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

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LABOR

1386 -- CAST IN A LINE FOR YOURSELF

A poor, hungry man stood idly on a bridge watching some fishermen. Seeing one of them with a basket full of fish by his side, he said, "if I had a catch like that, I'd be happy. I'd sell it and buy some food and clothes." "I'll give you that many fish if you do a small favor for me," said the fisherman. "What do you want me to do?" came the reply. "Just tend this line a while. I've got some business down the street." Gladly the young man accepted the offer. After the man left, the trout and bass continued snapping greedily at the baited hook. Soon he lost all his depression in the excitement of pulling in a large number of fish. When the angler returned, he said to the young man, "I'll keep my promise to you by giving you everything you've caught. And I hope you've learned a lesson. You mustn't waste time daydreaming and merely wishing for things. Instead, get busy and cast in a line for yourself."

* * *

LABOR

1387 -- PERSEVERANCE IN LABOR

One of the major components of genius seems to be hard work. Noah Webster worked 36 years on his Dictionary, while Gibbon labored 26 years on his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. When Milton was writing Paradise Lost, he rose at 4:00 a.m. every morning to begin work. Plato wrote the first sentence of the Republic nine different times before it was acceptable to him.

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LABOR

1388 -- REAL TREASURE

An old farmer who was about to die called his two sons to his bedside and said, "My boys, my farm and the fields are yours in equal shares. I leave you a little ready money but the bulk of my wealth is hidden somewhere in the ground, not more than eighteen inches from the surface. I regret that I've forgotten precisely where it lies." When the old man was dead and buried his two sons set to work to dig up every inch of ground in order to find the buried treasure. They failed to find it but as they'd gone to all the trouble of turning over the soil they thought they might as well sow a crop, which they did, reaping a good harvest. In autumn as soon as they had an opportunity they dug for the treasure again but with no better results. As their fields were turned over more thoroughly than any others in the neighborhood they reaped better harvests than anyone else. Year after year their search continued. Only when they had grown much older and wiser did they realize what their father had meant. Real treasure comes as a result of hard work.

* * *

LEGACY -- OF CHRIST

1389 -- CHRIST'S LEGACY TO US IS HIS PEACE

An American soldier lay mortally wounded on the battlefield. An officer asked, "Can I do something for you?" "Nothing -- nothing, thank you," replied the wounded soldier. "Shall I go and get you a little water?" asked the officer. "No, thank you; I am dying" was the reply. "Isn't there anything I can do? Cannot I sit down and write a letter to your friends?" "I have no friends you can write to. There is one thing I would be much obliged to you for," said the dying soldier. "In my haversack, yonder, you will find a Testament. Will you open it? Will you be so good as to turn to the fourteenth chapter of John? -- and near the end you will find a verse that begins with `Peace.'" The officer turned to the fourteenth chapter of John and read: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "Thank you sir," said the dying soldier; "thank you sir. I have that peace -- I am going to that Savior." After giving this testimony, in a few moments he was across the line of worlds into Eternity! (Dictionary of Illustrations)

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LEGALISM

1390 -- FOLLOWING THE LETTER, BUT NOT THE INTENT

Legalism fulfills the precise letter at the expense of failing to perform the intention of the Law. The following illustrates how precise obedience can entirely miss the intent of what has been asked of us:

A businessman was checking out of his hotel when he realized his briefcase was missing. "Boy," he said to the bellhop, "run up to room 1484 and see if I left my briefcase there. And hurry. I'm late leaving for the airport." The man waited anxiously. Finally, the bellhop came running up and panted, "Yes, it's still there."

* * *

LEGALISM

1391 -- INTERPRETING THE CROSS WRONGLY

Louis XII, of France, had many enemies before he ascended to the throne. When he became king, he caused a list to be made of his persecutors, and marked against each of their names a large black cross. When this became known, the enemies of the King fled, because they thought it was a sign that he intended to punish them. But the King, hearing of their fears, caused them to be recalled, with an assurance of pardon, and said that he had put a cross beside each name to remind him of the cross of Christ, that he might endeavor to follow the example of Him who had prayed for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." -- Children's Friend

It is not only sinners who misinterpret the goodness of God. Too often, legalists preach the message of the cross as if it shall be Christ's means of destroying all who do not line up to their views and notions. While supposedly preaching the gospel, they convey a message of death instead of a message of forgiveness through the cross of Christ. -- Duane V. Maxey

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LEGALISM

1392 -- ITS HEARTLESS CHALLENGE DEFEATED BY HEAVEN'S LOVE

There was a very capable evangelist whom God used in a significant way in the British Isles. But he lost his interest in spiritual things and drifted into a life of sin, for a number of months. Some of his sin was done in secret but ultimately, it became public knowledge and even made the headlines. At first, all he could think of was that he had been ruined for life, but, finally, he realized what a fool he had been, and he came back to God like the prodigal from the pigpen.

He found exactly the same thing the prodigal did. The Lord welcomed him with open arms and began to strengthen him and bless him. Finally, after a period of waiting, he felt pressed back

into a public ministry for the Lord. He was afraid that his sin would be found out and brought up all over again, but after he felt sure it was hidden and tucked away in the past, he went back to preaching, rejoicing in the forgiveness of God.

One night, when he was in Aberdeen, he was given a sealed letter. Just before the service began, he read the unsigned letter. It described a shameful series of events he had been engaged in. His stomach churned as he read it. The letter said, "If you have the gall to preach tonight, I'll stand and expose you." He took that letter and went to his knees. A few minutes later, he was in the pulpit. He began his message by reading the letter, from start to finish. Then he said, "I want to make it clear that this letter is perfectly true. I'm ashamed of what I've read, and what I've done. I come tonight, not as one who is perfect, but as one who is forgiven." God used that letter and the rest of his ministry as a magnet to draw people to Jesus Christ. -- Gary Inrig

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LEGALISM

1393 -- LEGALISM IS AN ANCIENT SIN

Legalism is rooted in the nature of unsanctified men. Therefore, it is manifested throughout both religious and secular history. In this regard, consider point six below:

The Roman philosopher and statesman, Cicero, said this some 2,000 years ago, and it is still true. The six mistakes of man:

1. The delusion that personal gain is made by crushing others.
2. The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected.
3. Insisting that a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it.
4. Refusing to set aside trivial preferences.
5. Neglecting development and refinement of the mind, and not acquiring the habit of reading and study.
6. Attempting to compel others to believe as we do.

* * *

LEGALISM

1394 -- ONE LAST WON'T DO FOR ALL

There lived in Berlin a shoemaker who had a habit of speaking harshly of all who did not feel exactly as he did about religion. The old pastor heard of this, and felt that he must give him a

lesson; so he sent for the shoemaker, and said to him: "Master, take my measure for a pair of boots." "With pleasure, your reverence," answered the shoemaker. "Please take off your boot." The clergyman did so, and the shoemaker took his measure, and prepared to leave the room. "Stay," said the pastor, my son also requires a pair of boots." "I will make them with pleasure, your reverence. Can I take the young gentleman's measure?" "It is not necessary," said the pastor. "The lad is fourteen, but you can make my boots and his from the same last."

"Your reverence, that will never do," said the shoemaker, with a smile of surprise. "I can't do it." "It must be on the same last." "But, your reverence, it is not possible, if the boots are to fit," said the shoemaker, thinking to himself that the old pastor's wits were leaving him. "Ah, then, Master Shoemaker," said the clergyman, "every pair of boots must be made on their own last if they are to fit; and yet you think that God is to form all Christians exactly according to your own last -- of the same measure and growth in religion as yourself. That will not do either." --
Dictionary Of Illustrations

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LEGALISM

1395 -- THE FALSE LIMITS OF LEGALISM

There's a wideness in Gods mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice
Which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

But we make His love too narrow
By false limits of our own,
And we magnify His strictness
With a zeal He will not own.

-- R. F. Horton

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LEGALISM

1396 -- THE JUST DUE OF LEGALISTS

A bishop said to Louis XI of France, "Make an iron cage for all those who do not think as we do, an iron cage in which the captive can neither lie down nor stand straight up." It was

fashioned, the awful instrument of punishment. After a while, the bishop offended Louis XI, and for fourteen years he was in that same cage and could neither lie down nor stand up. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." -- Rev. W. W. Landrum

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LEGALISM

1397 -- WESLEY HANDLES A LEGALISTIC REMARK

Wesley and a preacher of his were once invited to lunch with a gentleman after service. The itinerant was a man of very plain manners. While talking with their host's daughter, who was remarkable for her beauty and who had been profoundly impressed by Wesley's preaching, this good man noticed that she wore a number of rings. During a pause in the meal he took hold of the young lady's hand, and, raising it, called Wesley's attention to the sparkling gems. "What do you think of this, sir," said he, "for a Methodist hand?" The girl turned crimson. The question was extremely awkward for Wesley, whose aversion to all display of jewelry was so well known. With a quiet, benevolent smile, he looked up and simply said, "The hand is very beautiful." The young lady appeared at evening worship without her jewels, and became a firm and decided Christian. -- The Pilgrim Holiness Advocate

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LEVITY

1398 -- CLOWNING -- NO CURE FOR DISCOURAGEMENT

In 1835 a man visited a doctor in Florence, Italy. He was filled with anxiety and exhausted from lack of sleep. He couldn't eat, and he avoided his friends. The doctor examined him and found that he was in prime physical condition. Concluding that his patient needed to have a good time, the physician told him about a circus in town and its star performer, a clown named Grimaldi. Night after night he had the people rolling in the aisles. "You must go and see him," the doctor advised. "Grimaldi is the world's funniest clown. He'll make you laugh and cure your sadness." "No," replied the despairing man, "he can't help me. You see, I am Grimaldi!"

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LIBERALITY -- BENEFICENCE

1399 -- STRETCHING THE SOUL

"I was just a child," related a retired Baptist preacher, "when one spring day my father called me to go with him to old man Russell's blacksmith shop. He had left a rake and a hoe to be repaired and they were ready, fixed like new. Father handed over a silver dollar for repairing them but Mr. Russell refused to take it. 'No,' he said, 'there's no charge for that little job.' But

father insisted. And if I live a thousand years," said the preacher, "I'll never forget that great blacksmith's reply. 'Sid,' he said to my father, 'Can't you let a man do somethin' just to stretch his soul?'" (Pro. 11:24)

* * *

LIBERTY

1400 -- CONSTITUTIONAL HYPOCRISY

A number of zoning cases have affected the right of worship in private homes. In Colorado Springs, minister Richard Blanche has been repeatedly cited for holding religious meetings in his home in violation of a city zoning ordinance. In Fairhaven, Massachusetts, local zoning official ruled that Bible studies were home occupations and therefore prohibited under the town's property-use ordinances. In Los Angeles, officials ruled that home-occupancy regulations forbade orthodox Jews from holding prayer meetings in their homes. As civil liberties lawyers could not help but note in a Stratford, Connecticut case, prayer in home Bible studies is penalized while Tupperware parties enjoy the full protection of the Constitution.

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LIBERTY -- IN CHRIST, INCREASES

1401 -- THE INCREASE OF LIBERTY IN CHRIST

2 Cor 3:17-18 "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty -- But we are changed..by the Spirit.." The increase of our liberty in Christ does not come because the world around us, or sin, has changed, but because "we are changed".

Let me illustrate this: A baby is born into a home, and as that child changes and matures, while the dangers around the child remain the same, the parents give that child increasing liberty. Let the hot stove in the living room and the various hazards in that child's environment represent the dangers of sin:

First, the child has Crib Liberty, which is practically none at all. Next, the child has Playpen Liberty as he or she grows and changes. But as junior grows even more, so that he can climb over the slats of the playpen, instead of building higher sides on his protective prison to keep him from touching the hot stove, you give him greater liberty.

Third, the child receives Room Liberty -- can crawl or toddle around the room. You spank the hand if there is an attempt to touch the hot stove, and you teach your child how to avoid, by choice, that which is hazardous. Next, the child is given House Liberty as the growing up process has increased his or her ability to handle that increased liberty.

Later, the child receives Property Liberty, which is followed by Neighborhood Liberty and Area Liberty. Continuing to change and mature, your child is given Town Liberty, and somewhere

in the teen-age you grant Car and Vicinity Liberty. Finally, when that child has become legally of age, you give him or her Total Liberty, and that's when you kick `em out and insist that they pretty much shift for themselves.

Do you get the picture? Never do the hazards around your child change, and never does your basic concern for your child's safety change, but as the child changes and matures you grant increasing liberty. This is not only proper, but necessary for the good of your child. Translate this into the spiritual real and we should realize that it is God's will for us to "go forth and grow up" (Malachi) so as to be able to make moral distinctions with God alone as our guide. -- Duane V. Maxey

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LIBERTY -- IN CHRIST, LOVE-BOUGHT

1402 -- CURFEW MUST NOT RING TONIGHT

A poem by Rose Hartwick Thorpe, entitled "Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight," beautifully illustrates this. During the time when Oliver Cromwell ruled England, a young soldier named Basil Underwood was found guilty of some offense and sentenced to die at the sounding of the evening curfew. Bessie, the young woman he was soon to have married, passionately interceded for his life, even to Cromwell himself, but all to no avail. Finally, in loving desperation she went to the old, deaf sexton who was to toll the huge bell which would sound Basil's death-knell. As "Old Curfew," the sexton, made his way to the church where he had faithfully rung that bell for many years, Bessie tried to persuade him not to ring the bell that night:

Slowly England's sun was setting oe'r the hilltops far away,
Filling all the land with beauty at the close of one sad day;
And its last rays kissed the forehead of a man and maiden fair,--
He with steps so slow and weary; she with sunny, floating hair;
He with bowed head, sad and thoughtful, she, with lips all cold and white,
Struggling to keep back the murmur, "Curfew must not ring to-night!"

"Sexton," Bessie's white lips faltered, pointing to the prison old,
With its walls tall and gloomy, moss-grown walls dark, damp and cold,--
"I've a lover in the prison, doomed this very night to die
At the ringing of the curfew, and no earthly help is nigh.
Cromwell will not come till sunset;" and her lips grew strangely white,
As she spoke in husky whispers, "Curfew must not ring to-night!"

"Bessie," calmly spoke the sexton (every word pierced her young heart
Like a gleaming death-winged arrow, like a deadly poisoned dart),
"Long, long years I've rung the curfew from that gloomy, shadowed tower;
Every evening, just at sunset, it has tolled the twilight hour.
I have done my duty ever, tried to do it just and right:
Now I'm old, I will not miss it. Curfew bell must ring to-night!"

Wild her eyes and pale her features, stern and white her thoughtful brow,
As within her secret bosom, Bessie made a solemn vow.
She had listened while the judges read, without a tear or sigh,
"At the ringing of the curfew, Basil Underwood must "die.
And her breath came fast and faster, and her eyes grew large and bright;
One low murmur, faintly spoken. "Curfew must not ring to-night!"

She with quick step bounded forward, sprang within the old church-door,
Left the old man coming slowly, paths he'd trod so oft before.
Not one moment paused the maiden, but with eye and cheek aglow,
Staggered up the gloomy tower, where the bell swung to and fro;
As she climbed the slimy ladder, on which fell no ray of light,
Upward still, her pale lips saying, "Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

She has reached the topmost ladder, o'er her hangs the great dark bell;
Awful is the gloom beneath her, like the pathway down to hell.
See! the ponderous tongue is swinging; 'tis the hour of curfew now,
And the sight has chilled her bosom, stopped her breath, and paled her brow.
Shall she let it ring? No, never! Her eyes flash with sudden light,
As she springs, and grasps it firmly: "Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

(Clinging to the ponderous tongue, Bessie muffled its sound with her hands as she hung
suspended beneath the bell swinging to and fro.)

Out she swung,-- far out. The city seemed a speck of light below,--
There twixt heaven and earth suspended, as the bell swung to and fro.
And the sexton at the bell-rope, old and deaf, heard not the bell,
Sadly thought that twilight curfew rang young Basil's funeral knell.
"Still the maiden, clinging firmly, quivering lip and fair face white,
Stilled her frightened heart's wild throbbing: "Curfew shall not ring tonight!"

It was o'er, the bell ceased swaying; and the maiden stepped once more
Firmly on the damp old ladder, where, for hundred years before,
Human foot had not been planted. The brave deed that she had done
Should be told long ages after. As the rays of setting sun
Light the sky with golden beauty, aged sires, with heads of white,
Tell the children why the curfew did not ring that one sad night.

O'er the distant hills comes Cromwell. Bessie sees him; and her brow,
Lately white with sickening horror, has no anxious traces now.
At his feet she tells her story, shows her hands, all bruised and torn;
And her sweet young face, still haggard, with the anguish it had worn,
Touched his heart with sudden pity, lit his eyes with misty light.
"Go! your lover lives," said Cromwell. "Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

Wide they flung the massive portals, led the prisoner forth to die,
All his bright young life before him. Neath the darkening English sky,
Bessie came, with flying footsteps, eyes aglow with lovelight sweet;
Kneeling on the turf beside him, laid his pardon at his feet.
In his brave, strong arms he clasped her, kissed the face upturned and white,
Whispered, "Darling, you have saved me, curfew will not ring to-night."

Like Justice, deaf to mercy's plea, the old sexton did what law demanded. Like Jesus, Who muffled in His hands on the cross, the death-knell of our eternal doom, Bessie did what love designed to save the one she loved. And, like Basil, whose liberty was love-bought, we all, though totally unworthy, may escape the just Curfew of Eternal Death through Jesus' death in our behalf. --
Duane V. Maxey

* * *

LIBERTY -- IN CHRIST, NOT LAWLESS

1403 -- LIBERTY AND LAW ARE UNITED

"..being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.." 1 Cor 9:21 It is a dangerous error to think that Christians are without law, free to do as they choose while living in the liberty of Christ. Christ did not come to destroy the moral Law by His grace. He came to fulfill that Law in us! Former President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said: "A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both." Your liberty in Christ is based upon the law of God which is written upon the pages of the Bible and upon the fleshly tables of your heart.

We cannot treasure our liberty and privileges in Christ and trash the law and principles of God from whence those freedoms spring. If we value the former and violate the latter we, of necessity, forfeit both. In my humble opinion, a prime example of those who have made the fatal mistake of treasuring liberties while trashing the laws upon which they stand is the ACLU -- American Civil Liberties Union. They represent an increasingly prevalent attitude in our nation which threatens not only the loss of our laws, but the loss of our political liberty as well, for law and liberty are Siamese twins which never survive when they are severed from one another. --
Duane V. Maxey

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LIBERTY -- LIMITATIONS OF

1404 -- PERSONAL LIBERTY

Sages of old contended that no sin was ever committed whose consequences rested on the head of the sinner alone; that no man could do ill and his fellows not suffer. They illustrate it thus:

A vessel sailing from Joppa carried a passenger who, beneath his berth, cut a hole through the ships side. When the men of the watch expostulated with him, "What doest thou, O miserable

man?" the offender calmly replied: "What matters it to you? The hole I have made lies under my own berth!"

Manasseh's wickedness brought suffering and retribution upon the whole nation of Judah. --
C. H. Spurgeon

* * *

LIFE -- PRECIOUS

1405 -- HIS OWN FUNERAL MARCH

When Napoleon flung his troops across the Alps, and they were climbing their way over the snowy peaks to the sunlit plains of Italy, a most pathetic incident took place. A little drummer-boy was caught by a sliding avalanche on the mountain and shot into the crevasse. Unhurt, he found himself on the ledge. Far above him was the winding host going zigzag up the mountain. The soldiers who had witnessed the accident looked back, but they dared not turn aside; it was "Onward!"

The little lad commenced to play on his drum the relief call, and they heard him. Many a father in that French army, I think, wished there would come orders to relieve the lad; and then, as they wound out of sight and again came into view, they heard the appeal on the drum. Napoleon was told what had happened, but what was a little drummer-boy to him? What was a little drummer-boy to the great host that he was leading over the Alps, and he would not give the order to save the lad. "March on!"

The lad noticed the forms of his comrades getting fainter and fainter, and when he saw that there was to be no rescue, that he had to lie down and die, they heard him stop the relief call on his drum. A few minutes he waited, and then they heard him beating his own funeral march. The veterans in that army wept. They wept, and as they told of it by the campfires years after, they wept again. The lad beat his own funeral march; he had to lie down and die. There was no rescue, no hope, nothing but despair and death.

Aye, but that is not the story of the Cross. There is a funeral march being played from the judgment hall, and on the cross out side the city; and when I tell you that Jesus Christ died, the real Son of God, the substitute for us, there is life as a result of the funeral march. There is joy, and there is gladness, come from the death of Christ. -- John Robertson

The life of each one is precious to our great Commander, even the life of the most insignificant "drummer-boy" in His army. Still, each of us should stand ready to die, when by our death Christ's eternal purposes march forward, unhindered by us. -- Duane V. Maxey

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LIFE -- PRECIOUS

1406 -- ONE-HUNDREDTH OF AN INCH FROM DEATH

While visiting a space exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., Great Britain's Princess Anne was introduced to Neil Armstrong. During her tour she noticed a display of astronauts' space suits. Turning to Armstrong, she asked, "Is there any danger of a rip?" The one who had taken great risks in being the first to walk on the moon replied, "Yes, the difference between life and death up there is only about one-hundredth of an inch..!"

The same is true down here on earth -- a very fine line separates life from death, time from eternity.

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LIFE -- PURPOSE OF

1407 -- A PSALM OF LIFE

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest;
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Finds us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, -- act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;--

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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LIFE -- PURPOSE OF

1408 -- VICTIMS OF VANITY

Some men die by shrapnel,
Some go down in flames.
But most men perish inch by inch
Playing little games.

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LIFE -- SPIRITUAL

1409 -- HARDLY HEARTILY

"Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." Ephesians 5:14 The following notice was posted on the bulletin board in a business office: "The management regrets that it has come to their attention that workers dying on the job are failing to fall down. This practice must stop, as it becomes impossible to distinguish between death and the natural movement of the staff. Any employee found dead in an upright position will be dropped from the payroll."

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LIFE -- SPIRITUAL

1410 -- LACKING ONE THING

A young artist had toiled and struggled in his work upon a piece of statuary, until at last the block of marble which held his thoughts imprisoned had given way to the statue of an angel which appeared quite perfect to the beholder. The young artist wished the criticism of those of greater renown than himself, so he sent an invitation to Michael Angelo among others. The young artist had hidden himself behind a screen, and wanted to hear the criticism of his friends without being seen. When Angelo came to look the work over most carefully he was heard to say to one of his friends standing near: "It lacks one thing." The poor artist was well nigh brokenhearted as he heard this criticism. He hurried away from his studio and refused either to eat or to sleep, and at last one of his friends made his way into Angelo's presence to ask what it was that the statue lacked. "Man," said Angelo, "it lacks only life. If it had only life, it would have been perfect as God Himself could have made it." This is the picture of the man who is without Christ. He has many things to commend himself to the world; his disposition may be good, and his character may be beautiful, but if he lacks eternal life, he lacks everything. -- J. Wilbur Chapman

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LIFE -- SPIRITUAL

1411 -- NO ROOM FOR WEEDS

An elderly man who grew an amazing amount of food in a small garden said, "I have little trouble with weeds because I leave them no room. I fill the ground with healthy vegetables. I tried this formula a few years ago when I found the weeds outgrowing my impatience in a 5x5 area. After pulling out the weeds, I added another box of flowers and watered them well. I had to uproot a few weeds, but the flowers soon took over, leaving no room for unsightly vegetation.

This formula works not only in horticulture but is also effective in keeping sins of the flesh out of our lives. Paul put it like this: "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). -- Daily Bread

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LIFE -- SPIRITUAL

1412 -- SOMETHING NEEDED INSIDE

I heard of a poor, half-witted fellow whose companion, working beside him, dropped dead. He was found trying to hold up the dead man, trying to make him stand and sit upright. Finding his effort without avail, he was saying to himself, "He needs something inside him."

I suspect that is the reason we live at a poor dying rate. We need a living Spirit within to control and uphold us. -Sunday School Times

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LIFE -- TESTED BY THE LORD

1413 -- A FLIMSY FOUNDATION DISCOVERED

When workmen began to renovate Theater London in London, Ontario, they were determined to save the theater's greatest glory -- its splendid proscenium arch with its hand-painted murals of frolicking nymphs. During the project's early stages they discovered that one side of the arch was supported by nothing more than a broken brick standing on loose sand. A steel support was hastily erected before the arch collapsed! Many a life, if examined, would be found to have just as flimsy foundations. The Lord Jesus taught concerning the danger of building life on the sand. When the storm of judgment blows, such a life will not stand the test.

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LIFE -- TESTED BY THE LORD

1414 -- A SMALL PLOT WITH LARGE PRODUCTION

Early in my ministry, I met a man named Worrall. He had been stricken with rheumatoid arthritis at age 15, and when I met him 30 years later, he was totally paralyzed except for 1 finger, could barely speak and was totally blind. But he had a string tied to that one mobile finger that could turn on a recorder. He wrote for national magazines, authored books and led a happy and influential life from his bed. This was possible because after initial prayers brought no healing, he accepted his lot graciously and said, "Well Lord! If this is the size plot in life you've staked out for me, let's you and me together show the world what we can grow on it." Down the path of humble acceptance, Worrall achieved a happier and more useful life within the limitations of very restricted circumstances than most people ever will manage with excellent physical health. -- Floyd Faust

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LIFE -- TESTED BY THE LORD

1415 -- NOT FUNNY AT ALL

G. Campbell Morgan, in his book "How to Live," told about a conversation he had after he finished preaching one evening. A man approached Morgan to tell him he had invited a fellow employee, one with whom he had worked for 5 years, to attend the service. He then said, "My suggestion came as quite a surprise to my friend. He responded to my invitation by saying, 'Are you a Christian?' And when I answered, 'Yes, I am,' he replied, 'Well, I am too!' Here we had worked beside each other for years, and we never knew that we were both believers in Christ. Wasn't that funny?" To the man's surprise, Morgan retorted, "Funny? No, it isn't funny at all! You both need to be born again." It was inconceivable to Morgan that two men could be truly saved and work side-by-side for 5 years and not be aware of their kinship as brothers in Christ.

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LIFE -- TESTED BY THE LORD

1416 -- UNDER OBSERVATION

Leslie Flynn in "Dare to Care Like Jesus" tells the following story: "A Christian baroness, living in the highlands of Nairobi, Kenya, told of a young national who was employed as her houseboy. After three months he asked the baroness to give him a letter of reference to a friendly sheik some miles away. The baroness, not wishing the houseboy to leave just when he had learned the routine of the household, offered to increase his pay. The lad replied that he was not leaving for higher pay. Rather, he had decided he would become either a Christian or a Mohammedan. This was why he had come to work for the baroness for three months. He had wished to see how Christians acted. Now he wanted to work for three months for the sheik to observe the ways of the Mohammedans. Then he would decide which way of life he would follow. The baroness was stunned as she recalled her many blemishes in her dealings with the houseboy. She could only exclaim, 'Why didn't you tell me at the beginning!'"

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LIFE -- TESTED BY THE LORD

1417 -- WAITING TO HEAR WHAT HE SAID

A minister was making a wooden trellis to support a climbing vine. As he was pounding away, he noticed that a little boy was watching him. The youngster didn't say a word, so the preacher kept on working, thinking the lad would leave. But he didn't. Pleased at the thought that his work was being admired, the pastor finally said, "Well, son, trying to pick up some pointers on gardening?" "No," he replied. "I'm just waiting to hear what a preacher says when he hits his thumb with a hammer."

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LIGHT -- CHRIST, OF THE WORLD

1418 -- HE WANTED MORE LIGHT

A poor little boy once heard his Sunday School teacher say Jesus was the light of the world. He took her remark quite literally. After class, the boy said to his teacher, "If Jesus really is the light of the world, I wish He'd come hang out in my alley. It's awful dark where I live."

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LIGHT -- CHRIST, OF THE WORLD

1419 -- HE WHO HAS COME TO ME

A woman, discovered by a missionary in the depths of Central Africa, is reported to have broken out in the most affecting demonstrations of joy, when Christ was presented to her mind, saying, "Oh, that is He Who has come to me so often in my prayers. I could not find Who He was!"

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LIGHT -- CHRIST, OF THE WORLD

1420 -- LOST IN THE DARK

Instead of trusting Christ, modern-day thinkers insist on using human wisdom alone for answers to eternal questions. The tragedy of this situation was graphically illustrated in a humorous skit performed by Karl Vallentin, a Munich comedian. Walking on a stage where everything was dark except for a small area under a street lamp, he began to look for something on the ground. He told the policeman who came on the scene that he was trying to find a key, whereupon the two continued the search. Finally the officer asked, "Are you sure you lost it here?" "Oh, no," said Vallentin as he pointed to a corner, "It was over there, but here is where the light is!"

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LIGHT -- RADIANT LIVES

1421 -- HOW FENELON SHINED

The atheist who spent a few days with the saintly Fenelon said: "If I stay here much longer I shall become a Christian in spite of myself. Fenelon had used no word of controversy or even of solicitation. It was the quiet, convincing argument of a holy life that led to the remark. -- Topical Illustrations

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LIGHT -- RADIANT LIVES

1422 -- SHINING IS OFTEN BETTER THAN SHOUTING

It has been said: "The stars do not shout; they only shine." Any Christian, however obscure, can be a light to those around him and thus attract and guide men to the harbor of peace. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." -- Topical Illustrations

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LIGHT -- RADIANT LIVES

1423 -- THE GUIDING LIGHT BEAMED BY A BOY

If we would only be as faithful in our religious life as many are in their earthly and business life, fewer souls would be stranded on the reefs of eternity. One night the keeper of the lighthouse on a rocky coast was taken ill and was unable to attend the light. The machinery became disordered and the light failed to revolve. A storm swept the dangerous coast and the keeper's boy, a mere lad, climbed up to the lamp and during all the long hours of the stormy night turned with his own hands the lantern. In the morning, it was learned that two vessels with seven hundred souls on board had been able to make the harbor by the aid of the revolving light that had been kept in motion by the often tired, but ever vigilant boy. Unconsciously, the faithful boy had been the means of saving hundreds of lives, and all because he kept the light where it could be seen. -- Topical Illustrations

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LIGHT -- RADIANT LIVES

1424 -- THE LIGHT OF YOUR FACE

Charles H. Spurgeon in training young ministers said to his students, "When you talk about heaven let your face light up with a heavenly glory. When you tell about hell, your everyday face will do."

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL

1425 -- HATRED OF THE LIGHT

The devil fears the light, and this is one reason why we should always keep it burning. A governor of the Bahamas, who was about to return to England, promised to do his best to procure from the Home Government any favour the Colonists might desire. What think you was their unanimous request: "Tell them to tear down the lighthouses. They are ruining the colony!" The men were ship wreckers, and they hated the light. The devil so hates the light, that he would tear down every spiritual lighthouse in the land, if he only could. -- Sunday Circle

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL

1426 -- LIGHT TO THE END OF THE JOURNEY

A boy was walking with his father along a lonely road at night carrying a lantern. He told his father he was afraid because the lantern showed such a little way ahead. The Father answered, "That is so, but if you walk straight on you will find that the light will reach to the end of the

journey." God often gives us light for only a little way ahead, but He always gives at least that, and so He always gives us light enough for the whole journey. -- Christian Endeavor World

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL, REFLECTED

1427 -- GOD'S MAKE-UP

A Hindu trader in India once asked a missionary, "What do you put on your face to make it shine?" With surprise the man of God answered, "I don't put anything on it!" His questioner began to lose patience and said emphatically, "Yes, you do!" All of you who believe in Jesus seem to have it. I've seen it in the towns of Agra and Surat, and even in the city of Bombay." Suddenly the Christian understood, and his face glowed even more as he said, "Now I know what you mean, and I will tell you the secret. It's not something we put on from the outside but something that comes from within. It's the reflection of the light of God in our hearts.

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL, REFLECTED

1428 -- REFLECTED SON-LIGHT

In a tenement district in New York City, a boy in ragged clothes was seen with a small piece of broken mirror in his hand. Holding it high in the air he moved it slowly back and forth, watching the narrow slit of a window above him as he did so. "What are you doing?" a man suddenly demanded as he shook the youngster roughly by the shoulder. "Like most boys in this neighborhood, you're probably up to some mischief, aren't you?" The boy looked up into the stern face of his accuser and said, "See that window up there? Well, I have a little brother who has a room on that floor. He's a cripple. The only sunlight he ever sees is what I shine up to him with my mirror!" Do we reflect the light of the Son so that someone in darkness may see?

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL, REFLECTED

1429 -- WHAT IS A SAINT?

A young boy about nine years old went with his parents to Europe one summer. Part of their tour was visiting the great old cathedrals of the past. As he would visit cathedral after cathedral he saw the massive stained glass portraits of the disciples and of other saints. He was so impressed as he stood in these great empty halls looking through the beautiful stained glass windows. Upon return, when asked by his Sunday School teacher, what about the great churches of Europe did he like the most, and what was his definition of a saint, he thought for a moment and he said, "I loved the sense of awesomeness and the hugeness of who God must be. And what is a

saint?" And as his mind went back to those massive beautiful stained glass windows, he said, "A saint is a man the light shines through."

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL, REFLECTED

1430 -- WHY THE POTATOES SPROUTED

The well-known Bible teacher Keith Brooks had just finished speaking to a large class of businessmen on the Christian's responsibility to be a "light" in the world. He emphasized that believers are to reflect the Light of the world, the Lord Jesus. After the class, one of the members related to him an experience he had in his home which had impressed upon this same truth. He said that when he went into his basement he made an interesting discovery. Some potatoes had sprouted in the darkest corner of the room. At first he couldn't figure out how they had gotten enough light to grow. Then he noticed that the cook had hung a copper kettle from the ceiling near a cellar window. She kept it so brightly polished that it reflected the rays of the sun onto the potatoes. The businessman said to Brooks, "When I saw that, I thought, I may not be a preacher or a teacher with ability to expound Scripture, but at least I can be a copper kettle catching the rays of the Son and reflecting His light to someone in a dark corner."

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LIGHT -- SPIRITUAL, REFLECTED

1431 -- WRITTEN ON THEIR FACES

In one of his booklets, Adrian Rogers tells of some gold prospectors who discovered an exceptionally rich mine. One of them said, "Hey, we've got it made as long as we don't tell anybody else before we stake our claims." So they each vowed to keep the secret.

Because they had to have more tools and provisions, they headed for town. After buying all the supplies they needed, they hurried back to the mine site. But they weren't alone. A crowd of people followed them because their discovery was written all over their faces.

What happens on the inside shows on the outside. Joyful Christians with the light of God on their faces are needed in the darkness of this world.

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LIKENESS -- OF CHRIST

1432 -- MAKING A PICTURE OF GOD

Johnny was having a wonderful time with crayons and a sheet of paper when his mother came in and asked what he was drawing. He answered: "I'm making a picture of God." Surprised

but interested, the fond parent queried: "How can you do that? No one in the world knows what God looks like." "Well," replied Johnny with assurance, "they will when I get through!"

(Each Christian is to reflect the likeness of Christ, so that the world can, in a sense, thereby see a picture of God -- D.V.M.)

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LIKENESS -- OF CHRIST

1433 -- THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

In St. Peter's, Cologne, there are two pictures of the crucifixion of Peter, that stand side by side, and the existence of these two pictures is explained in this way:

In the beginning of the 19th century, when Napoleon came and ransacked the city, he robbed St. Peter's of one of those two pictures - the original- and took it away. While the first picture was taken away from the city, the artist, in the absence of the original, painted another picture. In time the original was restored, and the two were placed side by side. Experts now say that there is so little difference between the two pictures you cannot tell which is the original.

In the absence of the original, the artist painted another picture of Peter. Now, that is the glorious work of the Spirit. The Original is absent. Jesus is in heaven. But the Holy Spirit is here, and He is the Master Artist. In the absence of the Original, He is painting the likeness of Jesus upon the unworthy canvas of your life and mine. May we be worthy copies of the Original! Conformed to His likeness! -- Herbert Lockyer

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LIKENESS -- OF CHRIST

1434 -- WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM

Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, being killed in the battle of Lutzen, left only a daughter, Christina, six years of age. A general assembly consisting of deputations from the nobles, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasants of Sweden, was summoned to meet at Stockholm. Silence, being proclaimed, the Chancellor rose. "We desire to know," said he, "whether the people of Sweden will take the daughter of our dead King Gustavus Adolphus to be their Queen." "Who is this daughter of Gustavus?" asked an old peasant. "We do not know her. Let her be shown to us."

Then Christina was brought into the hall and placed before the old peasant. He took Christina up in his arms and gazed earnestly into her face. He had known the great Gustavus well, and his heart was touched when he saw the likeness which the little girl bore to that heroic monarch. "Yes," cried he, with the tears gushing down his furrowed cheeks; "this is truly the daughter of our Gustavus. Here is her father's row! Here is his piercing eye! She is his very picture! This child shall be our Queen!" -- Nathaniel Hawthorne

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LITTLE EVIL

1435 -- THE GREAT DESTRUCTION OF LITTLE SINS

R. G. Lee once quoted a Memphis paper concerning a mole which tunneled into the base of a rebuilt levee in Arkansas. The mole's "underground work" caused the only break in the levee system during the high water period that year, resulting in the crumbling of fifty feet of the Red River levee system. Randall Broome observes, "Little things can make a difference in life. As the mole caused the collapse of the levee, so does sin in our lives. Sins, even small sins, left unchecked and unconfessed can cause the crumbling of the spiritual foundations necessary to live a victorious Christian life." -- Randall Broome

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LITTLE EVILS

1436 -- NO SEE-UMS

A famous explorer in South America was once driven back and forced to abandon his journey by an almost invisible foe. He was equipped to meet leopards and serpents and crocodiles. They proved to be no threat, but he had failed to reckon with the little fellows -- the million of "chigoes" better known as "chiggers." They are so tiny that in North America we call them the "no see-ums." Someone has composed the following ditty about these tiny invaders:

Here's to the chigger, the bug that's no bigger
Than the end of a very small pin;
But the itch that he raises simply amazes,
And that's where the rub comes in!

Today, watch the tiny things which may spoil your testimony. Remember, "he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." Be on guard against the "little foxes" -- that evil thought, that hasty word, that burst of temper, that snap judgment which may bring defeat. Put on the whole armor of God by prayer, Bible study, and spiritual exercise, and you will be able to ward off enemies both large and small.

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LONELINESS

1437 -- A LONELY QUEEN

"The whole conviction of my life now rests upon the belief that loneliness, far from being a rare and curious phenomenon, peculiar to myself and a few other solitary men, is the central and

inevitable fact of human existence." We are told that, after a visit to the palace to visit with Queen Victoria, the great poet Alfred Lord Tennyson commented, "Up there, in all her glory and splendor, she was lonely." Nothing, whether it is royal status, wealth, public success, or bustling activism, can remove that need we have for other people. -- Thomas Wolfe

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LONELINESS

1438 -- FELT SO ALONE SOMETIMES

Wayne Newton and Elvis Presley: What a duo.

The Letter, a music video due in stores this month and now playing on TNN, ought to send tingles down the spines of both Newton aficionados and Elvis fans. The "letter" was written by Elvis, and Newton wrote a song about it, after he bought it from Sotheby's.

"The story goes that in his last engagement at the (Las Vegas) Hilton in December 1976, he kept a pad by his bed, and wrote down his thoughts," Newton says. "This one night, he wrote especially personal thoughts, then crumpled it up and threw it away."

I feel so alone sometimes. The night is quiet for me. I'd love to be able to sleep. I am glad that everyone is gone now. I'll probably not rest. I have no need for all this.

Help me, Lord.

Newton says an aide retrieved the note after he saw Elvis throw it away. "When I asked the contents of it" Newton says, "I was so moved that I purchased it."

Newton sings his own lines -- As I awake again today, the pain won't go away -- but speaks the entire contents of Elvis' letter.

"It reflects a man reaching to the ultimate for help. Once I digested it and got over the shock, I realized that it was feelings that I, too, had had at times," he says. "I realized -- that kind of loneliness creeps into everybody's life." -- USA Today

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LONELINESS

1439 -- HE LOOKED FORWARD TO HEAVENLY REUNION

In the later years of his life Vance Havner, one of the best-known and most beloved Bible teachers of this century, talked poignantly about the loneliness he felt after his wife went to be with the Lord. Havner had married somewhat later in life, and always had a keen sense that his wife

was a special gift from the Lord. Havner continued his ministry after her death, but referred to himself as a "lonely old man" and looked forward to their reunion in heaven.

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LONELINESS

1440 -- STAYS AFTER DINNER

Loneliness can be the most desolate word in all human language. Chuck Swindoll observed, "[Loneliness] plays no favorites, ignores all rules of courtesy, knows neither border nor barrier, yields no mercy, refuses all bargains, and holds the clock in utter contempt. It cannot be bribed; it will not be left behind. Tears fall from our eyes as groans fall from our lips -- but loneliness, that uninvited guest of the soul, arrives at dusk and stays for dinner."

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LONELINESS

1441 -- THEN A REQUEST, NOW A REGRET

"Please come home early." This was the most unreasonable request ever made by my wife of almost 40 years. She didn't make this request often. It came mostly on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, but it seemed that I always had so many things to do that in spite of her gentle urging, I rarely came home early. I don't want to give the impression that I was never at home. I was at home a lot. We rarely did anything out of the ordinary. We enjoyed the kids and the grandchildren. We listened to music, read the paper, and had meals together. Sometimes we would just talk about how the day had gone.

Now I know why she asked me so often to "Please come home early." She wasn't just lonely, she was lonely for me. When she passed away a short time ago, I learned firsthand what loneliness is all about. I have a supportive family and many good friends. I'm free now to go places and do things, but I'm lonesome. Lonesome for her. Now that she's gone, I've found the time to "come home early," but there is nobody to come home to. There is nobody to do those simple little things with, such as watching the evening news, listening to music, and reading the paper. And nobody cares how my day went. If I should get a call from the good Lord to "Please come home early," I won't fight it.

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LONG-SUFFERING -- COMMANDED

1442 -- JOHN SELWYN

Known as the "Bishop of the South Pacific," John Selwyn had at one time been recognized for his boxing skill. Touched by the Holy Spirit's convicting power, however, he later became an

outstanding missionary. The Southport Methodist magazine reports that one day this saintly leader reluctantly gave a stern but loving rebuke to a man who regularly attended the local church. The disorderly one resented the advice and angrily struck Brother Selwyn a violent blow in the face with his clenched fist. In return the missionary merely folded his arms and humbly looked into the man's blazing eyes. With his boxing skill and powerful rippling muscles, he could easily have knocked out his antagonist. Instead, he turned the other cheek and waited calmly to be hit a second time. This was too much for the assailant, who became greatly ashamed and fled into the jungle.

Years afterward, the man accepted the Lord as his Savior and gave his testimony before the church. It was customary at that time for a believer to choose a Christian name for himself after he was saved. When asked if he wished to follow this practice, he replied without hesitation, "Yes, call me John Selwyn! He's the one who taught me what Jesus Christ is really like!" This brought real joy to the missionary's heart, for he saw that heeding the Savior's admonition to suffer wrongfully for His sake had resulted in making his witness effective. (Luke 6:29)

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LORD'S PRAYER

1443 -- I CANNOT PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER "IF"

The entire Disciples' Prayer must be something that flows out of a truly committed heart. It ought to be a definition of your spirit, your attitude toward God, what is inside you. An unknown author put it this way: I cannot say "our" if I live only for myself. I cannot say "Father" if I do not endeavor each day to act like His child. I cannot say "who art in heaven" if I am laying up no treasure there. I cannot say "hallowed be Thy name" if I am not striving for holiness. I cannot say "Thy kingdom come" if I am not doing all in my power to hasten that wonderful event. I cannot say "Thy will be done" if I am disobedient to His Word. I cannot say "in earth as it is in heaven" if I'll not serve Him here and now. I cannot say "give us this day our daily bread" if I am dishonest or seeking things by subterfuge. I cannot say "forgive us our debts" if I harbor a grudge against anyone. I cannot say "lead us not into temptation" if I deliberately place myself in its path. I cannot say "deliver us from evil" if I do not put on the whole armor of God. I cannot say "Thine is the kingdom" if I do not give the King the loyalty due Him from a faithful subject. I cannot attribute to Him "the power" if I fear what men may do. I cannot ascribe to Him "the glory" if I'm seeking honor only for myself, and I cannot say "forever" if the horizon of my life is bounded completely by time.

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LORD'S SUPPER

1444 -- A BRAVE WARNING AFTER THE SACRAMENT

One of Frederick the Great's best generals was Hans Joachim von Zieten. He was never ashamed of his faith. Once he declined an invitation to come to his royal master's table because on that day he wished to present himself at the table of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. It was

sacrament day. The next time he appeared at the palace, the king, whose infidel tendencies were well known, made use of some profane expressions about the Lord's Supper, and the other guests laughed at the remarks made on the occasion.

Zietan shook his gray beard solemnly, stood up, saluted the king, and then said with a firm voice: "Your Majesty knows well that in war I have never feared any danger, and everywhere have boldly risked my life for you and my country. But there is One above us Who is greater than you and me, greater than all men. He is the Saviour and Redeemer, Who has died also for your Majesty and has dearly bought us all with his own blood. This holy One, I can never allow to be mocked or insulted, for on Him repose my faith, my comfort, and my hope in life and death. In the power of this faith, your brave army has courageously fought and conquered. If your Majesty undermines this faith, you undermine at the same time the welfare of your state. I salute your Majesty."

This open confession of his Saviour by Zietan, made a powerful impression on the king, who felt that he had been wrong in his attack on the faith of his general, and he was not ashamed to own it to his brave old general before all his other guests. -- British Workman

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LORD'S SUPPER

1445 -- THE INTERESTING ORIGIN OF WELCH'S GRAPE JUICE

A Methodist dentist, Dr. Thomas Welch, objected to his church's use of fermented wine in the communion service. Experimenting at night in his kitchen he came up with a nonalcoholic grape beverage, which he named "Dr. Welch's Unfermented Wine". He approached church officials to persuade them to substitute his beverage for the traditional wine. The elders regarded his suggestion as being an unacceptable innovation. A son, Charles, who was also a dentist, changed the name to Welch's Grape Juice. He set up a production facility in a barn behind the family home. Response was so overwhelming that he gave up dentistry and devoted full time to making and distributing grape juice.

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LOST -- ETERNALLY

1446 -- ALMOST, BUT LOST!

Three brothers yonder in Scotland got a boat and went out on one of the lakes, rowing in the little boat. But those lakes are often swept by storms and winds that come down upon them all unexpectedly, and, when those three brothers were far out yonder on the lake, a storm suddenly swept down upon the lake and turned over the boat. The middle brother was caught in the rigging and drowned outright, but the oldest and youngest brothers somehow got out from under the boat and they swam toward a rock, hundreds of yards out yonder, jutting up in the lake.

That was their only chance to be saved, and with extreme difficulty they made their way toward that rock. At last, the older brother reached it all worn out and all exhausted in strength. He did just reach it, and he looked back, and there some yards away came the younger brother barely able to move his hands in those battling, climbing, waves. This older boy called to him with what little strength he had left, trying to cheer him to hold out a little farther that he might reach the rock. But, he came a little farther and then went down. He could not make the rock. His strength was gone.

The people on the shore yonder saw the distressing scene. They got another boat and came to this oldest boy, and they found him almost wild in his grief. Over and over again, he told the story of how it all happened, and the boy would wind up his story with the plaintive cry, over and over and over again: "Oh! lads, little brother was nearly saved! Little brother was nearly saved! Sobbing his heart out, he would finish his story every time with the plaintive cry: "Oh, I tell you, little brother was nearly saved, nearly saved!" -- George W. Truett

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LOST -- ETERNALLY

1447 -- CROSSING THE DEADLINE

Many years ago, in a certain city, Dr. ___ took the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church. A few Sabbaths after he commenced his labors he saw an old gentleman sitting in the congregation with whitened locks and wrinkled face. He said in his heart, "I will speak to that man before he gets out, after the benediction is pronounced." He stepped out of the pulpit and came up to him, and the man said "Go away from me; go after these young people, and get them all to come to Christ if you can." The minister felt chagrined for a moment, did not know but he had done something improper. The old gentleman looked at him a moment and said, " You may think it strange, sir. I have sat in that pew forty years, and there was a time when I could not listen to a single sermon without a tender heart, deep impressions, and sometimes the tears would flow, and I felt that I ought to be a Christian.

Sometimes I would go from the church to my closet and offer prayer to God, and think I would then settle the great question. Then Monday I would go into New York to my business, and I would delay the matter, and so I kept on. By and by there came a time when I discovered I could shed no more tears. All these tender impressions were hushed and gone. I began to examine, and I found by God's word that there was a sin against the Holy Ghost which would drive Him for ever from me, and I made up my mind I had committed that sin. Several years now have proved it to me. Here I am, Sir, a lost soul. Please don't say any more to me about my soul; it will do no good. I respect you. I shall be in my pew here on Sunday. I shall pay my money for your ministry; but, Sir, it is no use to talk to me. Take care of my family; do what you can for them; tell all these young people what I have told you today, and tell them not to delay the matter of attending to the calls of the Holy Ghost, as I have done." I urge upon every one here tonight the same thing. My hearer, will you do it? May God help you this night to see to it that you no longer delay this matter, but while the gentle Spirit comes to your heart, accept the offers of His mercy, the entreaties of His

love. Make sure of your salvation if it so be that you are now within the reach of mercy. -- Rev. Albert P Graves

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LOST -- ETERNALLY

1448 -- LOST THROUGH FOLLY -- FOREVER!

A foreigner, coming to the United States, for convenient carriage, invested all his means in a valuable diamond. On the vessel, he amused the passengers one day by tossing up apples and catching them. His cleverness being appreciated and applauded, he took out his diamond, and began to toss it high in air, but the passengers said: "Don't do that! We like to see you toss the apples, but to toss the diamond is too dangerous!" "Oh," said he, "I'm not afraid!" and he tossed it up again, and again, and caught it easily. But he ventured once too often. There was a lurch of the ship, he missed the diamond! It fell upon the deck of the vessel, and rolled off into the sea, and was lost forever! -- W. A. Foster

Even thus, foolish men and women often lose their priceless souls and hope of salvation forever. Risking all eternal hope in exchange for men's applause and attention, many have played the fool once to often, and the sudden lurch of Divine providence has separated them forever from the priceless treasure of eternal salvation! -- Duane V. Maxey

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LOST -- ETERNALLY

1449 -- SO NEAR HOME, AND YET LOST!

Many years ago, on a Saturday morning, while I sat in my Liverpool study, preparing, my sermon for the following day, a telegram was put into my hand announcing the wreck of the ship, "Royal Charter," in Moelfra Bay, on the coast of Wales, and asking me to go and break the news of her husband's death by drowning to the wife of the first officer. The ship had gone almost round the globe. She had been to Australia, and had been telegraphed as arrived at Queenstown on the previous night, so that she was anxiously expected that day in the Mersey. But during the early morning a furious gale which I might rather call a terrible hurricane -- sprang up, and she was driven to destruction on that fearful shore, with a loss of over four hundred lives. As I entered the house of my parishioner, I was met by her little boy, who came dancing to me, and shouted, "Papa's coming! Papa's coming!" when I went into the parlor, I found the table spread in expectation of the arrival of him who would never cross the threshold again. I can not tell how I performed my mission; but after I had told the heavy news, the woman seemed almost stricken into marble. Her grief was too deep for tears; and I can never forget how, as she seized my hand, the first words that came gasping out were these, "So near home, and yet lost!"

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LOVE

1450 -- A REASON TO GO HOME

Today's quote worth re-quoting is from the Mayo Clinic Magazine, "For the patients who have an especially difficult time after surgery, if they eventually recover, it is because there is a family member who gives them a reason to be strong and a reason to go home." -- Paul Harvey

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LOVE

1451 -- HE LOVED HIS MOTHER

The following is a sketch, full of touching interest, of a little, ragged newsboy who had lost his mother. In the tenderness of his affection for her, he was determined that he would raise a stone to her memory. His mother and he had kept house together, and they had been all to each other, but now she was taken, and the little fellow's loss was irreparable. Getting a stone was no easy task, for his earnings were small; but love is strong. Going to a cutter's yard, and finding that even the cheaper cross of stones was far too expensive for him, he at length fixed upon a broken shaft of marble, part of the remains of an accident in the yard, and which the proprietor kindly named at such a low figure that it came within his means. There was much yet to be done, but the brave little chap was equal to it. The next day he conveyed the stone away on a little four-wheeled cart, and managed to have it put in position. The narrator, curious to know the last of the stone, visited the cemetery one afternoon, and he thus describes what he saw and learned:

"Here it is," said the man in charge, and, sure enough, there was our monument, at the head of one of the newer graves. I knew it at once. Just as it was when it left our yard, I was going to say, until I got a little nearer to it and saw what the little chap had done. I tell you, boys, when I saw it there was something blurred my eyes, so's I couldn't read it at first. The little man had tried to keep the lines straight, and evidently thought that capitals would make it look better and bigger, for nearly every letter was a capital. I copied it, and here it is; but you want to see it on the stone to appreciate it:

MY MOTHER
SHEE DIED LAST WEAK
SHEE WAS ALL I HAD. SHEE
SED SHEAD BEE WAITING
FUR --

And here the boy's lettering stopped. After a while, I went back to the man in charge and asked him what further he knew of the little fellow who brought the stone. "Not much," he said, "not much. Didn't you notice a fresh, little grave near the one with the stone? Well, that's where he is. He came here every afternoon for some time, working away at that stone, and one day I missed him, and then for several days. Then the man came out from the church that had buried the mother and ordered the grave dug by her side. I asked if it was for the little chap. He said it was.

The boy had sold all his papers one day, and was hurrying along the street out this way. There was a runaway team just above the crossing, and, well, he was run over, and lived but a day or two. He had in his hand, when he was picked up, an old file, sharpened down to a point, that he did all the lettering with. They said he seemed to be thinking only of that until he died, for he kept saying, "I didn't get it done, but she'll know I meant to finish it, won't she? I'll tell her so, for she'll be waiting for me," and he died with those words on his lips.

When the men in the cutter's yard heard the story of the boy next day, they clubbed together, got a good stone, inscribed upon it the name of the newsboy, which they succeeded in getting from the superintendent of the Sunday School which the little fellow attended, and underneath it the touching words: He Loved His Mother. -- J. Wilbur Chapman

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LOVE

1452 -- LINING UP THE TWO LIGHTS

At the entrance to the harbor at the Isle of Man, there are two lights, which guide the mariner into the harbor. One would think the two signals would confuse the pilot. But the fact is, he has to keep them in line, and so long as he keeps the two lights in line his vessel is safe. And it is just as we keep our eyes on the two signals -- the love of God, and the love of man -- that we keep the channel, and are safe from the rocks on either hand. -- W. L. Watkinson

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LOVE

1453 -- LOVE HURTS

One spring morning I was walking along a path in the woods near my home. Suddenly a rabbit bound across the path. This rabbit looked a bit roughed up; its fur was sparse and uneven. As I stepped closer, the rabbit casually hopped to a grove of small trees a few yards away. As I resumed my walk, a slight movement in the grass caught my eye. Stooping down, I saw four tiny creatures in a clump of grass. They were rabbit kits. Only two and a half inches long, hairless, and blind, they were totally helpless. Their nest had been dug down into the earth. Leaves and grass had been arranged to form a camouflaged home. But the most striking feature was that the inside of the nest had been completely lined with fur -- rabbit fur. Then it hit me. That scraggy-furred rabbit I had just seen was the mother of this precious litter. Not only had she carried her young through pregnancy, endured labor and delivery pains, prepared a nest, and patiently nursed and protected them to this point, she had also given of herself. Painfully, she had pulled out great clumps of fur to line the nest, thus providing a soft, warm environment for her fragile kits. -- Author Unknown

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LOVE

1454 -- LOVE IS VULNERABLE

No one ever said it better than C. S. Lewis: To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket -safe, dark, motionless, airless -- it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable.... The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers of love... is Hell.

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LOVE

1455 -- LOVE OFTEN INHERITS TROUBLE

We become vulnerable when we love people and go out of our way to help them. That's what the wealthy industrialist Charles Schwab declared after going to court and winning a nuisance suit at age 70. Given permission by the judge to speak to the audience, he made the following statement: "I'd like to say here in a court of law, and speaking as an old man, that nine-tenths of my troubles are traceable to my being kind to others. Look, you young people, if you want to steer away from trouble, be hard-boiled. Be quick with a good loud no to anyone and everyone. If you follow this rule, you will seldom be bothered as you tread life's pathway. Except you'll have no friends, you'll be lonely, and you won't have any fun!" Schwab had made his point -- love may bring heartache, but it's worth it!

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LOVE -- CONJUGAL

1456 -- JUDGED TO BE THE BEST ANSWER

Benedict's Scrapbook tells of a publisher who offered a prize for the best answer to the question, "Why is a newspaper like a good woman?" The winning answer was this. "It's like a good woman, because every man should have one of his own and not look at his neighbor's!"

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LOVE -- CONJUGAL

1457 -- LOVE OPENS DOORS

When all else fails, love opens doors.

Shortly after her marriage to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria had a quarrel with her new husband. Albert walked out of the room and locked himself in his private apartment. Victoria hammered furiously on the door. "Who's there?" called Albert.

"The Queen of England, and she demands to be admitted." There was no response, and the door remained locked. Victoria hammered again.

"Who's there?" The reply was the same, and still the door remained shut. More fruitless and furious knocking was followed by a pause. Then there was a gentle tap.

"Who's there?" Albert asked.

"Your wife, Albert," the Queen replied. The prince opened the door at once!

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LOVE -- CONJUGAL

1458 -- SING! SING!

Maybe you heard about the guy who fell in love with an opera singer. He hardly knew her, since his only view of the singer was through binoculars -- from the third balcony. But he was convinced he could live "happily ever after" married to a voice like that. He scarcely noticed she was considerably older than he. Nor did he care that she walked with a limp. Her mezzo soprano voice would take them through whatever might come. After a whirlwind romance and a hurry-up ceremony, they were off for their honeymoon together. She began to prepare for their first night together. As he watched, his chin dropped to his chest. She plucked out her glass eye and plopped it into a container on the nightstand. She pulled off her wig, ripped off her false eyelashes, yanked out her dentures, unstrapped her artificial leg, and smiled at him as she slipped off her glasses that hid her hearing aid. Stunned and horrified, he gasped, "For goodness sake, woman, sing, sing, SING!"

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LOVE -- EXAMPLES OF FATHER'S LOVE

1459 -- A VOICE OF CONFIDENCE

"Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark." Acts 1 5:37 In a moment of teenage carelessness, a 16-year-old girl wrecked her mother's car. She was uninjured, so she called home to tell her parents, fully expecting an angry reaction. Instead, her father asked only about her physical and emotional condition. When he arrived at the accident scene, he checked to make sure she was unhurt before turning his attention to the mangled auto being towed away. When it was time to go home, he handed her the keys to his car and got in on the passenger side. No angry tirade from this father! Just a lot of love and an overwhelming vote of confidence. Years later, she commented, "Words can't describe what my father's Godlike act did for my self-esteem that day."

She said this left a spiritual impact on her because she saw in her father the character of the God he loved.

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LOVE -- EXAMPLES OF FATHERS' LOVE

1460 -- AN APPLE AS WELL AS A ROD

Martin Luther's father was very strict, strict to the point of cruelty. One interesting note: He never had assurance of his standing with the Lord. Luther used to say: "Spare the rod and spoil the child" -- that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple, to give him when he has done well."

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LOVE -- EXAMPLES OF FATHERS' LOVE

1461 -- LOVE WALKS A CLEAN PATH

A little girl followed her father in newly planted clumps of St. Augustine grass. She stepped exactly where he stepped. She said, "Daddy, if you don't get mud on your feet, I won't get any mud on me!" The father who really loves his children will walk in a clean path.

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LOVE -- EXAMPLES OF MOTHER'S LOVE

1462 -- LOVE SAW BENEATH THE SOOT

There is a story in English history of a child of one of our noblehouses who, in the last century, was stolen from his house by a sweep. The parents spared no expense or trouble in their search for him, but in vain. A few years later, the lad happened to be sent by the master, into whose hands he had then passed, to sweep the chimneys in the very house from which he had been stolen while too young to remember it. The little fellow had been sweeping the chimney of one of the bedrooms, and fatigued with the exhausting labour to which so many lads by the cruel custom of those times were bound, he quite forgot where he was and flinging himself upon the clean bed dropped off to sleep. The lady of the house happened to enter the room. At first she looked in disgust and anger at the filthy black object that was soiling her counterpane. But all at once, something in the expression of the little dirty face, or some familiar pose of the languid limbs, drew her nearer with a sudden inspiration, and in a moment she had clasped once more in her motherly arms her long-lost boy. -- H. W. Horwill

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LOVE -- EXAMPLES OF MOTHERS' LOVE

1463 -- THE ONE SHE LOVED MOST

Someone once asked Susanna Wesley which one of her 11 children she loved the most. She wisely replied, "I love the one who's sick until he's well, and the one who's away until he comes home."

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LOVE -- FOR CHRIST, EXAMPLES OF

1464 -- HE WANTED ONLY TO SERVE

While visiting Franklin D. Roosevelt in the White House, Wendell Wilkie asked him, "Mr. President, why do you keep that frail, sickly man, Harry Hopkins, at your elbow?" Roosevelt replied, "Mr. Wilkie, through that door flows a stream of men and women who, almost invariably, want something from me. Harry Hopkins wants only to serve me. That's why he is so near me!" Is our Christian service motivated by a sense of obligation or duty? Are we working merely to gain the praise and approval of others? Do we desire to make a name for ourselves? Let's ask the Holy Spirit to help us examine our motives. Then we'll make sure that we are serving out of love.

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LOVE -- FOR CHRIST, EXAMPLES OF

1465 -- PORNOGRAPHY HAD TO GO

Living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ must make a difference in the everyday decision of life. We must be willing to pay the price of discipleship. A few years ago, Jack Eckerd, founder of the Eckerd drugstore chain, committed his life to Christ. Shortly afterward as he walked through one of his stores, he noticed the magazine racks with their glossy copies of Playboy and Penthouse. Although Eckerd was retired from active management, he called the president of the company and urged him to get rid of those pornographic magazines. The president protested because substantial profits were gained from their sales. Being the largest stockholder, Eckerd himself stood to lose a lot of money by such a decision. But he remained firm in his objection, and he prevailed. The offensive magazines were removed from all 1700 drugstores. When he was asked what motivated him to take this action, Eckerd replied, "God wouldn't let me off the hook!"

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LOVE -- FOR CHRIST, EXAMPLES OF

1466 -- SHE DID LOVE HIM

Charles Spurgeon tells of visiting a woman whose faith, once bright, had gone under a cloud and suffered total eclipse." She said to Spurgeon one day as he visited her, "My faith is gone. I don't have any true love for Christ." Spurgeon was wise. He did not argue, but took a piece of paper and walked to the window, writing the words, "I do not love the Lord Jesus Christ." Bringing it back, he handed her the pencil and said, "Sign this." She read it and cried, "It's not true. I'd tear it to pieces before I'd sign it!" Spurgeon said, "You said you didn't love Him." "Yes, but I could not sign that." Well then," countered Spurgeon, "I suspect you do love Him after all." "Yes, yes," she cried, I see it now! I do love Him. Christ knows I love Him!"

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1467 -- AN EXAMPLE OF TRUE LOVE

Moody told of a young man he met in Brooklyn who, while engaged to be married, had lost both arms in war. He had a letter written to his sweetheart releasing her from their engagement. The letter was never answered -- Instead, she hastened to the scene by train, embraced him saying, "I will never give you up; these hands will never give you up; I will take care of you!" Moody commented: "The Law says you are ruined, but Christ says, 'I will take care of you.'"

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1468 -- LOVE LIFTED ME

One of the most heart-moving conversions that I have ever known, I witnessed in my city, during the holiday period in mid-winter. There reached me the message that a little Sunday school boy in one of our mission Sunday schools had been accidentally shot by his little neighbor friend. I hurried to the humble home as fast as I could go. I found the unconscious little fellow in the hands of two skillful doctors. Said they, "He will not live. The shot is unto death." I went back the next day and the boy's father was in the stupor of a terrible drunk. I went back the next day, and the father was sobering up. He would walk the floor as tears fell from his face, while he looked on that little suffering boy, nine or ten years of age. Bending over his boy, he would say, "My little man is better, and he will soon be well!" The little face was clouded as he feebly whispered, saying, "No, papa; I will not get well." And then the father protested, as he said, "You will get well, and I will be a good man and change my ways!"

The little fellow's face was clouded, and he kept trying to say something, and I reached for the man to bend over to catch it, and this is what we did catch, after awhile: "When I am gone, papa, I want you to remember that I loved you, even if you did get drunk!" That sentence broke the father's heart. He left that room, unable to tarry any longer. A few minutes later, I found him lying prone upon his face, there upon the ground, behind the little cottage, sobbing with brokenness of heart.

Said he, "Sir, after my child loves me like that, oughtn't I to straighten up and be the right kind of man?" I said, "I have a story ten thousand times sweeter than that to tell you. God's only begotten Son loved you well enough to come down from heaven and die for you, Himself the just, for the unjust, that He might bring you to God. Won't you yield your wasting, sinful life to Him, and let Him save you?"

Then and there he made the great surrender. You should slip into one of our prayer meetings, when the men and women talk about what Christ has done for them, and one of the most appealing and powerful testimonies you would hear' is the testimony of this harness workman, as he stands up, with tears on his face, to tell you that love brought him home when everything else had failed. They criticized him; they scolded him; they railed at him; they pelted him with harsh words because he drank. Then a little boy said, "Papa, I love you, even if you do get drunk," and love won the day when everything else failed! -- George W. Truett

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1469 -- LOVE PERSONIFIED

In a testimony an evangelist one time described his mother as being love personified. As a boy he found her sitting at the table with an old tramp one day. Apparently she had gone shopping, met the tramp along the way, and invited him home for a warm meal. During the conversation the tramp said, "I wish there were more people like you in the world." Whereupon his mother replied, "Oh, there are. But you must look for them." The old man simply shook his head, saying. "But, lady, I didn't need to look for you. You looked for me." When that mother reflected her Christian kindness toward the tramp she did something more than simply offer him welfare. It was a compassion that went out of its way to love the unlovely. And that's the story of our Savior's Life, death and resurrection. He came looking for us in the sick, the maimed, the lame, the bruised, the broken hearted, the wretched wanderer, the poor and forgotten, the prisoner, and the lonely rich. Has he found you?

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1470 -- TAKE ME BACK

Reuel Howe illustrates redemptive love in the story of a mother and her eight-year-old daughter. The girl did something which caused her to feel alienated from her mother. Although her mother tried her best to help, the daughter finally ran out of the room in anger and went upstairs. Seeing her mother's new dress laid out for a party that evening, she found scissors and vented her hostility by ruining her mother's new dress, seeking to injure her mother. Later the mother came upstairs, saw the dress, threw herself on the bed, and wept. Soon the small daughter came into the room and whispered, "Mother." But there was no reply. "Mother, Mother." she repeated. Still no reply. "Mother, Mother, please," she continued. Finally the mother responded,

"Please what?" "Please take me back, please take me back," pleaded the girl. The Love of Christ takes us back, often after one has intentionally done Him wrong.

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1471 -- THE MELODY OF LOVE

The other day a friend told me a little story about Paderewski, the great Polish pianist. It seems a mother took her young son, eight or nine years old, to a concert by Paderewski because she thought the child had some musical talent and might benefit from hearing a genius play. They sat close to the stage, where the curtain was up, revealing the grand piano. Paderewski was in the wings; it wasn't quite time to start. The mother turned to speak to an acquaintance behind her. As she did, the little boy wriggled out of his seat, ran up the steps to the stage, sat down and began to play "Chopsticks" with all his might. The mother was appalled. The audience gasped as Paderewski himself strode onto the stage. But instead of being angry the maestro smiled, sat down on the piano bench with the little boy, whispered to him to continue and then, putting both arms around the little figure began to improvise a soft but brilliant accompaniment to the childish music. He kept it up until the audience, charmed and fascinated, burst into applause. I like to think that perhaps when we finally come into God's presence and try to explain our lives with all the faults and flaws, He will put His loving arms around us and turn our faltering notes into a triumphant song of redemption and fulfillment. -- Ruth Stafford Peale

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1472 -- THE SEEMING CRUELTY OF LOVE

Sometimes Christ's love for us is veiled behind what can seem to be pitiless and unduly harsh: Years ago, in the days before stage coaches had been superseded by railways, a mother and her infant were the only passengers in a coach in western Montana during a bitter winter. The woman had not provided against such intense cold, and although she could protect her baby, her own life became endangered. The driver quickened the pace of his team, hoping to reach warmth and refuge before her condition became serious, but the fatal drowsiness stole over her, and when no answers to his inquiries were returned, he stopped and got down from his box. The woman's head was swaying from side to side. He took the baby from her and bestowed it as comfortably as he could in a furry bundle under the shelter of the seat; then, seizing the mother roughly by the arm, he dragged her upon the frozen ground.

His violence partly awakened her; but when he banged the door and sprang on his box and drove on, leaving her in the road, she came fully to her senses and began to scream as she ran madly after him, calling, "My baby, oh, my baby." The horror of her loss and the violence of the exercise to which she was forced saved her. When her blood was in healthy circulation, the driver

pulled up his horses, and allowed her to resume her place with her unharmed child. -- Methodist Recorder

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LOVE -- OF CHRIST FOR MEN

1473 -- THEY DROPPED THEIR GUNS

A trip through the jungles of Thailand brought four Christian women face-to-face with death. As they made their way through the dense foliage to follow up on some new converts, they were ambushed at gun point by three communist rebels. When the men found that the women had no money, they angrily told them they were going to kill them.

The women pleaded with their captors not to shoot, but the men were adamant. Then one of the workers asked them if they could tell them about God's love before they were shot. Surprisingly, the gunmen agreed! So Kleun Anuyet explained that Jesus had died on the cross because He loved them.

The men did an astonishing thing -- they dropped their guns, and tears began to flow. The ringleader said, "If Jesus has that much love, then I want it too." Soon all three accepted Christ as Savior. Today they are serving God as full-time Christian workers. -- Send Magazine

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1474 -- DEEPER THAN THAT

Nansen, the Norwegian explorer, tried to measure an extremely deep part of the Arctic Ocean. The first day, he used his longest measuring line but couldn't reach bottom. He wrote in his log book, "The ocean is deeper than that!" The next day, he added more line but still could not measure the depth, and so again in his record book he wrote, "Deeper than that!" After several days of adding more and more pieces of rope and cord to his line, he had to leave that part of the ocean without learning its actual depth. All he knew was that it was beyond his ability to measure. So too, we cannot plumb the depths of God's love, because our human measuring line is too short.

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1475 -- FORGIVENESS THROUGH A SON

A young girl once ran away from home to get married. Her father was very angry and said that he would never forgive her. She was sorry to have grieved her father and wrote him long letters begging for his forgiveness; however he took no notice. By and by, the daughter had a little

son. When the boy was old enough to run about alone, she said to herself, "I will write no more letters to my father, but I will send my little son. He shall be a living letter. My father will know what I want to say to him when he sees his little grandson. He will know that I still love him and want his forgiveness." So she took the little boy to his grandfather's house and sent him in alone to speak to her father. She bade him to put his arms around his grandfather's neck and kiss him. When the little fellow did this, the old man's heart melted. He sent at once for the mother and forgave her.

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1476 -- HOW BROTHER LAWRENCE LOVED GOD

Brother Lawrence was a cook in a monastery. He learned to press meaning into virtually every action of his day. Note his capacity to see not only meaning but also purpose in his labor:

"I turn my little omelette in the pan for the love of God. When it is finished, if I have nothing to do, I prostrate myself on the ground and worship my God, who gave me this grace to make it, after which I arise happier than a king. When I can do nothing else, it is enough to have picked up a straw for the love of God. People look for ways of learning how to love God. They hope to attain it by I know not how many different practices. They take much trouble to abide in His presence by varied means. Is it not a shorter and more direct way to do everything for the love of God, to make use of all the tasks one's lot in life demands to show him that love, and to maintain his presence within by the communion of our heart with his? There is nothing complicated about it. One has only to turn to it honestly and simply.

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1477 -- IN EVERY DIRECTION, GOD IS LOVE

One day C. H. Spurgeon was walking through the English countryside with a friend. As they strolled along, the evangelist noticed a barn with a weather vane on its roof. At the top of the vane were these words: GOD IS LOVE. Spurgeon remarked to his companion that he thought this was a rather inappropriate place for such a message. "Weather vanes are changeable," he said, "but God's love is constant." "I don't agree with you about those words, Charles," replied his friend. "You misunderstood the meaning. That sign is indicating a truth: Regardless of which way the wind blows, God is love."

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1478 -- TRUSTING HIM WHO HOLDS THE SWORD

Years ago a naval officer and his wife were at sea during a raging storm. Seeing the frantic look in her eyes, the experienced seaman tried unsuccessfully to subdue her fears. When she grabbed his arm and cried, "How can you be so calm in such a storm?" he drew his sword and said, "Are you afraid?" Without hesitation she answered, "Of course not!" "Why not?" he inquired. "Because I know that the sword is in the hand of my husband, and he loves me too much to hurt me." The man replied, "Remember, I too know whom I have believed, and He is the One who holds the winds in His fist and the waters in the hollow of His hand!"

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1479 -- WHY DID GOD LOVE JACOB?

A minister one day sat in the vestry of his church to meet anyone who might have spiritual difficulties. Only one came. "What is your difficulty?" asked the minister. The man answered, "My difficulty is the ninth chapter of Romans, where it says, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,'" "Yes," said the minister, "there is great difficulty in that verse; but which part of the verse is difficult for you?" The latter part, of course," said the man. "I cannot understand why God should hate Esau." The minister replied, "That verse has often been difficult, but my difficulty has always been with the first part of the verse. I never could understand how God could love that wily, deceitful, supplanting scoundrel Jacob."

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LOVE -- OF GOD

1480 -- WHY DO YOU GO TO CHURCH?

Why do you go to church? To meet your friends, to hear the preacher, to fulfill an obligation? These reasons are not wrong, but they do not represent our highest motivation. Our primary reason must be to worship Christ. Francois Fenelon was the court preacher for King Louis XIV of France in the 17th century. One Sunday when the king and his attendants arrived at the chapel for the regular service, no one else was there but the preacher. King Louis demanded, "What does this mean?" Fenelon replied, "I had published that you would not come to church today, in order that Your Majesty might see who serves God in truth and who flatters the King."

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LOVE -- PREEMINENCE OF

1481 -- DOLLY MADISON

Dolly Madison, wife of the fourth president of the United States, was one of the most popular women in American history. Wherever she went, she charmed and captivated everyone

obscure and well-known, rich and poor, men and women alike. She was once asked to explain the secret of her power over others. Surprised by the question Mrs. Madison exclaimed, "Power over people. I have none. I desire none. I merely love everyone." And those who love are richly rewarded by love returned.

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LOVE -- PREEMINENCE OF

1482 -- THAT WHICH DIDN'T FAIL

When Eliot, the indefatigable missionary to the Indians, was an old man, it was observed that the energy by which he acted never sustained the slightest abatement, but, on the contrary, evinced a steady and vigorous increase. As his bodily strength decayed, the energy of his being seemed to retreat into his soul, and at length all his faculties seemed absorbed in holy love. Being asked shortly before his departure how he did, he replied, "I have lost everything; my understanding leaves me, my memory fails me; my utterance fails me; but I thank God, my charity holds out still; I find that rather grows than fails." -- Hinton

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LOVE -- THE TEST

1483 -- ABSTRACT OR CONCRETE LOVE?

A story in the "Sunshine Magazine" about a professor of psychology illustrates how difficult it is to love others. Although he had no children of his own, whenever he saw a neighbor scolding a child for some wrongdoing, he would say, "You should love your boy, not punish him." One hot summer afternoon the professor was doing some repair work on a concrete driveway leading to his garage. Tired out after several hours of work, he laid down the trowel, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and started toward the house. Just then out of the corner of his eye he saw a mischievous little boy putting his foot into the fresh cement. He rushed over, grabbed him, and was about to spank him severely when a neighbor leaned from a window and said, "Watch it, Professor! Don't you remember? You must 'love' the child!" At this, he yelled back furiously, "I do love him in the abstract but not in the concrete!"

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LOVE -- THE TEST

1484 -- LOVE IN ACTION

In her book, "Living with Love," Josephine Robertson tells a story. "In 1883, a youthful clergyman, the Rev. Joe Roberts, arrived by stagecoach in a blizzard to minister to the Indians of Wyoming. This great, wild area had been assigned to the Protestant Episcopal Church by President Grant. Soon after Joe Roberts arrived, the son of the chief was shot by a soldier in a brawl, and

Chief Washakie vowed to kill the first white man he met. Since this might mean the start of a long, bloody feud, young Roberts decided to take action. Seeking out the tepee, fifteen miles away in the mountains, he stood outside and called the chief's name. When Washakie appeared, Roberts opened his shirt. "I have heard of your vow," he said, "I know that the other white men have families, but I am alone. Kill me instead."

The chief was amazed and motioned him into his tent. "How do you have so much courage?" he asked. Joe Roberts told him about Christ, His death, His teachings. They talked for hours. When Joe left, the chief of the Shoshones had renounced his vow to kill and resolved to become a Christian. Washakie had seen love in action. Every group which calls itself Christian would do well to decide what it should do to make love visible in the home, church, community, and world. For unless love becomes visible it is not love at all.

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LOVE -- THE TEST

1485 -- SHOW ME

A police officer brought a 13-year-old girl into the police station in the wee morning hours. She had been physically abused by her stepfather. The police chaplain talked with her while the officers processed her case and waited for Human Services to come take custody of her. The girl related how her stepfather hated her, favoring his own daughters. She was either neglected or beaten for minor disagreements. Her mother hadn't shown her love for several years. Finally, she sobbed, "Nobody loves me!" In an effort to comfort her and offer some ray of hope and worth, the chaplain replied, "But don't you know that God loves you?" Holding out her battered, bruised arms, she retorted, "Show me!" -- A. D. McDowell

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LOVE -- TO CHRIST, BLESSINGS OF

1486 -- HE WANTED TO LOVE CHRIST MORE

Charles Spurgeon tells of a Mr. Welch, a Suffolk minister, who was noticed to sit and weep; and one said to him, "My dear Mr. Welch, why are you weeping?" "Well," he replied, "I can't tell you." But when they pressed him very hard, he answered, "I am weeping because I cannot love Christ more."

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LOVE -- TO CHRIST, BLESSINGS OF

1487 -- LOVE INHERITED ALL

The story is told of a wealthy man who lost his wife when their only child was young. A housekeeper was hired to take care of the boy, who lived only into his teens. Heartbroken from this second loss, the father died a short time later. No will could be found; and since there were no relatives, it looked as if the state would get his fortune. The man's personal belongings, including his mansion, were put up for sale.

The old housekeeper had very little money, but there was one thing she wanted. It was a picture that had hung on a wall in the house -- a photo of the boy she had loved and nurtured. When the items were sold, nobody else wanted the picture, so she bought it for just a few pennies. Taking it home, she began to clean it and polish the glass. As she took it apart, a paper fell out. It was the man's will, and in it he stated that all his wealth should go to the one who loved his son enough to buy that picture. The legacy of heaven and the inexhaustible riches of God's love belong to all who trust and love His Son.

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LOVE -- TO GOD COMMANDED

1488 -- LOVE MIXED WITH MARBLES

"Humanly speaking, I might never have been saved if someone hadn't 'said it with love' to me," says Dr. Howard Hendricks. "I was nine years old, a little terror," he recalls. "I was out playing marbles one day, when a man named Walt came along and invited me to Sunday School. There was nothing appealing to me about anything with 'school' in it, so he made me another proposition -- one I liked better: 'Wanna play a game of marbles with me?'"

"After he'd wiped me out in marbles, he inquired, 'Wanna learn how to play this game better?'"

"By the time he'd taught me how to play marbles over the next few days, he'd built such a relationship with me that I'd have gone anywhere he suggested. Of the 13 boys in that class -- 11 ended up in vocational Christian work."

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LOVE -- TO GOD, COMMANDED

1489 -- TELL GOD YOU LOVE HIM

In the Middle West some years ago, was a gentleman whose little child was born deaf and dumb. Shortly afterward her mother died, he was left alone to care for her, and so lovingly did he care for her, that a friend said he never saw anything like it on earth. The child of the family who is crippled always gets the most love and care. He simply surrendered his life to her. Outside of business hours, he spent his whole time with her. They were constant companions, and the sweetest kind of affection was theirs. They learned a sign language. No one else could understand

it, but they understood it. So, those early years passed by, and then he came to the moment when he was going to Europe and would be gone several months.

A friend said to him, "I would place this child of yours in that institution where they do wonderful things for the deaf and dumb. She will be best cared for there." He decided to do it. Nearly a year passed by, and he was to return. His child had always respected and admired her father, but that absence almost took her heart and drew it across the sea. She was all the time talking about her father. There was a special reason why she could hardly wait for him to return. It was not enough to just take the step to know the father and appreciate the father. That was not enough. Something else was the supreme element, and when he came back this was what took place.

That child rushed into her father's arms and pressed her little lips up to his ear, and to his amazement she said: "Papa I love you." They had taught her in seven months to move her lips and say "Papa". He dropped like a dead man on the floor. It was too much for him. He was completely overcome. She could hardly wait to get her lips up to his ear and tell him that she loved him.

Do you know, that is the normal, natural attitude of the human heart toward God at its best? We do not need to know only the facts about Him. Those are all known to every one of us. It is not that. God is waiting for you, just to have your heart move out toward Him, and to hear your whisper of love. Just tell God that you love Him. -- Cortland Myers

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LOVE -- TO GOD COMMANDED

1490 -- THEY LOST SIGHT OF HIS GREATNESS

Bible teacher E. Schuyler English told of a visit to the Orient by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In one city, the local orchestra performed Beethoven's Fifth Symphony for the visiting musicians. According to reports, it was not done very well.

At the end of the first movement, the host conductor passed the baton to Eugene Ormandy. What a transformation! You would have thought he had been conducting the local orchestra for years. As the members of the Philadelphia Orchestra listened, they were impressed in a new way with Ormandy's talent and genius. They realized they had begun to take him for granted and had lost sight of his greatness.

As believers in Christ, we often fall into a similar pattern in our relationship to God. We take Him and His marvelous attributes for granted.

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LOVE FOR CHRIST -- EXAMPLES OF

1491 -- HOW LOVE WAS REWARDED

A rich gentleman's wife died and not long afterwards their only child, a little boy whom they both dearly loved, followed his mother to the grave. The gentleman never recovered from the shock of this double bereavement. After his death, search was made for a will but none could be found. At the sale of the house furniture, an old domestic of the household was present for the purpose of buying a portrait of the little boy which was hanging on one of the walls. The servant had dearly loved the child, and was now eager to secure the picture. It was sold to her where it hung, and on its being taken down the will was found fastened to the back of it. When read, it was discovered that the person who, at the sale of his effects, should purchase the picture of his much-loved son should have all his property. This is what God has said to us if we honor and love his Son, He will make us inheritors of His Kingdom.

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LOVING OUR ENEMIES

1492 -- A NOBLE REVENGE

An officer in the army one day struck a common soldier. He was young and hot-tempered. The soldier whom he struck was a young man, too, and noted for his courage. He felt the insult deeply, but military discipline forbade that he should return the blow; he could only use words. "I will make you repent of it," he said. One day in the heat of a furious engagement the young soldier save an officer, who was wounded and separated from his company, gallantly striving to force his way through the enemies who surrounded him.

He recognized his insulter and rushed to his assistance. Supporting the wounded man with his arm, together they fought their way through to their own lines. Trembling with emotion the officer grasped the hand of the soldier and stammered out his gratitude. "Noble man! What a return for an insult so carelessly given!" The young man pressed his hand in turn and with a smile said gently, "I told you I would make you repent it." And from that time on they were as brothers. How beautifully that young soldier followed Romans 12:20-21. -- High School Christian

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LOVING OUR ENEMIES

1493 -- CHRISTIAN ENEMIES

During the fighting in New Guinea, a Digger was left for dead by the side of a trail. Later he recovered consciousness and lay there expecting every moment that Japanese soldiers would arrive and finish him off. Finally four Japanese soldiers did arrive. To his surprise, instead of killing him they lifted him gently and carried him to the side of a tract in another part of the forest. Before leaving him one of them said, "You will be quite safe here. Some of your countrymen will arrive soon and pick you up. We are Christians, and hate war." -- Herald Of Hope

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LOVING OUR ENEMIES

1494 -- GENERAL LEE'S FORGIVENESS

A Union soldier, bitter in his hatred of the Confederacy, lay wounded at Gettysburg. At the close of the battle General Lee rode by, and the soldier, though faint from exposure and loss of blood, raised his hands, looked Lee in the face, and shouted as loudly as he could, "Hurrah for the Union!" The General heard him, dismounted, and went toward him, and the soldier confesses: "I thought he meant to kill me. But as he came up, he looked at me with such a sad expression upon his face that all fear left me, and looking right into my eye, he said, "My son, I hope you will soon be well." If I live a thousand years, I shall never forget the expression on General Lee's face. There he was, defeated, retiring from a field that had cost him and his cause almost their last hope, and yet he stopped to say words like those to a wounded soldier of the opposition who had taunted him as he passed by. As soon as the General left me I cried myself to sleep there upon the bloody battleground." -- W.S.B.

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LOVING OUR ENEMIES

1495 -- IF HE THIRST, GIVE HIM DRINK

In one of the mighty battles in old Virginia, a Union officer fell severely wounded in front of the Confederate breastworks. He lay crying piteously for water. A noblehearted Confederate soldier heard his cry, and resolved to relieve him. He filled his own canteen with water, and though the bullets were flying across the field, and he could only go at the risk of his life, yet he went. He gave the suffering officer the much needed drink, and it so touched his heart that the officer instantly took out his gold watch and offered it to his generous foe, but the noble Confederate soldier refused to take it.

"Then give me your name and address," said the officer. "My name is James Moore, of Burke County, North Carolina," said the soldier. Then they parted, and the soldier was subsequently wounded by losing a limb. In due time the war was over, and the wounded Union officer returned to his business in New York. And not long after, the Confederate soldier received a letter from the officer to whom he had given the "cup of cold water" telling him that he had settled on him \$10,000, to be paid in four annual payments of \$2,600 each.

Ten thousand dollars for a drink of cold water! That was noble on the part of the Union officer, but to give that drink of water at the risk of his life was still more noble on the part of the brave Confederate soldier! -- Baptist Standard

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LOVING OUR ENEMIES

1496 -- SOMETHING HIS NEIGHBOR DIDN'T HAVE

Two men lived near each other. The river divided their farms. One day when the corn in the beautiful river bottoms was in roasting-ear stage, the cows of one neighbor got out of the pasture and crossed the river into the earing field of corn. They slashed and ruined perhaps a half acre. The man who owned the damaged corn rounded up the cattle and put them in his barn. He made the neighbor pay for every ear of corn that they had destroyed and then made him pay a good price for the cattle before he would return them to him.

In the fall of that year the hogs of the man whose corn had been eaten got out and crossed the river into the potato patch of the neighbor. They played havoc with it. This neighbor saw the hogs damage his potato patch, and got the hogs back across the river to the barn where they belonged. The owner saw them coming, got his gun, and hid himself with the avowal that if his neighbor harmed the hogs, he would shoot him.

When he saw that he had no intentions of harming the hogs, he was surprised. He came out from his hiding, and said: "You have something I do not have. What is it?" The neighbor replied, "I am a Christian." That night the unregenerate man and his wife went across the river and visited the neighbor. They were both converted before they left the home. On the next Lord's Day they both joined the local church. -- R. C. Campbell

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LUXURIOUS LIVING

1497 -- LUXURY SAPPED THEIR MORALE

It is a truth of life that in many ways it is easier to stand adversity than to stand prosperity. Ease has ruined far more men than trouble ever did. The classic example is what happened to the armies of Hannibal.

Hannibal of Carthage was the one general who had routed the Roman legions. Hannibal wintered his troops in Capua which he had captured, a city of luxury. And one winter in Capua did what the Roman legions had not succeeded in doing. The luxury so sapped the morale of the Carthaginian troops that when the spring came and the campaign was resumed they were unable to stand before Romans. -- William Barclay

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THE END