned this, but when he followed directions he obtained satisfying water. Before going his way, he filled the jug with water so the next thirsty person could secure water. He added to the note, "Believe me, it really works. You have to give it all away before you can get anything back." -- Robert Schuller

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GIVING -- SACRIFICIAL

0966 -- THE TIME TO GIVE, NOT TO SELL

Marquis de Lafayette was a French general and politician who joined the American Revolution and became a friend of George Washington. An influential man in the U.S. and France, Lafayette was also a man of compassion. The harvest of 1782 was a poor one, but the manager of his estate had filled his barns with wheat. "The bad harvest has raised the price of wheat," said his manager. "This is the time to sell."

Lafayette thought about the hungry peasants in the villages and replied, "No, this is the time to give."

Real love is often measured by our willingness to let go of what we possess.

Sometimes the thing we grip most tightly in our hands is the very thing God asks us to hand over to Him.

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GIVING -- SCRIPTURAL RULES FOR

0967 -- COBWEBS

An artist was asked to put on canvas what he considered to be the picture best symbolizing a decaying and dying church. After several months, he returned and reported that he had finished the task. The hour finally arrived when the painting was to be unveiled.

Several people standing around the easel had already given their description of what they thought the church would look like. Some had said it would be a rundown building in great need of repair and paint. Weeds would be growing in the church yard, and there would be some broken window panes. Everyone in the group seemed to have the same picture in mind. However, when the cloth was removed, a hush fell over the group. Everyone was stunned. Before their eyes was an absolutely beautiful church building. The grounds were well kept and the exterior of the building was in excellent condition.

After a few minutes, one person stepped forward and said to the artist, "I thought we asked you to paint a dying church?" The artist smiled and invited everyone to step closer to the painting.

He pointed through the windows to the empty pews and to the collection plate on the table. There was nothing in the plate but "cobwebs."

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GIVING -- SCRIPTURAL RULES FOR

0968 -- GIVING FREELY

Jesus said: "Freely ye have received. Freely give." Paul wrote: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" What God gives us freely, that we should not sell to others. Still, many who name the Name of Jesus are no better than the moneychangers which He angrily drove from the temple. They make God's House an house of merchandise, peddling their songs and seminars for a price. But, beloved, we had better be careful. He who has freely received a thing from God should not dare to peddle it for a profit among his brethren, for to do so is to risk becoming the object of Christ's frown and righteous indignation. Consider the following, written by another: I noticed a cartoon the other day portraying a Christian singer "ministering" at a piano. His words were rather indicative of our time: "I'd like to share a song with you that the Lord gave me a year ago -- and even though he did give it to me, any reproduction of this song in any form without my written consent will constitute infringement of copyright law.." Is this not an example of exactly the same spirit which those had whom Jesus drove from the temple?!

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GIVING -- SCRIPTURAL RULES FOR

0969 -- THE FIRST SHILLING

What place does God have in your budget? Do you give Him priority over everything else, or does He get just the leftovers -- the few dollars you can easily spare? An African convert who loved the Lord earned money by making and selling a special kind of bean cake. She had always been conscientious in her giving, but after suffering a severe foot injury in an accident her income ceased. It was many long months before she could resume her work. Eagerly she awaited the day she could sell her tasty cakes again. She promised the missionary that she would give one-third of her earnings to the Lord instead of just 10 percent. She said her goal for the first week of business was to make a profit of 3 shillings. The missionary was surprised, therefore, when the woman returned after only 2 days with one shilling as an offering for the Lord. "You surely haven't earned 3 shillings already!" he exclaimed. The woman was perplexed by his response. "Do you think I would give my Lord the last of the three?" she asked. "This is the first one and it belongs to Him -- the other two I make, will be for me."

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GIVING -- TO GOD

0970 -- HALLELUJAHS CEASE BY REQUEST FOR MISSIONARY OFFERING!

There are a great many who don't know much about religion, only hallelujah and glorying. They are a good deal like a man that sat in a congregation one day. During the sermon he got to clapping his hands and shouting, "Glory, hallelujah!" having a grand time. A brother near him, fearing that he would disturb the minister, spoke to him and he cooled down very suddenly. The minister noticed it and after the meeting said to the brother. "What did you say to that man that cooled him off so quickly?" Said he, "I asked him for a dollar for foreign missions." And there are multitudes just like that. They are very happy until you say money. There seems to be such a narrow, small kind of spirit. -- Albert P. Graves

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GIVING -- TO GOD

0971 -- SHE WAS A CONTRIBUTOR

An elderly mother in Scotland gave up her son to the Lord. One day she went to a missionary society meeting where only contributing members were admitted. The doorkeeper asked, "Are you a contributor?" "I am afraid not," she answered. When he wouldn't let her in, she left disappointed. Pondering his words, she thought of her son who years before had gone as a missionary to Sierra Leone in West Africa. His body now lay buried in that distant land. She retraced her steps to the building and explained to the man, "I forgot. You asked me if I was a contributor. I gave my only boy, and he is buried out in Sierra Leone." The doorkeeper removed his cap, bowed graciously, and said, "Come in." He then led her to a front seat.

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GIVING -- TO GOD

0972 -- THE SPURGEONS WERE JUDGED WRONGLY

Years ago The Chaplain magazine told how the noted preacher Charles Spurgeon and his wife were called miserly because they sold all the eggs their chickens laid and wouldn't give any away. Because they always made a profit on their butter, milk, and eggs, rumors circulated that they were greedy.

The Spurgeons, however, took the criticism graciously, and only after the death of Mrs. Spurgeon was the truth revealed. The records showed that their entire profits had been used to support two needy, elderly widows whose husbands had spent their lives in serving the Lord. Yet because the Spurgeons did not want to call attention their giving (Matt. 6:3), they had refused to defend themselves.

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GLORIFYING GOD

0973 -- NOT THE COMPOSER, BUT THE CREATOR

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) was present at the Vienna Music Hall, where his oratorio *The Creation* was being performed. Weakened by age, the great composer was confined to a wheelchair. As the majestic work moved along, the audience was caught up with tremendous emotion. When the passage "And there was light!" was reached, the chorus and orchestra burst forth in such power that the crowd could no longer restrain its enthusiasm. The vast assembly rose in spontaneous applause. Haydn struggled to stand and motioned for silence. With his hand pointed toward heaven, he said, "No, no, not from me, but from thence comes all!" Having given the glory and praise to the Creator, he fell back into his chair exhausted.

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GOD -- ETERNAL

0974 -- ETERNITY COMPARED TO A RING

A mother was approached by her young son, who asked, "Mommy, did God make Himself?" Realizing that such questions by children are very important and must be answered, she dropped what she was doing and sat down with her youngster for a little talk. Pointing to her wedding band, she said, "This is a 'love ring,' which your daddy gave me when we were married. Look at it closely and tell me where it begins and where it ends."

The youngster examined it carefully and then said, "There's no starting place and stopping place to a ring." The mother replied, "That's the way it is with God. He had no beginning and has no end, yet He encircles our lives with His presence. He is too wonderful, too great, for our minds to understand. Nobody ever made God -- He always was!" Somehow the boy realized that for God to be God, He could not have been created. He had to be without beginning and without end.

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GOD -- GLORY OF

0975 -- DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD

An article in *Glad Tidings* illustrates a great point. A growing church was making construction plans. In honor of the pastor's many years of ministry, the building committee told him they wanted to put his name on the cornerstone. He thanked them for their thoughtfulness, then quoted 1 Corinthians 10:31, "...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." He then asked that the committee not let his name appear. If you were to drive by that church today, instead of the pastor's name you would read these words on the cornerstone: "For the glory of God."

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GOD -- GREATNESS OF

Baron Rothschild, a member of the world-famous family of financiers, stepped from a carriage one evening and gave the driver what he felt was an adequate tip.

Eyeing the tip disdainfully, the driver said, "Your lordship's son always gives me a good deal more than this."

"I dare say he does," Baron Rothschild snapped. "But then, you see, he has a rich father: I haven't."

The Baron made an excellent point. When you have a father with plentiful resources to depend on, you don't have to worry about giving too much!

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GOD -- POWER OF

0977 -- GOD CONQUERED

John III Sobieski, king of Poland in the late 17th century, is best remembered as the man who saved central Europe from invading armies of Turks in 1683. With the Turks at the walls of Vienna, Sobieski led a charge that broke the siege. His rescue of Vienna is considered one of the decisive battles in European history. In announcing his great victory the king paraphrased the famous words of Caesar by saying simply, "I came; I saw; God Conquered."

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GOD -- POWER OF

0978 -- GOD TURNS THE TABLES ON EVIL

God has a way of turning the tables on evil. The French philosopher Voltaire predicted that Christianity would be swept from existence within 100 years. Yet just 50 years after he died in 1779, the German Bible Society had occupied Voltaire's house and was using his printing press to produce stacks of Bibles.

During World War II, Adolf Hitler erected a massive stone structure in Monte Carlo. It was to be a radio station from which to broadcast Nazi propaganda into North Africa. Today from that very building, Trans World Radio beams the gospel of Christ's redeeming love all across Europe and into Russia and Africa.

Could these ironies of history be whispers of the last word Christ will have at the end of this age?

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GOD -- POWER OF

0979 -- IT WAS D. L. MOODY

In May 1855, an eighteen-year-old boy went to the deacons of a church in Boston. He had been raised in a Unitarian church, in almost total ignorance of the gospel, but when he had moved to Boston to make his fortune, he began to attend a Bible preaching church. Then, in April of 1855, his Sunday school teacher had come into the store where he was working and simply and persuasively shared the gospel and urged the young man to trust in the Lord Jesus. He had, and now he was applying to join the church.

Years later his Sunday school teacher said of him: I can truly say that I have seen few persons whose minds were spiritually darker than was his when he came into my Sunday school class and I think the committee of the church seldom met an applicant for membership who seemed more unlikely ever to become a Christian of clear and decided views of Gospel truth, still less to fill any space of public or extended usefulness. Who was that boy? Why none other than D. L. Moody. By God's grace he was transformed into one of the most effective servants of God.

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GOD -- POWER OF

0980 -- MOVED ONLY BY DEEP OCEAN CURRENTS

Countless icebergs float in the frigid waters around Greenland. Some are tiny; others tower skyward. At times the small ones move in one direction while their gigantic counterparts go in another. The small ones are subject to surface winds, but the huge ice masses are carried along by deep ocean currents.

Our lives are subject to two similar forces. The winds represent everything changeable, unpredictable, distressing. But simultaneous with these adverse gusts or gales is another force more powerful than anything on the surface. It's the sure movement of God's purposes and the deep flow of His unchanging love. It's in that unseen current that we must rest the destiny of our souls.

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GOD -- POWER OF

0981 -- TOO CONSERVATIVE

The story is told of a Welsh woman who lived in a remote valley in Wales. She went to a great deal of trouble to have electrical power installed in her home. They noticed she didn't use very much electricity at all. In fact, her usage was minuscule. They sent a meter reader out to check on the matter. The man came to the door and said, "We've looked at the amount. Don't you use electricity?" "Oh yes" she said. "We turn it on every night to see how to light our lamps and

then we switch it off again." This sounds like the way many Christians apply the power of God in their lives.

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GOD -- SEARCH FOR

0982 -- NOT MUCH BETWEEN HIM AND SEEING GOD

After one of the first Russian cosmonauts returned from space, he said, "I didn't see God up there." An American pastor responded in a Sunday sermon by saying, "All he needs to do is to leave the space capsule and take off his space suit. He'll see God!"

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0983 -- DEFEATED BY SNOWFLAKES

Napoleon proposed to invade Russia and bring its Czar under his sway. It is said that someone ventured to say of his purpose, "Man proposes, but God disposes." On hearing the remark, Napoleon is said to have replied, "I propose, and I dispose." But that was to leave God out of the reckoning, and it proved fatal. For God dealt with Napoleon through one of the tiniest, most fragile creations, the snowflake. The snows of Russia defeated the presumptuous Napoleon. "Russia shall be mine," his proud heart had said whereas the Lord was there. Because of God, the Corsican's proudly conceived invasion came to disaster and defeat. Emperors, kings, dictators, generals, and statesmen who leave God out of their reckoning are fools. -- Sunday School Times

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0984 -- HE EXPECTED THE ANSWER WHEN HE GOT HOME

Pastor William E. Sangster told of an experience in his youth when he went on a vacation with some friends. When he had spent all the funds given him for the trip, he wrote home for more. His father, thinking he should teach his son the value of money, did not respond to the request. Sangster's companions wondered why he had been turned down, but William said to them, "I'll wait till I get home, and he'll tell me himself."

We should have that kind of attitude toward our heavenly Father. Life holds many unanswered questions. But we know that God is sovereign and that He is working out everything according to His plan (Eph. 1:11). The Lord has said, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Is. 55:9). That's why we cannot comprehend all that He is doing in our lives.

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0985 -- I WILL NOT DOUBT

I will not doubt though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
I will believe the Hand which never fails
From seeming evil worketh good for me.
And though I weep because those sails are tattered,
Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,
"I trust in Thee!"

I will not doubt though sorrows fall like rain,
And troubles swarm like bees about a hive;
I will believe the heights for which I strive
Are only reached by anguish and by pain,
And though I groan and writhe beneath my crosses,
I yet shall see, through my severest losses,
The greater gain.

-- Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0986 -- IN SALES, NOT MANAGEMENT

After a tree fell on his garage, the Rev. Ray Lanham was asked by neighbor Tom Bedell if it isn't wrong that a man of God should suffer from an act of God.

"I wouldn't know," replied Mr. Lanham, "I'm in sales, not management."

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0987 -- "STONEWALL" JACKSON'S ATTITUDE TOWARD A CALAMITY

When General "Stonewall" Jackson lost an arm in battle, his chaplain exclaimed, "Oh, General, what a calamity!" Jackson thanked him for his sympathy, but replied, "You see me wounded, but not depressed, not unhappy. I believe it has been according to God's holy will, and I acquiesce entirely in it. You may think it strange, but you never saw me more perfectly contented than I am today, for I am sure my heavenly Father designs this affliction for my good. I am

perfectly satisfied that either in this life or in that which is to come, I shall discover that what is now regarded as calamity is a blessing." What faith!

We often label adverse circumstances or a shattering experience a "calamity". But if we could see as God sees, we wouldn't want to miss the invaluable spiritual lessons we might not gain in any other way.

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GOD -- SOVEREIGNTY OF

0988 -- WINDS DELAYED THE BRITISH

In a major address, before the assembly at Connecticut Ezra Stiles praises the Lord for his help to the colonists. To Whom but the Ruler of the Winds shall we ascribe it that the British reinforcements, in the summer of 1777, was delayed on the ocean three months by contrary winds, until it was too late for General Clinton to help at Saratoga: a turning point of the war.

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GOD'S PEOPLE

0989 -- A QUIET AND HOLY PEOPLE

All down through the centuries, the Spirit of God has been at the work of conversion. Back in the third century Cyprian the Bishop of Carthage wrote to his friend Donatus: "It is a bad world, Donatus, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered, in the midst of it, a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any of the pleasures of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. ..They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are Christians, and I am one of them." -- Sunday School Times

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GOD'S PEOPLE

0990 -- GOD'S PEOPLE MADE FROM HUMBLE MATERIAL

Matthew Simpson, an American pastor of the 19th century, once visited some of the great buildings of Europe. There he saw mosaics -- pictures made up of small pieces of stone, glass, metal, and shell. Simpson wrote, "The artist takes these little pieces, and polishing and arranging them, he forms them into a grand and beautiful picture. Each individual part of the picture may be a little worthless piece of glass or marble or shell; but, with each in its place, the whole constitutes a masterpiece of art. So I think it will be with humanity in the hands of the great Artist. God is picking up the little worthless pieces of stone and brass that might be trodden underfoot unnoticed, and is making of them His great masterpiece."

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GOD'S PEOPLE

0991 -- NAMES, NOT NUMBERS

Marvin Rosenthal, writing in "Israel, My Glory," tells about a mother who was asked by a census taker how many children she had. She responded, "Well, there's Billy and Harry and Martha and...." "Never mind the names," the man interrupted, "Just give me the number!" The mother becoming indignant, replied, "They haven't got numbers, they've all got names." That's the way it is in our relationship with the Lord. Paul, writing to Timothy, gave the assuring word that "the Lord Knows those who are His" (2 Tim. 2:19). And Jesus indicated that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:30).

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GOD'S PEOPLE

0992 -- THE HANDS OF CHRIST

During the Second World War, a church in Strasbourg was destroyed. After the bombing, the members of this particular church went to see what was left and found that the entire roof had fallen in, leaving a heap of rubble and broken glass. Much to their surprise, however, a statue of Christ with outstretched hands that had been carved centuries before by a great artist was still standing erect. It was virtually unharmed except that both hands had been sheered off by a falling beam. The people hurried to a sculptor in town and asked if he could replace the hands of the statue. He was willing, and he even offered to do it for nothing. The church officials met to consider the sculptor's proposition -- and decided not to accept his offer. Why? Because they felt that the statue without hands would be the greatest illusion possible that God's work is done through His people. In a very real sense that's true. Jesus Christ chooses human hands. Sometimes they seem to be the most infirm hands, the least potentially successful hands, or the least qualified hands -- but those are the hands He uses.

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GOD'S SON

0993 -- THE REWARD OF LOVING GOD'S SON

A very wealthy man lost his wife when his only child was very young. Then there came into his home a housekeeper to take care of that boy. The boy lived until he was of age, and then he died. The man had no other relatives; and he died heartbroken soon after the boy died. He had no one to leave his enormous wealth to, and there was a question about what would become of his possessions. They could find no will. It looked as if it would all pass over to the state. At last it

was taken over by the state, and they held a sale to dispose of his personal effects, at the mansion where he had lived.

The old housekeeper who had brought up that boy from infancy, not having any money of her own, being just as poor as when she began to work for this wealthy man and keep house for him, went to the sale. There was only one thing she wanted. She couldn't buy the furniture; she couldn't buy the expensive rugs, but there was a picture on a wall in that house, a picture of the boy. She loved that boy. He had been to her a son, although she held no relationship to him. When the picture came to be sold, nobody else wanted it, and she bought it just for a few cents, and took it home.

It had been hanging on the wall for some time, and she thought she would clean it, take the back out, take the glass out, and polish it. But when she took it apart, some important looking papers fell out. They were given to a lawyer, who said to the woman, "I guess you have fallen on your feet this time. This man has left all his wealth to the one who loved his son enough to buy that picture." God will do anything for those who love His Son. -- Edward Drew

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0994 -- EARDLEY WILLMOT'S ADVICE

A gentleman who had filled many high stations in public life, with the greatest honor to himself and advantage to the nation, once went to Eardley Willmot in great anger at a real injury he had received from a person high in the political world. He was considering how to react resentfully in the most effectual manner. After relating the particulars to Eardley Willmot, he asked if he did not think it would be manly to resent it. "Yes," said Eardley, "it would doubtless be manly to resent it, but it would be Godlike to forget it." This, the gentleman declared, had such an instantaneous effect upon him that he came away quite another man and in a temper entirely altered from that in which he went. -- Sunday School Times

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0995 -- GOOD FOR EVIL

A good story is told of the magnanimous William McKinley which shows his kindness to a political enemy. During one of his congressional campaigns, Major McKinley was followed from place to place by a reporter for a paper of the opposite political persuasion. The young reporter is described as being one of those shrewd, persistent fellows who are always at work, quick to see an opportunity and skilled in making the most of it. While Mr. McKinley was annoyed by the misrepresentations to which he was almost daily subjected, he could not help admiring the skill and persistency with which he was assailed. His admiration too was not unmixed with compassion, for the reporter was ill, poorly clad, and had an annoying cough.

One night, McKinley took a closed carriage for a nearby town at which he was billed to speak. The weather was wretchedly raw and cold. He had not gone far when he heard that cough, and knew that the reporter was riding with the driver in the exposed seat. McKinley called to the driver to stop and he alighted. "Get down off that seat, young man," he said. The reporter obeyed, thinking that the time for the major's vengeance had come. "Here," said McKinley, taking off his overcoat, "you put on this overcoat and get into that carriage." "But, Major McKinley," said the reporter, "I guess you don't know who I am. I have been with you through the whole campaign, giving it to you every time you spoke, and I am going over tonight to cut you to pieces if I can." "I know," said McKinley, "but you put on this coat, and get inside and get warm, so you can do a good job." -- S. S. Lesson Illustrator

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0996 -- IT WAS HE WHO TAUGHT ME

John Selwyn, who became the Bishop of the South Pacific, was renowned for his boxing skill in his university days. On a certain occasion he had to utter grave words of rebuke and warning to a professed convert. The man, removed from savagery only by a generation or two, struck the Bishop a violent blow on the face with his clenched fist. All Selwyn did in return was to fold his arms and look into his face. With his powerful arm and massive fist he could have easily knocked him down, but instead he waited calmly for another blow. It was too much for his assailant; he was ashamed and fled into the jungle. Years afterward the Bishop came home seriously ill. One day the man who had struck him came to his successor to confess Christ in baptism. Convinced of the genuineness of his conversion, he was asked what new name he desired to take as a Christian. "Call me John Selwyn," he replied, "for it was he who taught me what Jesus Christ is like." -- Southport Methodist

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0997 -- PARDON FOR AN ENEMY

Two boys were at the same school: George Washington and Peter Miller. Washington became the first president of the United States and Peter Miller became a preacher of the Gospel. Washington lived at Philadelphia, and Miller at Ephrata, a village seventy miles from the capital. For many years the preacher endured much persecution from a man named Michael Wittman, who did all in his power to distress the servant of God. He even inflicted personal violence, injured the building, and publicly denounced the preacher's testimony. At length Wittman was involved in treason, was arrested, and sentenced to death.

Upon this the old preacher walked the seventy miles to Philadelphia to plead for the life of his persecutor. "Well, Peter, What can I do for you?" "For our old acquaintance' sake, George, I

have come to beg the life of the traitor Wittman." "No, Peter; this case is too black: I cannot give you the life of your friend." "My friend! he is the bitterest enemy any man ever had." And then he told the president what he had suffered from this man for over twenty years. "Ah, then, Peter; this puts another aspect upon the matter. I could not give you the life of your friend; but I will freely pardon your enemy." On the third day the preacher and the persecutor walked back the seventy miles to Ephrata, The man was melted by the pardon; he was soundly converted; Peter baptized him; and the criminal was brought into the joy of God's salvation. -- Western Recorder

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0998 -- WHAT WE DESERVE AND GET

The only thing we ever did to "deserve" salvation was to be rebels against God. One day a little girl, dressed in white, carrying a bunch of flowers, passed a small boy who was playing in a dusty street. The boy threw a handful of dirt at the girl. It struck the edge of her dress and fell on her shoes. She stood still. Her face flushed as though she would cry, but instead she smiled and threw a flower at the boy who waited to see what she would do. He was surprised and ashamed because in return for dirt he had received a flower. Man is a rebel against God, but all that he has ever received from God was the gift of the Lord Jesus 'Christ. -- Revelation

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GOOD FOR EVIL

0999 -- WHEN STRUCK BY A POTATO

A Salvation Army officer tells of an old Maori woman who had won the name of "Warrior Brown" by her fighting qualities when in drink or enraged. She was converted, and gave her testimony at an open air meeting, whereupon some foolish person hit her a nasty blow with a potato. A week before, the cowardly insulter would have needed to make himself scarce for his trouble; but what a change! "Warrior" picked up the potato without a word and put it in her pocket. No more was heard of the incident until the harvest festival came around, and then "Warrior" brought a little sack of potatoes and explained that she had cut up and planted the insulting potato, and was now presenting to the Lord its increase. -- Sunday Companion

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GOODNESS -- OF GOD

1000 -- GOODNESS OF GOD QUESTIONED

When a father received word that his son, a brilliant lad, had been killed in a railway accident, he turned to his pastor and cried in desperation, "Tell me, sir, where was God when my son was killed?" And in that tense and terrible moment guidance was given to the counseling

pastor. "My friend," said he, "God was just where He was when His own Son was, killed! " --
Christian Digest

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GOODNESS -- OF GOD

1001 -- I KNOW WHAT GOD WILL DO

Charles Spurgeon loved to tell about his grandfather, a minister, who was very poor. The one cow he owned had died, and his 10 children were without milk. His wife asked, "What will we do now?" "I cannot tell," he said, "but I know what God will do. We must have milk for the children and He will provide for us."

The next morning a man brought Spurgeon's grandfather a gift of 20 pounds from the ministers' relief fund, even though help had not been requested. A few days before, the relief committee had divided the funds for distribution and an amount of 5 pounds was left over. One of the members said, "There is poor Mr. Spurgeon down in Essex. Suppose we send it to him." "We'd better make it 10," said the chairman, "and I'll give an extra five." That made it fifteen. Another man added five more pounds. Those men knew nothing about Spurgeon's cow, but God knew.

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GOSPEL

1002 -- NOTHING BUT THE GOSPEL

Dr. Baldwin, who was pastor of a church for forty-one years, says, "At thirty, after examining as best I could the philosophies and religions of the world, I said, 'Nothing is better than the Gospel of Christ.' At forty, when burdens began to press heavily, and years seemed to hasten, I said, 'Nothing is as good as the Gospel.' At fifty, when there were empty chairs in the home, and the mound builders had done me service, I said, 'There is nothing to be compared with the Gospel.' At sixty, when my second sight saw through the delusions and vanities of earthly things, I said, 'There is nothing but the Gospel.' At seventy, amid many limitations and deprivations, I sing: "Should all the forms that men devise attack my faith with treacherous art, I'd call them vanities and lies, and bind the Gospel to my heart." -- Gospel Herald

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GOSPEL

1003 -- THE GOSPEL FITS MAN'S SOUL

An African woman, who had heard for the first time from a missionary the story of Christ and the Cross, exclaimed "I always knew that there must be such a man as that!" When we speak of

the witness of humanity to Christianity, that is what we mean: that Christianity must be true, because it is adapted to man, ancient, medieval, modern man, wherever he has appeared in the past man, in whatever state we can imagine him to exist in the ages to come.

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GOSPEL

1004 -- THE GOSPEL TRUMPET NOT MUTED

From the steeple of St. Mary's Church in Cracow, Poland, a bugle has been sounded every day for the last seven hundred years. The last note on the bugle is always muted and broken, as if some disaster had befallen the bugler. This seven-hundred-year commemoration is in memory of a heroic trumpeter who one night sounded a blast on his trumpet and summoned the people to defend their city against the hordes of the invading Tartars. As he was sounding the last blast on his trumpet, an arrow from one of the Tartars struck him and killed him. Hence the muffled note at the end. -- McCartney

No muted note shall muffle the sounding forth of the gospel. Christ has been given all power over every enemy. No satanic arrow can reach or harm Him. He will continue to sound forth the trumpet call of salvation loud and clear until the very end of the age. Then, with an omnipotent blast from the last trump, Christ will raise the dead and bring all men into judgment before His throne. No, we need not commemorate a dead Hero, whose final trumpet call was muted by an enemy. We can celebrate the fact of a living Savior, and the mighty crescendo of His final trumpet call will rock the entire universe and usher in His eternal kingdom! Hallelujah! -- Duane V. Maxey

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GOSPEL

1005 -- THE INCOMPARABLE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

With another, I testify that at thirty, after examining as best I could the philosophies and religions of the world, I said, "Nothing is better than the gospel of Christ;" at forty, when burdens began to press heavily and years seemed to hasten, I said, "nothing is so good as the gospel;" at fifty, when there were empty chairs in my home and the mound builders had done me service, I said, "there is nothing to be compared with the gospel;" at sixty, when my second sight saw through the illusions and vanity of earthly things, I said, "there is nothing but the gospel;" at seventy, amid many limitations and deprivations I sing:

"Should all the forms which men devise
Attack my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart."

-- Baldwin

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GOSSIP

1006 -- MY NAME IS GOSSIP

I am more deadly than the screaming shell of the cannon. I win without killing. I tear down homes, break hearts, wreck lives. I travel on the wings of the wind. No innocence is strong enough to intimidate me, no purity pure enough to daunt me. I have no regard for truth, no respect for justice, no mercy for the defenseless. My victims are as numerous as the sands of the sea and often as innocent. I never forget and seldom forgive. My name is Gossip. -- Morgan Blake

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GOSSIP

1007 -- RUMORS

Abraham Lincoln's coffin was pried open twice. The first occasion was in 1887, twenty-two long years after his assassination. Why? You may be surprised to know it was not to determine if he had died of a bullet fired from John Wilkes Booth's derringer. Then why? Because a rumor was sweeping the country that his coffin was empty. A select group of witnesses observed that the rumor was totally false, then watched as the casket was resealed with lead.

The second time, fourteen years later, the martyred man's withered body was viewed again -- this time by even more witnesses. Why again? For the same grim purpose! Rumors of the same nature had again implanted doubts in the public's mind. The pressure mounted to such proportions, that the same ghoulish, grotesque ceremony had to be carried out. In spite of the strong protests of Lincoln's son Robert, the body was exposed a second time. Officials felt the rumors should be laid to rest along with the Civil War president. Finally -- the corpse was permanently embedded in a crypt at Springfield.

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GOSSIP

1008 -- THE RIGHT IMPRESSION

Many years ago the Moody Church News carried a humorous story about a woman in a small town who was known for being a gossip. One day on vacation she visited the offices of The Chicago Daily News. She was wearing a white dress and inadvertently leaned against a wall where a freshly printed copy of the front page was hanging. It was a hot, humid day, and some of the print came off on the back of her white dress. Later as she walked down the street to meet her husband, she noticed that people walking behind her were snickering. When she reached the place

where her husband was waiting, she asked him if there was anything on her back that shouldn't be there. As she turned around, he read the large black reversed letters: sweN yliaD (Daily News). Realizing the appropriateness of the words, he said, "No, dear, nothing's on your back that doesn't belong there." -- Moody

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GRACE -- OF CHRIST

1009 -- GRACE TO PRAY

When Joseph Parker, the great London preacher of the last century, was debating one day on the town green with enemies of Christianity, an infidel shouted to him, "What did Christ do for Stephen when he was stoned?" Parker answered and he said the answer was given him like an inspiration from Heaven: "He gave him grace to pray for those who stoned him." It was the belief of St. Augustine and of Luther that the prayer which was offered by Stephen for those who stoned him, and which Paul must have heard when he held the clothes of those who did the stoning, was used of God for the conversion of the apostle. -- Watchman-Examiner

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GRACE -- OF GOD

1010 -- DRINK UP, LITTLE FISH

One day famed British preacher Charles Spurgeon was riding home after a hard day's work, feeling tired and depressed. Suddenly the phrase "My grace is sufficient for you" entered his mind. He then thought of the tiny fish who might be afraid lest they drink the river dry, but who hear the reassuring word, "Drink up little fish, my stream is sufficient for you." Spurgeon also thought of a mountain climber fearing lest he exhaust all of the thin oxygen in the atmosphere being reassured, "Breathe away young man and fill your lungs, for my atmosphere is sufficient for you." Spurgeon said that for the first time, "I experienced the joy that Abraham felt when he rejoiced in God's provision."

It's true. No matter how great our need might be, God's overcoming power far outweighs it. -- Moody

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GRACE -- OF GOD

1011 -- HE GAVE IT TO ME

Legendary Spanish artist Pablo Picasso was virtually unknown when he painted his famous portrait of American writer Gertrude Stein in 1906. Picasso gave the portrait to Miss Stein since, as the artist himself recalled with a smile, at that time in his career "the difference between a gift

and a sale was negligible." Some years later, the portrait attracted the interest of millionaire art collector Dr. Albert Barnes, who asked Miss Stein how much she had paid Picasso for it. "Nothing," she replied. "Naturally, he gave it to me."

Dr. Barnes was incredulous that such a priceless work of art could have been a gift.

If you've ever thought about the gospel for very long, you can probably appreciate Dr. Barnes's incredulity. Think of what we have been given in Christ: forgiveness, eternal life, all the riches of heaven, all at a cost we could have never paid! But that's not all, we have the privilege of sharing this treasure with others.

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GRACE -- OF GOD

1012 -- HER SADNESS WAS TURNED TO JOY

Charlotte Elliott learned an important lesson about Jesus one sleepless night in 1834. She was an invalid, so when her family held a bazaar in Brighton, England, to raise money to build a school, she could only watch from afar.

That night she was overwhelmed by her helplessness and could not sleep. But her sadness was turned to joy when she realized that God accepted her just as she was.

That experience inspired her to write these well-loved words: "Just as I am, without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me, and that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come! I come!"

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GRACE -- OF GOD

1013 -- WHEN THE TIME COMES

When Corrie Ten Boom of The Hiding Place fame was a little girl in Holland, her first realization of death came after a visit to the home of a neighbor who had died. It impressed her that some day her parents would also die. Corrie's father comforted her with words of wisdom. "Corrie, when you and I go to Amsterdam, when do I give you your ticket?"

"Why, just before we get on the train," she replied.

"Exactly," her father said, "and our wise Father in heaven knows when we're going to need things too. Don't run out ahead of Him Corrie.

When the time comes that some of us will have to die, you will look into your heart and find the strength you need -- just in time."

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GRACE -- RICHES OF

1014 -- BLANK CHECK

At one time J. Wilbur Chapman experienced a great sorrow that nearly shook his faith. In addition, his finances were almost depleted just when it was necessary for him to take a long trip to the western United States. One of the elders of his church who was a wealthy banker came to his home to offer a word of comfort and encouragement. As he left, he slipped a piece of paper into the pastor's hand. Chapman looked at it and was surprised to find that it was a check made out to him and signed by this rich friend. But the figures to indicate the amount of the gift were missing. "Did you really mean to give me a signed blank check?" he asked. "Yes," said the man. "I didn't know how much you'd need, and I wanted to be sure you would have enough." Later Chapman commented, "While I never had to use that check, it gave me a secure feeling to know that thousands of dollars were literally at my disposal." Someone has said, "God too has given us a signed check in Philippians 4:19 to provide for every genuine need that arises in our lives."

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GRACE -- RICHES OF

1015 -- MORE TO FOLLOW

A benevolent person gave Mr. Rowland Hill a hundred pounds to dispense to a poor minister, and thinking it was too much to send him at once, Mr. Hill forwarded five pounds in a letter with simply these words within the envelope: "More to follow." In a few days time, the good man received an other letter with five pounds with the same motto: "And more to follow." A day or two after came a third, then a fourth, and still the same promise: "And more to follow." Till the whole sum had been received, the astonished minister was made familiar with the cheering words: "And more to follow."

Every blessing that comes from God is sent with the selfsame message: "And more to follow." "I forgive you your sins, but there is "more to follow." "I justify you in the righteousness of Christ, but there is more to follow." "I adopt you into my family but there is more to follow." "I educate you for Heaven, but there is more to follow." "I give you grace upon grace, but there is more to follow." "I have helped you even to old age, but there is still more to follow." "I will uphold you in the hour of death, and as you are passing into the world of spirits my mercy shall still continue with you, and when you land in the world to come, there shall still be more to follow." -- C. H. Spurgeon

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GRACE -- RICHES OF

1016 -- THE PLENTEOUSNESS OF GRACE

The philosophic Hammerton tells us the story of a woman who worked in a cotton factory in one of the great manufacturing towns in Lancashire, and who on an excursion went for the first time to the coast. When she caught the earliest glimpse of the Irish Sea, the expanse lying out before her eyes looking like the limitlessness of the ocean in its rush and roll of billows, she exclaimed, as she drew one boundless breath of freshness and glory, "At last here comes something there is enough of!" -- Dr. C. Robinson

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GRACE -- SALVATION BY

1017 -- FORGET THE REPAIRS

London businessman Lindsay Clegg told the story of a warehouse property he was selling. The building had been empty for months and needed repairs. Vandals had damaged the doors, smashed the windows, and strewn trash all over the place. As he showed a prospective buyer the property, he took pains to say that he would replace the broken windows, bring in a crew to correct any structural damage, and clean out the garbage. The buyer said, "Forget about the repairs. When I buy this place, I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building; I want the site." That's God's message to us! Compared with the renovation God has in mind, our efforts to improve our own lives are as trivial as sweeping a warehouse slated for the wrecking ball. When we become God's the old life is over. He makes all things new. All He wants is the site and the permission to build. There are still some trying to "reform," but God offers "redemption." All we have to do is give Him the "property" and He will do the necessary "building."

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GRACE -- SALVATION BY

1018 -- TOO LATE

A young fellow came forward in a Gospel meeting, earnestly asking, "What can I do to be saved?" Knowing the man thought he had to accomplish something by his own efforts to gain redemption, the Christian worker responded to the anxious inquirer, "You're too late!" "Oh, don't say that," exclaimed the distressed seeker, "I really want salvation; I'd do anything or go anywhere to obtain it." "I'm sorry," replied the other, "you're too late for that. Your salvation was completed many hundreds of years ago at Calvary. It's finished work! All you have to do is simply receive Christ. Then the blessed gift He offers will become yours through His merits. Realizing his great debt was paid, the young man found peace by looking to the Savior and resting his all upon the grace of God."

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GRACE -- SALVATION BY

1019 -- TWO MIRACLES

A big, wealthy city church had three missions. On the first Sunday of the New Year, all the members of the mission churches came to the city church for Communion. In those mission churches were some outstanding cases of conversion -- thieves, burglars, and so forth, but all knelt side by side at the Communion rail. On one such occasion, the pastor saw an erstwhile burglar kneel beside a judge of the Supreme Court of England -- the judge who had sent him to jail, where he had served seven years. After his release he was converted and became a Christian worker. Neither seemed to see the other.

After the service, the judge, walking home with the pastor, said, "Bid you notice who was kneeling beside me at the Lord's Table this morning?" "Yes," replied the pastor, "but I did not know that you noticed it." Presently the judge exclaimed, "What a miracle of grace!" "Yes, a marvelous miracle of grace," replied the pastor. "But to whom do you refer?" queried the judge. "To So-and-so," said the pastor, mentioning the name of the burglar, "I was not referring to him," said the judge; "I was thinking of myself."

"You were thinking of yourself?" "Yes, it did not cost that burglar much to get converted when he came out of jail, He had nothing but a history of crime behind him, and when he saw Jesus as his Saviour, he knew there was salvation and hope and joy for him, but look at me! I was taught from earliest infancy to live as a gentleman; that my word was to be my bond; that I was to say my prayers, go to church, take Communion, and so on. I went through Oxford, took my degrees, was called to the bar, and eventually became a judge. Man, nothing but the grace of God could have caused me to admit that I was a sinner on a level with that burglar! It was harder for me to get converted than for that burglar!" -- F. C. H. Dreyer

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GRATITUDE -- TO MEN

1020 -- TWO STRANGERS ON EARTH

The virtues were invited once
To banquet with the Lord of All;
They came -- the great ones rather grim,
And not so pleasant as the small.
They talked and chatted o'er the meal;
They even laughed with temperance glee;
And each one knew the other well,
And all were good as good could be.
Benevolence and Gratitude
Alone of all seemed strangers yet;
They stared when they were introduced;
On earth they never once had met.

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GRAVE

1021 -- HOME JUST BEYOND

I read once of a little girl whose home was near a cemetery, and in order to go to the store, she had to follow a path that led through the cemetery. But this little girl never seemed to have any sense of fear, even when she returned through the cemetery at dusk. Someone said to her, "Aren't you afraid to go through the cemetery?" "Oh, no," she replied, "I'm not afraid, for my home is just beyond." Are you afraid of the cemetery? Not if you are a Christian, and know that your Home is just beyond. -- The Biblical Echo

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GREAT COMMISSION

1022 -- HE KEPT THE MESSAGE GOING THROUGH HIMSELF

One of the more heroic stories to come out of the Korean War involved a young sergeant by the name of Gardolibov. He had been engaged in the severe fighting on Heartbreak Hill. When the shooting had subsided, a rescue team was dispatched to the area to aid the wounded. The sergeant was found dying, but they discovered something very unusual. Although his hands were paralyzed, he had clenched between his teeth the two ends of a communication wire that had broken. In that moment when one would expect his every thought and concern to be directed toward his own needs, he was still doing what he could to keep the messages going through. He was faithful unto death! Many so-called "soldiers of the cross" are put to shame by his noble example. Sad to say, when the going gets rough, the demands too great, the sacrifice too costly, or the shame of the cross too much to bear, they desert their post and flee back of the lines where it's more comfortable and secure. Some even go AWOL.

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GREAT COMMISSION

1023 -- NO OTHER PLAN

It was said of Christ that after His resurrection, when He went to heaven in victory and power, the whole angelic host came out to welcome Him. The Archangel, the head of the parade, was the spokesman. He said, "Lord, You have finished the redemptive work on the cross. Is it enough to save the world?" The Lord answered with a note of victory, the same loud cry which came from the cross, "It is finished." And He concluded by saying, "I came not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved. I shed my blood for the ransom of many." That is the plan of salvation. He gave His life that sinners might be saved. The Archangel seemed to be satisfied with the answer, but another question came up as to how the world might know of this Gospel, to

which the Lord answered, "I have told My disciples, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'" But the Archangel queried again, "The world does not know. Suppose your disciples become busy with their own work and Peter goes back to fishing or Levi goes back to the customs office and they forget to preach the Gospel. What will you do?" There was a pause. The Lord looked straight into the face of the Archangel and said with determination, "They must, for I have no other plan." -- Selected

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GREAT COMMISSION

1024 -- ORDERS FROM OUR GREAT COMMANDER

When I was working in India, I went to a place near Poona. On Saturday night, when I entered the hotel dining room, I found seated at the same table with me a naval officer, an infantry major and his wife, and a sergeant major and his wife. When the conversation started, the naval officer said: "Why don't these missionaries stay at home, and mind their own business? You can get all the converts you want at a rupee a head." I replied, "Suppose you were ordered to take your battleship to Constantinople tomorrow, and I was to ask you why you didn't stay here and mind your own business; that there was no sense in going to Constantinople." The man's eyes flashed fire as he said, "I would tell you to mind your own business. If we are ordered to go, we must go, even if every ship is sunk, and every sailor killed." I said to him, "Quite right, my friend; and I have marching orders from the Divine Government to go and preach the Gospel to every creature, and the primary question is whether I am going to obey the last command of my Lord." -- Dr. Robert P. Wilder

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GREAT COMMISSION

1025 -- WHY DIDN'T YOU HURRY?!

In coming home one night, driving across the vast prairie, I saw my little boy John hurrying to meet me. The grass was high on the prairie, and suddenly he dropped out of sight. I thought he was playing, and was simply hiding from me; but he did not appear as I expected he would. Just then the thought flashed across my mind, "There's an old well there, and he's fallen in!" I hurried up to him, reached down in the well and lifted him out; and as he looked up in my face, what do you think he said? "Oh, papa, why didn't you hurry?!" Those words never left me. They kept ringing in my ears until God put a new and deeper meaning into them, and bade me think of souls without God and without hope in this world; and from that vast throng a pitiful, despairing, pleading, cry rolled into my soul, "Oh, why didn't you hurry?!"

* * *

GREED

1026 -- WIFE, HAD WE OWNED THESE

In the other years, a capitalist came up to death's door. Commanded he of his wife who stood at his bedside, "Wife, bring me the strong box!" Obeying his behest, she brought to the dying man the safety box in which his stocks and bonds reposed. Fumbling at the lock, he opened the box. Clutching the stocks and bonds, with a tenacious, icy death-grip, he exclaimed, with ghoulish glee, "Wife, had we owned these on the day of our wedding, the State of Georgia would be ours today!" Then, he fell back on his pillow, a lifeless corpse! The condemning words of the rich fool's Judge need no explanation: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!...So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Lk. 12:20-21) -- Dr. T. W. Callaway

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GREED -- MISERY OF

1027 -- SPITEFUL GIFTS

There's an old legend about a greedy man and an envious man who were walking along when they were overtaken by a stranger who got to know them. And after a bit he said, as he departed from them, that he would give each of them a gift. Whoever made a wish first would get what he wanted, and the other would get a double portion of what the first had asked for. The greedy man knew what he wanted, but he was afraid to make his wish because he wanted the double portion for himself and didn't want the other to get it. And the envious man felt the same way, and he was also unwilling to wish first. After a while the stronger of the two grabbed the other by the throat and said he would choke him to death unless he made his wish. And at that the other man said, "Very well. I make my wish -- I wish to be made blind in one eye." Immediately he lost the sight of one eye, and his companion went blind in both. In this coming year, be careful of greed and envy.

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GREED -- MISERY OF

1028 -- THAT FOR WHICH SHE GRASPED

In his book "Feminine Faces," Clovis Chappel wrote that when the Roman city of Pompeii was being excavated, the body of a woman was found mummified by the volcanic ashes of Mount Vesuvius. Her position told a tragic story. Her feet pointed toward the city gate, but her outstretched arms and fingers were straining for something that lay behind her. The treasure for which she was grasping was a bag of pearls.

Chappel said, "Though death was hard at her heels, and life was beckoning to her beyond the city gates, she could not shake off their spell -- But it was not the eruption of Vesuvius that made her love pearls more than life. It only froze her in this attitude of greed."

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GROWTH -- SPIRITUAL

1029 -- BETTER THAN BEING SAVED

John Gilmour, a godly Britisher who loved to witness for Christ, always carried gospel books to give to people as he had opportunity.

One day Gilmour was walking in a little village when he came across an old Irishman selling lids, kettles, and saucepans. Gilmour greeted the man, "Good morning, how is business today?" "Oh," said the Irishman, "I cannot complain."

Then Gilmour said, "What a grand thing it is to be saved!" The old man looked intently at him and replied, "I know something better than that." "Better than being saved? I would like to know what that is." With a warm smile, the man responded, "The companionship of the One who saved me, sir."

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GROWTH -- SPIRITUAL

1030 -- FORMULA FOR SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

If you want to be distressed -- look within. If you want to be defeated -- look back. If you want to be distracted -- look around. If you want to be dismayed -- look ahead. If you want to be delivered -- look up!

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GROWTH -- SPIRITUAL

1031 -- YOU CAN'T GET ANY BIGGER AND I CAN!

Sir Edmund Hillary, who attempted to scale Mount Everest, lost one of the members of his team in the failed effort. He returned to a hero's welcome in London, England, where a banquet held in his honor was attended by the lords and ladies and powerful people of the British Empire. Behind the speakers' platform were huge blown-up photographs of Mount Everest. When Hillary arose to receive the acclaim of the distinguished audience, he turned around and faced the mountain and said, "Mount Everest, you have defeated me. But I will return. And I will defeat you. Because you can't get any bigger and I can." -- Robert Schuller

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GUIDANCE

1032 -- KILLING THE GUIDE

Sir Samuel Baker relates the following incident: "Many years ago, when the Egyptian troops first conquered Nubia, a regiment was destroyed by thirst in crossing the Nubian desert. The men, being upon a limited allowance of water, suffered from extreme thirst; and, deceived by the appearance of a mirage that exactly resembled a beautiful lake, they insisted on being taken to its banks by the Arab guide. It was in vain that the guide assured them that the lake was unreal, and he refused to lose the precious time by wandering from his course. Words led to blows, and he was killed by the soldiers, whose lives depended upon his guidance.

The whole regiment turned from the track and rushed toward the welcome waters. Thirsty and faint, over the burning sands they hurried; heavier and heavier their footsteps became; hotter and hotter their breath as deeper they pushed into the desert, farther and farther from the lost track, where the pilot lay in his blood. Still the mocking spirits of the desert, the afreets of the mirage, led them on, and the lake glistening in the sunshine, tempted them to bathe in its cool waters, close to their eyes, but never at their lips.

At length the delusion vanished -- the fatal lake had turned to burning sand! Raging thirst and horrible despair! The pathless desert and the murdered guide! Lost! Lost! All lost! Not a man ever left the desert, but they were subsequently discovered -- parched and withered corpses -- by the Arabs sent upon the search."

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GUIDANCE

1033 -- WHY THE COMPASS WAS WRONG

A big steamer went upon the rocks and was totally wrecked. No storm was prevailing at the time, and the wonder was that the captain, who was a skilled and experienced officer, would have been careless enough to let his boat go so far from the course. No one was more surprised than the captain, who could find no way in which to explain the accident, until it occurred to him to examine the compass. He found in the box something that looked like the point of a steel knife blade. The day before, in trying to remove a spot of rust while cleaning the compass, a sailor had broken off a bit of the point of the blade of his knife.

This bit was not a quarter of an inch long, but by drawing the needle far enough away from its true direction to mislead the man at the wheel, it wrecked a vessel that was three hundred feet long. The knife that was broken was not worth fifty cents, but it destroyed a vessel worth \$500,000.

Like this bit of steel drawing the magnetic needle away from its proper pointing with such momentous results, is many a word and deed uttered or performed, perhaps thoughtlessly with no evil intent, but the influence of which, ever increasing in power, wrecks lives, and dashes souls upon the rocks of eternal woe! How solemn is life! It is made up of little things which are the turning points in our lives, or the lives of others at the parting of the ways. -- Herald and Presbyter

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GUIDANCE -- DIVINE

1034 -- FOLLOW GOD'S CHART, NOT INTUITION

In his book *A Thirst for God*, Sherwood Wirt tells of serving briefly as the quartermaster of the *Teal*, an 80 foot patrol boat belonging to the Alaska Game Commission. He was at the helm when Captain Cole took over briefly and changed their course north toward Juneau. He pointed to the compass reading and told Wirt, "Steady as she goes!"

As the ship cruised along, Wirt noted that they seemed to be edging toward the mainland, so he altered the course slightly and steered the *Teal* straight up the channel. In a few minutes Captain Cole came on the bridge and snapped. "You're off course! Go back to the reading I gave you." Wirt said, "My dead reckoning had led me to believe one thing, but the chart indicated something else. Following my intuition might have led to shipwreck."

The Bible is God's chart. Life's hazards are clearly marked. So are the channels of safety.

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GUIDANCE -- DIVINE

1035 -- HE SEES BEYOND THE FOG AND DARKNESS

"Our vessel when nearing port, just after the pilot came on board, was enveloped in a dense fog: the pilot was able to guide her safely by going to the masthead where he could see over the fog. All his orders to those on deck were instantly obeyed. Is it not so with Christ?"

Hidden
From our sight,
He above our lower darkness
Stands in light:

Hark! His words fall clear and cheery
On the ear
"I can see beyond the darkness;
Never fear."

-- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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GUIDANCE -- DIVINE

1036 -- HOW A CHINESE FOUND GOD

One evening an elderly Chinese said to the great missionary, Hudson Taylor, "Are you a foreigner?" "Yes, I am an Englishman." "Are there books in that bag on the table?" "Yes, there are." "Are you a teacher of a foreign religion?" "Yes; of the Jesus religion." The Chinese then told Taylor that for many years he had been a seeker after truth but could find no religion that could take the burden of guilt from his soul. A few nights before he had had a vision of a man in white who had told him to go into Hangchow, that there he would find a foreigner sitting in an inn with a bag of books on the table before him, that he had visited inn after inn that day, but had found no such person. Finally, he had heard of this inn in the suburb...and as a last hope had entered it.

The missionary then preached the Gospel to him and gave him a New Testament. Two days later he visited his home and found that he had destroyed all his idols and was rejoicing in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Hudson Taylor parted from the man, adoring God, not only for His power to save, but also for His marvelous and miraculous way of leading souls to the messenger and the message of the Gospel. -- C. E. McCartney

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GUIDANCE -- DIVINE

1037 -- SOMETHING BETTER AHEAD

I once saw a drove of sheep looking very tired and weary being hurried on by a shepherd and his dogs, and when they wanted to stop and drink at a brook by the wayside they were not allowed to but driven on. I felt that it was very unkind of that shepherd; but by and by they stopped before a pair of handsome gates and the flocks were turned into beautiful, grass pastures with a clear stream running through them. Then I knew that I had been hasty; that the shepherd had not been unkind but kind in not allowing his sheep to drink from the muddy stream in the road, for he had been saving them and taking them on to something better. So with our heavenly Father, our Shepherd; He is compelled to deny us some times while leading us unto better things. -- Moody

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GUIDANCE -- DIVINE

1038 -- THE MIGRATION OF THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

It is not uncommon to witness in late summer the migration of the monarch butterfly. The careful observer may see hundreds of them clinging to tree limbs and other shrubbery as the flock rests up on their journey to a remote mountain site in central Mexico. Scientists have recently found 16 of these sites, ranging from 1 to 10 acres each, within a 100-mile radius where millions upon millions of butterflies from North America spend the winter. No one knows how butterflies find their way to these tiny plots of land. Each new generation that migrates has never been there before. Something programmed into their tiny bodies directs them to a place they have never seen, but which they somehow know they must find. These butterflies are one more example of God's

creatures being drawn along by the mind of their Creator. They are also illustrative of the children of God referred to in Hebrews 11. These heroes of faith walked roads they had not consciously mapped out, following an inner leading to a land they'd never seen -- a land prepared for them by God.

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GUILT

1039 -- FREEDOM THROUGH ADMISSION OF GUILT

The story is told that one day Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, visited a prison and talked with each of the inmates. There were endless tales of innocence, of misunderstood motives, and of exploitation. Finally the king stopped at the cell of a convict who remained silent. "Well," remarked Frederick, "I suppose you are an innocent victim too?" "No, sir, I'm not," replied the man. "I'm guilty and deserve my punishment." Turning to the warden, the king said, "Here, release this rascal before he corrupts all these fine innocent people in here!"

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GUILT

1040 -- FREEDOM THROUGH CONFESSION OF GUILT

I have heard that a great English prince went to visit a famous king of Spain. The prince was taken down to the galleys to see the men who were chained to the oars and doomed to be slaves for life. The King of Spain promised, in honor of the prince's visit, that he would set free any one of these men that the prince might choose. So the prince went to one prisoner and said: "My poor fellow, I am sorry to see you in this plight; how came you here?" "Ah, sire," he answered, "false witnesses gave evidence against me; I am suffering wrongfully." "Indeed," said the prince, and passed on to the next man. "My poor fellow, I am sorry to see you here; how did it happen?" "Sire, I certainly did wrong but not to any great extent I ought not to be here." "Indeed," said the prince, and he went on to others who told him similar tales.

At last he came to one prisoner who said: "Sire, I am often thankful that I am here, for I am sorry to own that if I had received my due I should have been executed. I am certainly guilty of all that was laid to my charge and my severest punishment is just." The prince replied wittily to him, "It is a pity that such a guilty wretch as you are should be chained among these innocent men, and therefore I will set you free. -- C. H. Spurgeon

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GUILT

1041 -- GUILT SMOTHERS TRUE FAITH

In May of 1983 Charlotte Huddelston died after breathing argon gas mistakenly pumped into the oxygen system at Fort McLellen's Noble Army Hospital -- making her the third victim of the mix-up. Apparently the five-foot white tank of odorless, non-toxic argon resembled those that usually contained oxygen. Although the argon didn't poison anyone, it displaced the oxygen supply and suffocated its victims.

That pretty much describes the power guilt has to smother a believer's spiritual vitality.

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GUILT -- CONVICTION OF SIN

1042 -- OUR FATHER

In a state of unbelief, a man in Providence, Rhode Island began to pray. In this state it occurred to him that he could say the Lord's prayer. So he began, "Our Father which art in heaven." He said as soon as he uttered the words, he was convicted of his hypocrisy in calling God his Father. When he added the petition, "Hallowed be thy name, " he said it almost shocked him. He saw that he was not sincere, that his words did not at all express the state of his mind. He did not care to have God's name hallowed. Then he uttered the next petition, "Thy kingdom come." Upon this, he said, he almost choked. He saw that he did not want the kingdom of God to come; that it was hypocritical of him to say so, and that he could not say it, as really expressing the sincere desire of his heart. And then came the petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." He said his heart rose up against that, and he could not say it. Here he was brought face to face with the will of God.

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GUILT -- CONVICTION OF SIN

1043 -- THE FALSE PEACE OF SIN

G.F. Pentecost told of a man in great distress who came to see him at an evangelistic meeting. He was under deep conviction and was frantic with the terror of a conscience that was continually condemning him. He was also very angry with D.L. Moody who had preached the week before, and with Pentecost himself. "I wish you and Moody had never come to this city!" he shouted with a terrible oath. "Before you came, I wasn't troubled about my sins. You talk of peace and joy, but you have turned my soul into a living hell. I can't stay away from the meetings, and to come to them only makes me worse. You promise salvation, but all I find is torment. I wish you would leave, then I'd get back my old peace."

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THE END