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

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TAXES

2425 -- INCOME TAX

The sixteenth amendment of the Constitution, legalizing federal income taxes, was adopted in 1913. It began as an amendment to a bill in Congress lowering the tariff on imports. The idea was that the small deficit from reduced tariff receipts could be taken care of by a tiny tax on prosperous incomes.

On incomes from \$14,000 to \$20,000, the bite was one percent. Few made over \$4,000. That amount had a buying power of at least \$10,000 of today's money. Few opposed the idea. It didn't seem important.

* * *

TEACHER -- CHRISTIAN

2426 -- ONE MORE TIME!

In a manufacturing town in Scotland, a young lady began teaching a Sunday school class of poverty-stricken boys. The most unpromising youngster was a boy named Bob. After the first two

or three Sundays, he did not return. So the teacher went to look for him. Although the superintendent had given Bob some new clothes, they were already worn and dirty when the teacher found him. He was given another new suit, and he came back to Sunday school. But soon he quit again, and the teacher went out once more to find him. When she did, she discovered that the second set of clothes had gone the way of the first. "I am completely discouraged about Bob," she told the superintendent. "I guess we must give up on him." "Please don't do that," he pleaded. "I believe there is still hope. Try him one more time." They gave Bob a third suit of clothes, and this time he began to attend faithfully. It wasn't long until he became a Christian and eventually even taught in that same Sunday school. Who was that obstinate, ragged boy who for a time seemed so unreachable? None other than Robert Morrison, who later became the first Protestant missionary to China. He translated the Bible into Chinese and brought the Word of God to teeming millions.

So discouraged pastor, Sunday school teacher, youth worker, give that disappointing person one more chance.

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TEACHING -- COMMANDED

2427 -- TEACHING NOT IN VAIN

A chaplain who was ministering to a seriously wounded soldier was requested by the dying man to write a letter to his former Sunday school teacher. "Tell her I died a Christian because of what she taught me in that class in church. The memory of her earnest pleas and the warmth of her love as she asked us to accept Jesus has stayed with me. Tell her I'll meet her in Heaven." The message was sent, and some time later the chaplain received this reply: "May God forgive me. Just last month I resigned my position and abandoned my Sunday school pupils because I felt my work had been fruitless. How I regret my impatience and lack of faith! I shall ask my pastor to let me go back to teaching. I have learned that when one sows for God, the reaping is both sure and blessed!"

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TEACHING -- SPIRITUAL

2428 -- LEARNING TO FLY

The nestling eaglet looks up to the majestic flight of the soaring eagle through heaven, and says, "Oh, that I could soar as bravely. Teach me to fly!" And, as if in answer to the wish, the parent bird descends, and tears the soft nest in pieces, forcing the restful brood forth to the sweeping winds. And, though to the young bird it may seem almost cruel, yet it is just what it longed for -- this is teaching it to fly! -- Wadsworth

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TELEVISION

2429 -- INVENTED IN RIGBY, IDAHO

Television was invented in Rigby, Idaho in 1922 by a 16 year old Mormon farm boy. (See "The Strange Birth Of Television" Reader's Dig. 2/53) Yes, this modern menace to morality around the world was indeed, in part, invented by Philo Farnsworth in Idaho, an obscure state, and in Rigby, an even more obscure town. How coincidental then, that some 34 years later an obscure denomination was born in that same obscure state which strongly opposes the evil influence of said invention. There is much more history involved in the invention of T. V.. A mechanical contraption known as the Nipkow disk which rather crudely transmitted images was invented in 1894, and extensive experiments with this device were conducted in 1912, but it was the invention of the "dissector tube" by Philo Farnsworth, along with other electronic devices invented by one Vladimir Zworykin, which helped bring to the world modern "electronic" television. In 1922 radio was in its infancy, with fewer than 30 licensed broadcasting stations in the entire country. Yet that year a boy of 16 in a small Idaho high school explained to his teacher that he had worked out the details of electronic television." (above article) In 1927 Farnsworth applied for the patent on his invention which was granted 3 years later. The moral of the story?: We should not "despise the day of small things."-Zech. 4:10 Out of small, obscure sources can spring forth influences of incalculable magnitude, for either good or evil. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel."-Micah 5:2

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TEMPTATION -- ENTICERS

2430 -- HOW TEMPTATION WORKS

A man once watched an Indian preparing a snare with which to catch a wild animal. He was surprised to learn that the Indian never sprang the trap or pulled the noose the first time the animal appeared. Instead of that, he would let it come repeatedly and feed where the trap was. Then, when it had become bold and thoroughly familiar with the surroundings, he would set the trap so that the next time it came the animal would be caught in the snare.

That is the way temptation works. It does not drive its shaft into the heart of its victim at first, but deceives it and lures it on. Then, the fatal blow is delivered. -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2431 -- DON'T LOOK AT THAT WHICH TEMPTS

Leslie Dunkin told about a dog he had when he was a boy. Periodically his father would test the dog's obedience. He would place a tempting piece of meat on the floor and give the

command, "No!" The dog, who must have had a strong urge to go for the meat, was placed in a most difficult situation -- to obey or disobey his master's command.

Dunkin said, "The dog never looked at the meat. He seemed to feel that if he did, the temptation to disobey would be too great. So he looked steadily at my father's face." Dunkin then made this spiritual application: "There is a lesson for us all. Always look up to the Master's face."

Yes, that's good advice. God, of course, will not tempt us to do wrong. However, we do encounter many temptations, and if we keep our eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus we will be able to overcome them. -- Leslie E. Dunkin

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2432 -- HOW HE SHUT OUT TEMPTATION

Trochilus, one of the disciples of Plato, miraculously escaped from a storm at sea in which the ship was sunk and he himself almost perished. When he reached home, the first thing he did was to order his servants to wall up two windows in one of his chambers which looked out upon the sea. His fear was that on some fine, bright day, looking out upon the sea when it was calm and tranquil and flashing in the sunlight, he should again be tempted to venture upon its treacherous waters. There are not a few windows looking out upon the sea of temptation which the soul would do well to wall up. -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2433 -- J. WILBUR CHAPMAN'S GOVERNING RULE

An example of the Holy Spirit's guidance can be seen in a statement by J. Wilbur Chapman. He said, "My life is governed by this rule: Anything that dims my vision of Christ or takes away my taste for Bible study or cramps my prayer life or makes Christian work difficult is wrong for me, and I must, as a Christian, turn away from it."

* * *

TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2434 -- JIM'S WAY

Christianity has transforming power. One who has led an evil life, and then has become a true Christian, will alter his purposes and habits and will put away from him all temptations to former evil practices.

A baggageman named Jim knew how to put one sort of temptation out of his way: He owned a number of game roosters, and one morning he cut off all their heads. When he told his wife what he had done, she said they were too old to cook and she could not see why he had done so foolish a thing. "I don't care," said Jim, "I haven't any use for them any longer. I used to take a couple of them out in a lot where people would see them Sunday mornings on their way to church, and then I would fight them for all they were worth. I'm none too strong anyway, and so I thought that if I killed the roosters, no fellow could come along some Sunday morning and say: 'Come, Jim, put a couple of them in a bag and lets go and fight them.' If they're dead I can't go can?" -- Tarbell's Teacher's Guide

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2435 -- NO

The late United States Senator from Massachusetts, and one of the noblest characters the Senate has known, George F. Hoar, in his autobiography tells of his college days at Harvard in the early forties. He pays a high tribute to one of the faculty, Dr James Walker, who frequently preached in the college chapel. He says that the ticking of the clock in the chapel was inaudible when the chapel was empty, but it ticked out clear and loud upon the strained ears of the students as they waited for the next sentence from the preacher. Among the sermons which Hoar recalled after sixty years, was one which he says no hearer could forget to the day of his death. It was on the text: "Thou shalt say, No."

I can hardly hope for a like impression. I can hardly dare to expect that, fifty years from tonight, this text will sound in the memory and conscience of some young man or woman who hears the sermon tonight. Yet, it may be, that the easily remembered words of this text will be used of God to strengthen and fortify a life and to turn a soul back from temptation. -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2436 -- PASSING THE TEST

Mark was very poor at spelling. On examination day he was stumped by many difficult words. Softly the tempter whispered, "Look at Jane's paper; she's an honor student and always gets them right!" Mark heeded the suggestion and copied several answers. The teacher noticed his actions and was greatly surprised, for she had always thought of him as an honest boy. When it came time to collect the completed work, she observed that Mark was having an inner struggle. After bowing his head for a moment, he suddenly tore up his paper. Although at first he had yielded to temptation, he finally decided to take a zero rather than be dishonest. Calling the boy to her desk, the teacher said, "I was watching you, Mark, and I want you to know that I'm very proud

of you for what you did just now. Today you really passed a much greater examination than your spelling test!"

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TEMPTATION -- RESISTING

2437 -- TOO CLOSE TO HIS PRICE

In the days of the Civil War, it was illegal to trade in cotton; but many unscrupulous speculators tried to buy cotton in the South, run it through the Union lines, and sell it at great profit in the North. One of these speculators approached a Mississippi steamboat captain and offered him \$100 if he would run his cotton up the river for him. The captain declined, reminding him that it was illegal. "I will give you \$500," said the man. "No," answered the captain. "I will give you \$1000." "No," the captain said again. "I will give you \$3000." At that, the captain drew his pistol, and pointing it at the man, he said, "Get off this boat! You are coming too near my price." -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- SEDUCERS

2438 -- ANOTHER VICTIM APPROACHING

In the national gallery in Stockholm, there is a remarkable, almost terrible, painting. I do not know that it has a name, but it needs no name. A path winds in and out among the rocks along the side of a mountain. Just above the path there is the opening to a cave in the rocks. At the entrance stands, what seems at first to be a beautiful woman. It is a woman's head and face, but the head is set on the lithe and sinewy body of a lion. Below this beast with the woman's face, are torn robes, and the rocks are splashed with blood. The cold steel eyes in the beautiful face are turned toward the path, along which may be seen approaching, another victim. Who ever painted the picture preached a great sermon. Many a young man would do well to get a copy of that painting and hang it on the wall of his room; and underneath it let him write the words of Paul: "If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy." (I Cor 3:17) -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- VOLUNTARILY ENTERING INTO

2439 -- HE WAS SOON A DRUNKARD AGAIN

William Jennings Bryan used to tell of a man in his home town in Illinois who had been the victim of drink. He reformed, signed the pledge, and apparently was delivered out of his evil habit. But, when he rode into town, he continued to hitch his horse to the rail in front of the tavern. He pitched his tent toward Sodom, and soon was again a drunkard. The way to avoid evil is to avoid the appearance of it. -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- VOLUNTARILY ENTERING INTO

2440 -- ONCE TOO OFTEN

A tamer of wild beasts in London had a boa constrictor, cared for by him from the time when it was little till it had grown to an enormous size. At the close of his exhibition, the animal glided forward on the stage, and at a word of command rose upon him fold after fold, till at length the man was hidden from sight and the horrible head of the monster waved aloft in the air. The audience began to cheer wildly, when suddenly, they were still with horror. A scream of agony had come from the center of that serpent mass, and then as all listened appalled they heard the bones of the tamer crack one after another and all was still. The serpent had become the master. He had been toyed with once too often. That is what sin does for its victim. -- Addison P. Foster

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TEMPTATION -- WORLDLY SNARES

2441 -- BEANS OF THE DEVIL

The other day I was going down the street, and I saw a drove of pigs following a man. This excited my curiosity so much that I determined to follow. I did so, and, to my great surprise, I saw them follow him to the slaughterhouse. I was anxious to know how this was brought about, and I said to the man: "My friend, how did you manage to induce those pigs to follow you here?" "Oh, did you not see?" said the man. "I had a basket of beans under my arm, and I dropped a few as I came along and so they followed me."

So it is spiritually. The devil has his basket of beans under his arm, and he drops them as he goes along, and what multitudes he induces to follow him to an everlasting slaughterhouse! Yes, friends, and all your broad and crowded thoroughfares are strewn with the beans of the devil." -- Rowland Hill

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TEMPTATION -- YIELDING TO

2442 -- DISTRACTIONS

If a child is playing with a toy you don't want him to have, how can you get it away from him? Take it by force, and he'll bawl for hours. The better way is to distract his attention by interesting him in something else. Then while his attention is diverted, you can take away the toy. Oddly enough, that's exactly how the devil tempts us. The lure of wealth or fame or pleasure distracts us and lets him take from our hearts our trust in God.

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TEMPTATION -- YIELDING TO

2443 -- EVIL IMAGINATION

A celebrated Italian scholar spent his days and nights in his library among his precious volumes. One morning, he was found dead in his chair. The light still burned in his lamp. There was no wound or mark of violence, no sign of struggle. The cause of the scholar's death remained a mystery, until, upon drawing back of the sleeve of his robe, his friends saw on his wrist a tiny spot of red. Then they understood the cause of his death. The red mark told of the bite of an asp. The scholar had opened an old volume in which the small, but venomous, creature made its home and it had stung him to death.

What happened to that scholar in actual life often happens figuratively to those who defile the imagination with an evil book. Through unrestrained indulgence of thought and desire, men are led into wickedness and sin before an evil thing is done in the visible world. It is always done first in the realm of the heart. The world sees the outer fall, but not the inner fall which long antedates the outer. Evil thoughts and imaginations secretly indulged in work silently like miners, sapping a wall and give no intimation of their approach to the fortress of the soul. When men are overthrown by a given temptation, it is not so much this particular temptation that has overwhelmed them, as the things which led up to, and prepared the way for, that temptation.

A few summers ago, I visited Lake Trasimeno, where in 217 B.C., Hannibal, invading Italy, overwhelmed the Roman army sent against him. It was not so much the assault of the Carthaginian army in the gray mists of that fatal morning which accounted for the overthrow of the Roman Legions, as the steps and maneuvers taken by Hannibal to get the Roman army in that dangerous position between the mountains and the sea, where escape was impossible.

So is it with the disasters which overtake the soul: the real damage is wrought before men see that anything is wrong. -- McCartney

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TEMPTATION -- YIELDING TO

2444 -- WHY EVIL MUST BE SHUT OUT ENTIRELY

The Arabs have a fable of a miller who one day was startled by a camel's nose thrust in the window of the room where he was sleeping. "It is very cold outside," said the camel. I only want to get my nose in." The nose was let in, then the neck, and finally the whole body. Presently, the miller began to be extremely inconvenienced by the ungainly companion he had obtained in a room certainly not large enough for both. "If you are inconvenienced, you may leave," said the camel; "as for myself, I shall stay where I am." There are many such camels knocking at the human heart. -- C. H. Spurgeon.

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TEN COMMANDMENTS

2445 -- NO, THE COMMANDMENTS AREN'T OUT -- TED IS OUT!

Cable TV mogul Ted Turner proclaimed himself "news king" yesterday, and declared the Ten Commandments obsolete.

Turner, creator of Cable News Network, told members of the National Newspaper Association in Atlanta that the biblical Ten Commandments do not relate to current global problems, such as overpopulation and the arms race.

"We're living with outmoded rules," Turner said. "The rules we're living under is the Ten Commandments, and I bet nobody here even pays much attention to 'em, because they are too old.

"When Moses went up on the mountain, there were no nuclear weapons, there was no poverty. Today, the commandments wouldn't go over. Nobody around likes to be commanded. Commandments are out."

* * *

TESTIMONY

2446 -- A GREATER ALLEGIANCE

Every Christian ought to be ready to stand up courageously and unashamedly for the Lord. How inconsistent that a person redeemed by the blood of Christ experiencing saving power should cower before an unbelieving world!

On one occasion Frederick the Great invited some notable people to his royal table. Including his top-ranking generals. One of them by the name of Hans von Zieten declined the invitation because he wanted to partake of communion at his church. Some time later at another banquet Frederick and his guests mocked the general for his religious scruples and made jokes about the Lord's supper. In great peril of his life, the officer stood to his feet and said respectfully to the monarch, "My lord, there is a greater King than you, a King to whom I have sworn allegiance even unto death. I am a Christian man, and I cannot sit quietly as the Lord's name is dishonored, His character belittled, and trembled in silence, knowing that von Zieten might be killed. But to their surprise, Frederick grasped the hand of this courageous man, asked his forgiveness, and requested that he remain. He promised that he would never again allow such a travesty to be made of sacred things. (Romans 1:16)

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TESTIMONY

2447 -- CHRIST AND THE PUZZLE

Keith Miller, in his book, *A Second Touch*, tells of a business man who one night turned his life over to Jesus Christ. After struggling along on his own strength, the next morning he was late for his train. In his hurry, he bumped into a small boy with a puzzle in his hand, scattering the puzzle pieces across the sidewalk. Instead of rushing on, he stopped, stooped down and helped pick up the puzzle while the train moved out of the station. After he had finished, the little lad looked up into his face and asked, "Mister, are you Jesus?" Then said the man, "I realized that at least in some small way, Christ truly was in my heart." What witness of Christ shows through your life?

* * *

TESTIMONY

2448 -- SHE'S TOUGH TO GET ALONG WITH

It was testimony night in the church. A lady got up and said, "We are living in a wicked land where sin is on every hand. I have had a terrible fight with the old devil all week."

Where upon her husband, who was sitting glumly by her side said, "It's not all my fault either; she's tough to get along with."

* * *

TESTIMONY

2449 -- SLAIN FOR HIS REJECTED TESTIMONY

A North American Indian returned to his tribe to recount the wonders he had witnessed in the white man's capitol city, Washington D. C.. His fellow tribesmen listened to him with doubt, until he declared that he had seen the white people attach a great ball to a canoe and so rise into the clouds and travel the heavens. This was pronounced to be an impossibility, and a young warrior, in a paroxysm of anger, leveled a rifle at his head and shot him dead on the spot, as too great a liar to be permitted to live.

Even thus, multitudes have, in deep spiritual ignorance, rejected the truth of the gospel and put to death many who have borne witness of its power and accomplishments in their own lives. --
Dictionary Of Illustrations

* * *

TESTS -- SPIRITUAL

2450 -- BEING TEMPTED VERSE BEING TESTED

Alexander MacLaren, in a sermon entitled "Faith Tested and Crowned," distinguished between being tempted and being tested or tried. He said that, "the former word conveys the idea of appealing to the worst part of man, with the wish that he may yield and do the wrong. The latter means an appeal to the better part of man, with the desire that he should stand. Temptation says, 'Do this pleasant thing; do not be hindered by the fact that it is wrong.' Trial or proving says, 'Do this right and noble thing; do not be hindered by the fact that it is painful.' The one is a sweet, beguiling melody, breathing soft indulgence and relaxation over the soul; the other is a peeling trumpet-call to high achievements."

Satan tempts us to bring out the worst in us; God tests us to bring out the best in us.

* * *

TESTS -- SPIRITUAL

2451 -- BLESSING OUT OF BOLL WEEVIL DESTRUCTION

In 1910, the boll weevil wiped out the cotton crop in the south, forcing southern farmers to diversify by planting peanuts and other new crops. The change brought prosperity to the region. Growers in Enterprise, Alabama, were so grateful to the destructive beetle for ending their one-crop dependency that they eventually erected a monument to him in their town square in 1919. Time has a way of putting things into the right perspective.

* * *

THANKFULNESS -- EXAMPLES OF

2452 -- NO WORD OF COMPLAINT

One of God's faithful missionaries, Allen Gardiner, experienced many physical difficulties and hardships throughout his service to the Savior. Despite his troubles, he said, "While God gives me strength, failure will not daunt me." In 1851, at the age of 57, he died of disease and starvation while serving on Picton Island at the southern tip of South America. When his body was found, his diary lay nearby. It bore the record of hunger, thirst, wounds, and loneliness. The last entry in his little book showed the struggle of his shaking hand as he tried to write legibly. It read, "I am overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God." Think of that! No word of complaint, no childish whining, no grumbling at the circumstances -- just praise for God's goodness.

* * *

THANKFULNESS -- EXAMPLES OF

2453 -- THANKFUL HEARTS FIND HEAVENLY BLESSINGS

"If one should give me a dish of sand, and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my clumsy fingers, and be unable to detect them; but let me take a magnet, and

sweep through it, and it would draw to itself the most invisible particles. The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day, and as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find some heavenly blessings." -- Henry Ward Beecher

* * *

THANKFULNESS -- EXAMPLES OF

2454 -- THE FLEAS ELIMINATED GUARD INTERFERENCE

Corrie Ten Boom in *The Hiding Place* relates an incident which taught her this principle. She and her sister, Betsy, had just been transferred to the worst German prison camp they had seen yet, Ravensbruck. Upon entering the barracks, they found them extremely overcrowded and flea-infested. Their Scripture reading that morning in 1 Thessalonians had reminded them to rejoice always, pray constantly, and give thanks in all circumstances. Betsy told Corrie to stop and thank the Lord for every detail of their new living quarters. Corrie at first flatly refused to give thanks for the fleas, but Betsy persisted. She finally succumbed. During the months spent at that camp, they were surprised to find how openly they could hold Bible study and prayer meetings without guard interference. It was several months later when they learned that the guards would not enter the barracks because of the fleas. -- Corrie Ten Boom

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THANKFULNESS -- EXHORTATIONS TO

2455 -- DON'T MENTION IT

We're not very good at saying "Thank you," are we? We're like a little boy I heard about. On his return from a birthday party, his mother queried, "Bobby, did you thank the lady for the party?"

"Well, I was going to. But a girl ahead of me said, 'Thank you,' and the lady told her not to mention it. So I didn't."

* * *

THANKFULNESS -- EXHORTATIONS TO

2456 -- SPRINGS OF INGRATITUDE

In some parts of Mexico hot springs and cold springs are found side by side -- and because of the convenience of this natural phenomenon the women often bring their laundry and boil their clothes in the hot springs and then rinse them in the cold ones. A tourist, who was watching this procedure commented to his Mexican friend and guide: "I imagine that they think old Mother Nature is pretty generous to supply clean hot and cold water here side by side for their free use?" The guide replied, "No señor, there is much grumbling because she supplies no soap."

* * *

THANKFULNESS -- EXHORTATIONS TO

2457 -- THINK AND THANK

Moses Montefiore, the British philanthropist, had this motto in his home: THINK AND THANK. It reflects the fact that the word thankfulness comes from an old Anglo-Saxon term that meant "thankfulness."

If we pause to think about the abundance that God has showered on us, we will discover many reasons to express our gratitude to Him. Unfortunately, it's all too easy to take God's goodness for granted. For example, most of us have food, clothing, and shelter. Yet in some parts of the world, even in highly developed countries, many people fight hunger, poverty, and homelessness.

* * *

THANKLESSNESS

2458 -- THOSE WHO DIDN'T OFFER THANKS

An honest farmer was asked to dine with a gentleman, and there asked a blessing at the table, as he was accustomed to do at home. His host said jeeringly, "That is old-fashioned! It is not customary nowadays for well-educated people to pray at the table." The farmer answered that with him it was customary, but that some of his household never prayed over their food. "Ah, then," said the gentleman, "they are sensible and enlightened. Who are they?" The farmer answered, "They are my pigs." -- Christian Herald

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THANKSGIVING

2459 -- A FOURTH-GRADER'S REPORT

I heard about a little fourth-grader who stood up to give a report concerning the origins of the Thanksgiving holiday. Here's how he began: "The pilgrims came here seeking freedom of you know what. When they landed, they gave thanks to you know who. Because of them, we can worship each Sunday, you know where."

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THANKSGIVING

2460 -- FIRST PROCLAMATION AFTER PLYMOUTH

Governor Bradford of Massachusetts made this first Thanksgiving Proclamation three years after the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth:

"Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings." -- William Bradford

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THANKSGIVING

2461 -- THANKS

Rudyard Kipling at one time was so popular that his writings were getting ten shillings per word. A few college students, however didn't appreciate Kipling's writings; they facetiously sent him a letter enclosing ten shillings. It read, "Please, send us your best word." They got back a letter from Kipling, "Thanks."

* * *

THANKSGIVING

2462 -- THANKSGIVING DAY

History of the National Holiday

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday in the United States commemorating the harvest of the Plymouth Colony in 1621. The event followed a winter of great hardship.

When it was first inaugurated, only a few eastern states participated. However, through the effort of Sarah Hale a change was effected. She was fired with the determination of having the whole nation join together in setting apart a national day for giving thanks "unto Him from who all blessings flow." To this end, she resolutely engaged the press with an endless flow of letters and articles to the various newspapers and journals of her time. In addition, she pleaded long and earnestly with three Presidents: Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan during the period of 1852, when her campaign succeeded in uniting 29 states in marking the last Thursday of November as "Thanksgiving Day."

Then came the dark days of the Civil War. Who would listen to a lone woman with her persistent plea for "just one day of peace amidst the blood and the strife"? One man did; her entreaty won the ear of a great American, and in 1863 President Abraham Lincoln officially proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a day set apart for the national giving of thanks unto Almighty God. Lincoln lived to see only two such occasions, but Sarah Hale lived well on into her late 90's, content that her long-cherished hope had at last become a reality.

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THANKSGIVING

2463 -- THE ORIGIN OF THANKSGIVING DAY

Thanksgiving Day in the United States is an annual day of thanks for the blessings of the past year, observed on the fourth Thursday in November in each of the states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. It is a historical, national, and religious holiday that began with the Pilgrims. After the survival of their first colony through the bitter winter, and the gathering of the harvest, Gov. William Bradford of Plymouth Colony issued a thanksgiving proclamation in the autumn of 1621. This first thanksgiving lasted three days, during which the Pilgrims feasted on wild turkey and venison with their Indian guests.

Days of thanksgiving were celebrated sporadically until, on Nov. 26, 1789, President Washington issued a proclamation of a nationwide day of thanksgiving. He made it clear that the day should be one of prayer and giving thanks to God. It was to be celebrated by all religious denominations, a circumstance that helped to promote a spirit of common heritage.

Credit for establishing this day as a national holiday is usually given to Sarah J. Hale, editor and founder of the Ladies' Magazine (from 1828) in Boston. Her editorials in the magazine and letters to President Lincoln urging the formal establishment of a national holiday of thanksgiving resulted in Lincoln's proclamation in 1863, designating the last Thursday in November as the day. Succeeding presidents annually followed his example, except for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who in 1939 proclaimed Thanksgiving Day a week earlier -- on the fourth but not the last Thursday -- to encourage holiday shopping. In 1941, Congress adopted a joint resolution setting the date on the fourth Thursday.

A traditional Thanksgiving dinner takes place yearly at the White House and in almost every American home. Roast turkey and pumpkin pie are among the symbols of this festival. An ancient harvest symbol, the cornucopia, or "horn of plenty," has also been attached to Thanksgiving. Schools and businesses close for this day of family reunion and national, rather than individual, giving of thanks.

In Canada a legal Thanksgiving Day is observed, usually on the second Monday in October.-- Sula Benet

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THINGS

2464 -- LIVINGSTONE'S EVALUATION OF THINGS

I recall that day standing on the threshold of a little home of a village in Lanarkshire, Scotland. It was a very small and humble home where one day years ago a family arose early to bid farewell to a son. After a frugal meal of porridge and bread a young man named David read the 121st Psalm, offered a prayer, and trudged over a muddy road to Glasgow, where he took ship for Africa. The years passed, and David Livingstone, out of that humble home was found dead on his knees by his hand made cot in a little hut of long grass in country of Illala. The natives of the village carried his body 1,200 miles over river and mountain and through jungles of an enemy country until one day it was lowered in the tomb in Westminster Abbey.

Last summer I stood before that grave and I wondered by what process one could argue from a birth so humble to a grave so glorious. Then I remembered what David Livingstone had written across his life, "I put no value on anything I possess save in terms of the Kingdom of God."

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TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2465 -- A QUOTATION ATTRIBUTED TO EISENHOWER

General Eisenhower is quoted as saying, "The urgent is seldom important, and the important is seldom urgent." Too often life is controlled by the "tyranny of the urgent". We put aside higher and more worthy goals to put out fires.

Let's evaluate the importance of all of our daily activities to be sure we're not victims of the "Tyranny of the Urgent".

* * *

TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2466 -- A TIME TO SPEAK -- A TIME TO KEEP SILENCE

Driving down the Georgia coast a few years ago, without any particular reason for doing so, I turned aside from the main highway, and driving through the marshes celebrated in the songs of Sidney Lanier, crossed over to St. Simon's Island, an enchanting spot washed by the waves of the Atlantic and shaded by immense live oaks. I had heard that John Wesley once preached beneath an oak tree on this island when he was in Georgia. Remembering that the oak was in the old churchyard, I entered the quiet acre so that I might stand beneath that historic tree. Walking along the path by the graves, I was suddenly arrested by the sight of a familiar name. I stopped in surprise, and read the name and dates again to make sure. But there was no mistake. There it was -- "Lucien Lamar Knight," one of my classmates in the seminary.

Long after the time when most men enter the ministry, he felt the urge to preach the gospel, gave up a lucrative post as associate of the celebrated Henry Grady on the Atlanta Constitution, and entered theological seminary. There, his notable gifts were remarked by all, and everyone predicted for him a brilliant and useful career in the ministry. But an unfortunate marriage wrecked his career as a preacher, and led him to resign from the ministry. He gave himself to historical studies and was, for a time, state historian of Georgia.

On his grave, was an eloquent epitaph which he himself had prepared, speaking not of himself but of his desire to sleep in those beautiful and historic surroundings, which recalled to me the accents of his silvery tongue as I remembered him preaching in his seminary days.

To me, there was something deeply moving, stirring, and arresting in my coming suddenly upon the grave of a classmate on the lonely and remote island. It seemed as if the hand of Providence had turned me aside from the main road and the beaten highway southward, and brought me to this island grave of my old friend under the shadow of the mournful oaks. Standing there, I thought of the eloquent tongue now stilled in that grave and these words came to me: "There is...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." (Eccles 3:7)

I did not think of them in the way they are usually taken -- a time when speech is silver and silence is golden. What I thought was, that there is a time when we can speak, when we ought to speak, and also a time when we cannot speak, even if we would. My friend and classmate had come to a time when, so far as this life was concerned, he could speak no longer. It was not strange, then, that this sudden coming on his resting place on that lonely island should have filled me with a new desire to speak more earnestly in the great accents of the gospel while I have the opportunity, and while it is called Today. -- McCartney

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TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2467 -- IF I COULD LIVE THOSE DAYS AGAIN

I looked upon a farm one day.
That once I used to own;
The barn had fallen to the ground.
The fields were overgrown.

The house in which my children grew.
Where we had lived for years--
I turned to see it broken down.
And brushed aside the tears.

I looked upon my soul one day.
To find it too had grown
With thorns and nettles everywhere.

The seeds neglect had sown.

The years had passed while I had cared
For things of lesser worth:
The things of Heaven I let go
When minding things of Earth.

To Christ I turned with bitter tears.
And cried, "O Lord, forgive!
I haven't much time left for Thee,
Not many years to live."

The wasted years forever gone,
The days I can't recall;
If I could live those days again.
I'd make Him Lord of all.

-- Theodore W. Brennan

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TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2468 -- JUST A MINUTE

Just a tiny little minute -- only sixty seconds in it,
Forced upon me. Can't refuse it.
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
I must suffer if I loose it,
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it.

-- Selected

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TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2469 -- NO LEISURE TO LOOK UP INTO HEAVEN

Though the following story comes from the distant past, it speaks forcefully to the present: King Henry IV of France once asked the Duke of Alva if he had observed the great eclipse of the sun that had recently occurred. "No," said the duke, "I have so much to do on the earth that I have no leisure to look up into heaven." Commenting on this, Thomas Brooks said, "It is sad to think how heart and time are so taken up with earthly things that we have no leisure to look to Christ and the things that belong to everlasting peace." Yes, how foolish is the person who caters entirely to

this temporal world! It gives only momentary pleasure, and cannot bring the eternal rewards of Heaven. Jesus told us, "...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mt. 6:33).

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TIME -- RIGHT USE OF

2470 -- SOMETHING OF MORE VALUE

A flurry of magazine articles has probed what seems to be a growing trend among those at the top of American business. A surprising number of high-level managers, corporate presidents and chief executive officers, and Wall Street wizards are simply walking away from their positions. Their reasons? A simpler life, more time with family, less travel or stress, or the chance to follow a dream. The sudden resignation of one top Wall Streeter sent shock waves all over the financial world. While most struggle to imitate these people's attainments, they have found something that outweighs the value of what they used to have.

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TIMING -- GOD'S

2471 -- HOW THE MILKMAN FOUND CHRIST

A poor seamstress was troubled because she had never won anybody to Christ. She determined to speak to the milkman next morning. Before daylight she was up waiting for him to come. Opening the door she greeted him and said, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" Dropping his pails he said, "Little woman, why do you talk to me like this? For two nights I have been unable to sleep, and the burden of it all is that I am not a Christian. I am in the darkness. If you know how to find the light tell me." So she told him how she had been saved, and he was saved that morning. -- Selected

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TIMING -- SOMETIMES CRUCIAL

2472 -- THE PROVIDENTIAL MOMENT TO DECIDE

Once, to every man and nation,
Comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood,
For the good or evil side;
The great call of God's Messiah,
Offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand,
And the sheep upon the right.

And the choice goes by forever,
'Twixt that darkness and that light.

(Adapted by D.V.M.. Written by J. R. Lowell)

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TIMING -- SOMETIMES CRUCIAL

2473 -- TO ILLUSTRATE ONLY

I heard or read a humorous story about a fellow who decided to run his rotary lawn mower over a frog and butcher it with the blade. To his amazement, however, after he ran the mower over the frog, there it was still in one piece. He did this several times, and always the frog would be there in one piece without a mark on him. Finally, the fellow ran the mower over the top of the frog, and left it there with the blade whizzing around. Then, he kneeled down and peered underneath to see how it was that the mower blade never did hit him. What do you think? When he looked under his mower, there the frog was jumping that blade like a jump-rope every time it spun around with perfect timing! Can you believe it!? No? Well, I don't either, and it doesn't sound too smart to be looking under a lawnmower with the blade whizzing away. Don't do that, but the story illustrates what I'm trying to get across -- timing is sometimes crucial. Especially is this so when we are walking with God. We should neither lag behind nor run ahead, for the consequence of either could be eternally fatal. -- Duane V. Maxey

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TIMING -- SOMETIMES CRUCIAL

2474 -- WHAT TIME IS IT BY HEAVEN'S CLOCK?

A contributor to the Reader's Digest tells this one: "One evening in Albany, New York, I asked a sailor what time it was. He pulled out a huge watch and replied, "It's 7:20." I knew it was later. "Your watch has stopped, hasn't it?" I asked. "No," he said, "I'm still on Mountain Standard Time. I'm from southern Utah. When I joined the navy, Pa gave me this watch. He said it'd help me remember home. When my watch says 5 a. m., I know Dad's rollin' out to milk the cows. And any night when it says 7:30 I know the whole family's around a well-spread table, and Dad's thankin' God for what's on it and askin' Him to watch over me, I can almost smell the hot biscuits and bacon. It's thinkin' about those things that makes me want to fight when the goin' gets tough," he concluded, "I can find out what time it is where I am easy enough. What I want to know is what time is it in Utah." -- Reader's Digest

What time it is by Heaven's clock is what matters, not what time it is in this world. --
Duane Maxey

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TITHING

2475 -- GOD IS OUR FIRST CREDITOR

A. A. Hyde, a millionaire manufacturer, said he began tithing when he was one hundred thousand dollars in debt. Many men have said they consider it dishonest to give God a tenth of their incomes when they were in debt. Mr. Hyde said he agreed with that thought until one day it flashed upon him that God was his first Creditor. Then he began to pay God first and all the other creditors were eventually paid in full. If a man owes you money, it would be wise business policy on your part to encourage him to pay his debt to God first. -- Sunday School Times

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TITHING

2476 -- WILLIAM COLGATE, THE SOAP MAN

Many years ago a lad of sixteen years left home to seek his fortune. All his worldly possessions were tied in a bundle, which he carried in his hand. As he trudged along he met an old neighbor, the captain of a canal boat, and the following conversation took place, which changed the whole current of the boy's life:

"Well, William, where are you going?" "I don't know," he answered, "Father is too poor to keep me at home any longer and says I must now make a living for myself." "There's no trouble about that," said the captain. "Be sure you start right, and you'll get along finely." William told his friend that the only trade he knew anything about was soap and candle making, at which he had helped his father while at home. "Well," said the old man, "let me pray with you once more, and give you a little advice, and then I will let you go." They both knelt down upon the towpath; the dear old man prayed earnestly for William and then gave this advice: "Someone soon will be the leading soapmaker in New York. It can be you as well as anyone. I hope it may. Be a good man; give your heart to Christ; pay the Lord all that belongs to Him of every dollar you earn; make an honest soap; give a full pound, and I am certain that you will be a prosperous and rich man." When the boy arrived in the city, he found it hard to get work. Lonesome and far from home, he remembered his mother's words and the last words of the canal boat captain. He was then led to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," and united with the church. He remembered his promise to the old captain, and the first dollar he earned brought up the question of the Lord's part. In the Bible he found that the Jews were commanded to give one tenth; so he said, "If the Lord will take one tenth, I will give that." Having regular employment, he soon became a partner. After a few years his partner died, and William became the sole owner of the business. He now resolved to keep his promise to the old captain; he made an honest soap gave a full pound, and instructed his bookkeeper to open an account with the Lord, and carry one tenth of all his income to that account. He prospered; his business grew; his family was blessed; his soap sold, and he grew rich faster than he had ever hoped.

He then gave two tenths; prospered more than ever; then he gave three tenths; then four tenths; then five tenths. He educated his family; settled all his plans for life; and gave all his

income to the Lord's work. He prospered more than ever. This is the story of Colgate, who has given millions of dollars to the Lord's cause, and left a worthy example of tithing which all would be wise to follow. -- Wayne Wiman

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TOBACCO

2477 -- A RHYME I ONCE HEARD

Tobacco is a filthy weed,
'Tis said it is the devil's seed!
It taints your breath
And stains your clothes,
And makes a chimney of your nose!

-- Duane V. Maxey

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TOBACCO

2478 -- HOW SHE KNEW HE WAS NOT AN ANGEL

A preacher out west, Mr. H____, was a good man, but very rough in his ways and very much given to chewing tobacco. One time he was riding on horseback through the country, when there came a shower. Riding up to a cabin, he hastily hitched his horse and knocked at the door. A sharp-looking old lady answered the summons. The preacher asked for shelter. "I don't take in strangers: I don't know you," replied the old lady suspiciously. "But you know what the Bible says," said the preacher. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." "You needn't quote Bible, said the old lady quickly; "no angel would come down from heaven with a quid of tobacco in his mouth as you have!" The door was shut, and the preacher unhitched his horse and made away in the rain. -- Christian Register

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TOBACCO

2479 -- SATISFACTION

A tobacco company sent packs of cigarettes to high school boys accompanied with this explanation: "We are sending you a pack of our finest cigarettes. We hope you will use them to your satisfaction and want more." One of the boys wrote back, "I received the package of cigarettes and used them to my satisfaction. I steeped them in a quart of water and sprayed our bug infested rose bushes. Every bug died. These cigarettes are sure good poison. I want more next spring if we have more bugs." -- Youth Today

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TOBACCO

2480 -- THE LINE PRESIDENT AND THE PUFFER

The manager of a leading Western railway decided to employ no one who was addicted to the cigarette habit, and posted notices to this effect in all the company offices, whereupon a freight clerk wrote to the manager as follows: "Dear Sir: I have been in this freight office for ten years. During this time I have smoked from twenty to thirty cigarettes a day, and nobody has complained about my work. To this the manager replied: "Dear Sir: If you had not kept yourself spiked down with the coffin nails, you might have been president of the road. I started in the same freight office with you ten years ago." -- Topical Illustrations

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TONGUE -- RESTRAINT OF

2481 -- 3000 VOLUMES

It is said, "The spoon always seems twice as large when you have to take a dose of your own medicine." In the light of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 12, we might paraphrase that truth, "Words which appear to be just tiny molehills of idleness and frivolity here will loom as mountains of error when we face them in the judgment!" Not only the wicked utterances of the tongue will rise up against us in that day, but for every foolish, idle word we shall also be called to give a strict account!

It has been estimated that most people speak enough in one week to fill a large 500-page book. In the average lifetime this would amount to 3000 VOLUMES or 1,500,000 pages! It is a frightening thought that by these words we shall either be "justified" or "condemned."

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TONGUE -- RESTRAINT OF

2482 -- STATISTICS ABOUT TALKING

Can it be that the average person spends one-fifth of his or her life talking? That's what the statistics say. If all of our words were put into print, the result would be this: a single day's words would fill a 50-page book, while in a year's time the average person's words would fill 132 books of 200 pages each! Among all those words there are bound to be some spoken in anger, carelessness, or haste.

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TRACTS

2483 -- HIS HEAD WAS IN A NOOSE

"There went out a sower to sow" (Mark 4:3). Mark J. Goodger, the "Highway Bible Evangelist," covers the United States every year on a bicycle, giving out tracts from door to door. At one two-story house in South Carolina he rang the bell six times because he heard sounds within. Finally a man opened the door, received the tract, and slammed the door violently in Mr. Goodger's face.

A week later he was strangely led to ring the bell of the same house. This time, the man soon appeared. He led Mr. Goodger up to the attic. At the top, Mr. Goodger immediately saw a rope dangling from the rafters, a noose at the end, and a box below. The man said, "Sir, when you kept ringing my doorbell last week my head was in that noose. I was ready to jump. Because you were so persistent, I decided to go down and see who it was.

After receiving your tract, I again returned to the garret, but I sat down because I was arrested by the title of your tract. I read the tract, and God spoke to me. Now I am trusting in the Lord." As the man sat on the box, Mr. Goodger seized his opportunity to show him clearly the way of salvation. But for a tract, the man would have been in eternity without Christ. -- Moody Church News

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TRACTS

2484 -- SAVED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

A professional diver said he had in his house what would probably strike a visitor as a very strange chimney ornament. It was the shell of an oyster holding a piece of a printed paper. The possessor of this ornament was diving on the coast when he observed at the bottom of the sea this oyster on a rock with a piece of paper in its mouth, which he detached and commenced to read through the goggles of his headgear. It was a Gospel tract! Coming to him so strangely and unexpectedly, it so impressed him that he said, "I can't hold out against God's mercy in Christ any longer, since it pursues me thus."

There in the ocean depths he became a repentant man, accepted Christ, and was assured that his sins were forgiven. "Saved at the bottom of the sea" is his testimony. Is it not wonderful that God can use even an oyster as His messenger? Perhaps God is forced to use oysters when men fail. Let's get busy for God. -- Christian Victory

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TRADITIONS -- OF MEN

2485 -- SOME TRADITIONS DIE HARD

William Poteet wrote in The Pentecostal Minister how in 1903 the Russian czar noticed a sentry posted for no apparent reason on the Kremlin grounds. Upon inquiry, he discovered that in 1776 Catherine the Great found there the first flower of spring. "Post a sentry here," she

Some traditions die hard.

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TRANSFORMATION

2486 -- THE COMPANIONSHIP OF JESUS

The New Birth brings spiritual transformation instantly. However, there is also a gradual transformation involved in one's relationship with Christ. The former effects the heart, creating an inward likeness of Christ. The latter effects the character, gradually creating an outward likeness of Christ in the daily living of the Christian.

Among the Dutch the rose was sometimes cultivated by planting an inferior rose close to a rose of superior quality. The rose of inferior quality was carefully watched and its thorns removed so as to avoid self-pollination; the object being that it should be pollinated by the superior rose. Gradually, the rose thus treated took upon itself the characteristics of the superior life of its companion. This is indeed a beautiful illustration of the blessing that comes to the life that knows the companionship of Jesus. If our lives are pollinated, as it were, by his righteousness; if His life-transforming truth is received into the heart, and self be sacrificed to make room for the incoming of his superior life, it cannot be other than that gradually the life loses its own inferior characteristics and develops the characteristics of the blessed life of him who is himself the Rose of Sharon. -- S. Gumbart

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TRIFLING -- WITH GOD

2487 -- THE REWARD OF DISHONEST TRIFLING

One day, there happened a tremendous storm of lightning and thunder as Archbishop Leighton was going from Glasgow to Dunblane. He was recognized, when at a distance, by two men of bad character. They had not courage to rob him, but, wishing to fall on some method of extorting money from him, one said, "I will lie down by the wayside, as if I were dead, and you shall inform the archbishop that I was killed by the lightning, and beg money of him to bury me."

When the archbishop arrived at the spot, the wicked wretch told him the fabricated story. The Archbishop sympathized with the survivor, gave him money, and proceeded on his journey. But when the man returned to his companion, he found him really lifeless! -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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TRIUMPH -- AT DEATH

2488 -- THE NOTE OF TRIUMPH

That useful and beloved Jewish-Christian, the Rev. Joseph S. Flacks, who passed to glory recently, mailed on the very day of his death the following post card message to friends:

"Triumphant Through Grace -- This is to announce: I moved out of the old mud house (2 Cor. 5:1); arrived in Glory-land instantly, in charge of the angelic escort (Luke 16:22); absent from the body, at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6). I find, as foretold (Psa.16:11), "in thy presence fulness of joy...pleasures for evermore!" Will look for You on the way up at the redemption of the body (Rom. 8:23). Till then look up." -- J. S. Flacks

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TRUST -- FALSE

2489 -- FOOLISH HOPE

The scene is a four engine airliner. The pilot's voice comes across the intercom: "Those of you on the left side of the plane have probably noticed that one of our engines has failed. Do not be alarmed. We can still fly on three engines, but we will probably arrive about 15 minutes late." A few minutes later the pilot's calm voice was heard again: "Those of you on the right side of the plane are probably aware that a second engine has failed. Do not be alarmed. We can make it on two engines, though we will probably be at least 30 minutes late now." A few minutes later the pilot spoke to the passengers: "It has just come to my attention that a third engine has failed. Please do not be alarmed. We can make it to the airport on one engine. However, we will arrive approximately 45 minutes late." One passenger turned to another and said, "Boy, I hope that fourth engine doesn't fail, or we could be up here all night!"

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TRUST -- FALSE

2490 -- NO WATER

A United Press release in a midwestern city told of a hospital where officials discovered that the firefighting equipment had never been connected. For 35 years it had been relied upon for the safety of the patients in case of emergency. But it had never been attached to the city's water main. The pipe that led from the building extended 4 feet underground -- and there it stopped! The medical staff and the patients had felt complete confidence in the system. They thought that if a blaze broke out, they could depend on a nearby hose to extinguish it. But theirs was a false

security. Although the costly equipment with its polished valves and well-placed outlets was adequate for the building, it lacked the most important thing -- water!

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TRUST -- IN GOD

2491 -- A POEM BY A. B. SIMPSON

Once my hands were always trying;
Trying hard to do my best;
Now my heart is sweetly trusting,
And my soul is all at rest.

Once my brain was always planning,
And my heart, with cares oppressed;
Now I trust the Lord to lead me,
And my life is all at rest.

Once my life was full of effort,
Now 'tis full of joy and zest;
Since I took His yoke upon me,
Jesus gives to me His rest.

-- A. B. Simpson

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TRUST -- IN GOD

2492 -- BUT I CAN SEE YOU

In his book *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, Brennan Manning tells about an incident which took place one day when a two-story house caught on fire. The family was making its way out of the house when the smallest boy became terrified, tore away from his mother, and ran back upstairs. Suddenly, he appeared at a smoke-filled window crying hysterically. Standing outside, his father shouted, "Jump, son, jump! I will catch you."

The boy cried, "But daddy, I can't see you."

"I know, his father called. But I can see you." That's really all that matters in threatening situations, isn't it? To know that our heavenly Father can see us.

* * *

TRUST -- IN GOD

2493 -- HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALM?

Years ago a military officer and his wife were aboard a ship that was caught in a raging ocean storm. Seeing the frantic look in her eyes, the man tried unsuccessfully to allay her fears. Suddenly she grasped his sleeve and cried, "How can you be so calm?" He stepped back a few feet and drew his sword. Pointing it at her heart, he said, "Are you afraid of this?" Without hesitation she answered, "Of course not!" "Why not?" he inquired. "Because it's in your hand, and you love me too much to hurt me." To this he replied, "I know the One who holds the winds and the waters in the hollow of His hand, and He will surely care for us!" The officer was not disturbed because he had put his trust in the Lord.

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TRUST -- IN GOD

2494 -- KEPT IN THE POSITION OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD

Richard Fuller, the 19th-century Baptist preacher, told of an old seaman who said, "In fierce storms, we must put the ship in a certain position and keep her there." Said Fuller, "This, Christian, is what you must do.... Reason cannot help you. Past experiences give you no light.... Only a single course is left. You must put your soul in one position and keep it there. You must stay upon the Lord; and, come what may -- winds, waves, cross seas, thunder, lightning, frowning rocks, roaring breakers -- no matter what, you must hold fast your confidence in God's faithfulness and His everlasting love in Christ Jesus."

Do you feel overwhelmed by your troubles? Fix your mind on the Lord. Ask for His help. Trust Him. Let Him give you peace in your storm (Phil. 4:6,7).

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TRUST -- IN GOD

2495 -- TRUSTING IN THE KING'S FAIRNESS

A skillful surgeon recently undertook the responsibility of performing a serious operation on the eyes of an Eastern monarch which proved highly successful. After the king's recovery the problem of presenting his account puzzled the doctor, for he was dubious as to what figure would correctly estimate the value of the result achieved. In Eastern countries it is a serious wrong to charge the king more or less than the actual value. Taking a blank billhead the doctor wrote across it, "The king can do no wrong," and respectfully submitted it to the monarch. His answer was a letter enclosing a sum far beyond his highest hopes. When we know not what to pray for, let us leave it to our Heavenly King, who doeth all things well. -- Christian Herald

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TRUST -- IN RICHES

2496 -- CHARLEMAGNE'S TOMB

It is said that about 200 years ago, the tomb of the great conqueror Charlemagne was opened. The sight the workmen saw was startling. There was his body in a sitting position, clothed in the most elaborate of kingly garments, with a scepter in his bony hand. On his knee lay the Holy Scriptures, with a cold, lifeless finger pointing to Mark 8:36: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and loose his own soul?"

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TRUST -- IN RICHES

2497 -- PERFECTLY CONTENTED

Many people mistakenly think they can find contentment in the things of the world. A wealthy employer once overheard one of his workers exclaim, "Oh if I only had a hundred dollars, I would be perfectly content." Knowing that his own money had not given him inner peace, he told her, "Since I would like to see someone who is perfectly contented, I'm going to grant your desire." He gave her the money and left, but before he was out of earshot, he heard her remark almost bitterly, "Why on earth didn't I say 200?" The boss smiled, for he had made his point that money doesn't make a person "perfectly contented."

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TRUTHFULNESS

2498 -- I WAS UNDER OATH

Henry Rowland served for years as a professor of physics at Johns Hopkins University. Once, while Rowland was being cross-examined during a trial in which he was an expert witness, a lawyer demanded, "What are your qualifications as an expert witness in this case.?"

"I am the greatest living expert on the subject under discussion," Professor Rowland replied quietly.

Later a friend, well acquainted with Rowland's modest and retiring disposition, told the professor he was amazed to hear him praise himself in this way. It was completely out of character. Rowland responded, "Well, what did you expect me to do? I was under oath."

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TURNING

2499 -- AIM-DAY-CO -- "TURN THIS WAY"

It is said of Miss Reside, the first woman missionary to the Kiowa Indians of Oklahoma, that after she had been with the Indians long enough for them to know what it meant to be a Christian they gave her a new name. They called her "Aim-day-co". Chief Bigtree in explaining the name said: "When we Kiowas see anyone on the wrong road we call out "Aim-day-co"! (Turn this way) Our sister came to us from a far land and found us all on the wrong road and in great danger. She stood in a new road and called to us and said, "Turn this way," and showed us the Jesus road. God bless "Aim-day-Co" -- Moody Monthly

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TURNING

2500 -- THE GREAT DIVIDE

Divide Creek is in the Canadian Rockies. At one point in its course, the stream is dissected by a large boulder. Water that flows on the west side rushes into Kicking Horse River and eventually reaches the Pacific. Water that flows on the east side pours into the Bow River, which courses into the Saskatchewan River, into Lake Winnipeg, on to the Nelson River, Hudson Bay, and finally finds its way into the Atlantic. Once the water divides at the rock, its destiny is set. There is no turning back. -- James E. Parker Jr.

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TURNING

2501 -- TURNING POINTS

Do you remember that touching story Gough tells of himself, how once he lay brutalized and insensible with drink in the gutter with the full sun of summer pouring down on his unsheltered face? Many persons passed him in the public way and doubtless turned with shuddering contempt from so foul a sight. If ever any man looked helplessly lost and ruined, it must have been Gough as he lay like a hog in the gutter that day. But at length there drew near him a woman with a Christlike heart in her, and she pitied him. She could not lift him to his feet it was useless to address him so what did she do? She noted how the sun beat perilously on the bloated face, and taking out her handkerchief she gently laid it on that face and went away.

Presently, Gough awoke. He felt the handkerchief and began to ask how it got there. At last it dawned upon him that some true heart had pitied him, and he said to himself: "I am deep enough down, God knows, but some one has thought me worth pitying and if I am worth pitying I am worth saving!" It was the turning point of Gough's life. -- W. J. Dawson

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THE END