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

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## WALK OF BELIEVERS

### 2535 -- KNOWN BY OUR WALK

A tutor of one of the Oxford colleges, who limped in his walk, was some years ago accosted by a well-known politician, who asked him if he was not the chaplain of the college at such a time, naming the year. The Doctor replied that he was. The interrogator observed, "I knew you by your limp." "Well," said the Doctor, "It seemed my limping made a deeper impression than my preaching." "Ah, Doctor," was the reply, with ready wit, "it is the highest compliment we can pay a minister to say that he is known by his walk, rather than by his conversation." -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

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## WALK OF BELIEVERS

### 2536 -- SIDETRACKED!

A man bought a new hunting dog. Eager to see how he would perform, he took him out to track a bear. No sooner had they gotten into the woods than the dog picked up the trail. Suddenly he stopped, sniffed the ground, and headed in a new direction. He had caught the scent of a deer that had crossed the bear's path. A few moments later he halted again, this time smelling a rabbit that had crossed the path of the deer. And so, on and on it went until finally the breathless hunter caught up with his dog, only to find him barking triumphantly down the hole of a field mouse.

Sometimes we as Christians are like that. We start out with high resolve, keeping Christ first in our lives. But soon our attention is diverted to things of lesser importance. One pursuit leads to another until we've strayed far from our original purpose.

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## WALK OF BELIEVERS

### 2537 -- THE GREAT STONE FACE

An interesting story by Nathaniel Hawthorne that has always intrigued me is "The Great Stone Face." A boy named Ernest is its central character. His mother told him in his earliest years about an ancient legend of their valley. She said, "Someday a man will arise, born in this neighborhood, whose countenance will resemble the great stone face which you see on the side of that distant mountain." As Ernest looked at the far-off ridge, he saw in the craggy rocks what appeared to be the features of a fine and noble individual. From then on, he spent hours concentrating on that inspiring sight. He longed for the day when he might see a real face as kind and wise as that. Carefully he scrutinized various ones in the village like Mr. Gathergold, General Blood and Thunder, and the one they called "the Poet." Each time, however, he was disappointed. Yet he never became discouraged in his search, but faithfully performed his daily duties with cheerfulness, always seeking to be helpful to others. His many good deeds increasingly won for

him the love and respect of all. One evening after many years had passed, while he was speaking to a group of neighbors, his countenance was lighted by the setting sun. Suddenly the one called "the Poet" pointed to him and exclaimed, "Look! There's the man who resembles the Great Stone Face!" And so it was! In the exercise of his faith and the pursuit of kindness and duty, Ernest himself had fulfilled the legend.

\* \* \*

## WARNINGS

### 2538 -- A FATAL FAILURE TO HEED WARNING

A tourist in Scotland some years ago, unacquainted with the nature of the coast, wandered along a path, which is only safe at low tide. Delighted with the seascape, he watched with admiration the huge waves breaking on the shore and gazed with awe at the precipitous rocks towering above him, and so entranced was he with his surroundings, he did not notice that the sea was gradually encroaching on his pathway. A native, observing from the lofty cliffs this stranger, evidently unaware of danger, descended as far as he was able with safety, and drew his attention by a loud "hulloo," and said: "If you pass this spot, you lose your last chance. The tide is rising, already the beach you have traveled is covered, and the waters are nearing the foot of the cliffs before you. By this path alone can you escape." The warning went unheeded, for the tourist thought he was able to make the turn in the road before the sea reached the cliff, but he misjudged the distance, and soon saw with alarm the danger of his position. He turned back, but alas! the sea had already cut off his way of escape. He looked at the cliffs, which were inaccessible, the waters were at his feet. He sought higher ground, but to no purpose. At last a projecting rock was seen. He reached it but the relentless waves came on. They reached him inch by inch, until they reached his neck. He uttered one despairing cry for help, but none was near. The waters covered this victim of self-confidence. He neglected the warning and perished. "There's a time, we know not when, a point we know not where, that marks the destiny of men -- for glory or despair." -- Gospel Herald

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## WARNINGS

### 2539 -- DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT

Fifty years ago Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor. The United States suffered tremendous losses, including the death of 2,400 military personnel. Franklin D. Roosevelt described December 7, 1941, as "a date which will live in infamy."

Enemy planes were still 50 minutes away when two U. S. soldiers manning a small radar station in the Pacific saw many dots show up on their radar screen. They immediately reported it to their superior officer, a young lieutenant. Assuming that the dots were U. S. planes, he said, "Don't worry about it." Tragedy followed! Someone said that one man, "at the most responsible moment of his career, failed the nation." Most of us will never face such a severe test. We all,



however, come in contact with people who need to be warned. We need to tell them that just as certainly as there is a heaven for those who put their faith in Jesus, there is a hell for those who miss the only way of escape. -- National Geographic

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## WARNINGS

### 2540 -- NO REAL WARNING

One night a man in a trap was run down at a level crossing. Consequently, the old signalman in charge had to appear in court. After a severe cross-examination, he was still unshaken. He said he had waved his lantern frantically, but all to no avail. The following day, the superintendent of the line called him into his office. "You did wonderfully well yesterday, Tom," he said. "I was afraid at first that you might waver." "No, sir," replied Tom, "but I was afraid that old lawyer was going to ask me whether my lantern was lit!"

How tragic it is, that so many Christians are "waving the lantern" in the same way, and souls are lost. -- The Sunday Companion

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## WARNINGS

### 2541 -- WARNING DISREGARDED

A gentleman was traveling in Italy in the summer months. As he left Rome, he was warned of the danger of sleeping at Baccano. He was told to travel all night rather than stop at that place, as a malignant fever prevailed there. He arrived there about bedtime. The air was balmy and the accommodation inviting. He concluded to stop for the night. Those, whose interests would be promoted by his doing so, told him there was no danger. He rose in the morning and proceeded on his journey. Some days after he had reached Florence, the fever developed itself, and he was soon in his grave.

Sinners are warned of the consequences of sinful acts. They are persuaded to disregard the warning. They sin, and the threatened consequences do not immediately appear. They think they shall escape, but ere long God's immutable law overtakes them, and they perish. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." -- Rev. Harry Rogers

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## WARNINGS

### 2542 -- YOU'RE JAMMING MY SIGNALS!

When the unsinkable Titanic sank, warning after warning had been sent to tell them they were speeding into an ice-field. But the messages were ignored. In fact, when a nearby ship sent an urgent warning, the Titanic was talking to Cape Race about the time chauffeurs were to meet arriving passengers at the dock, and what menus were to be ready.

Preoccupied with trivia, the Titanic responded to the warning: "Shut up. I am taking to Cape Race. You are jamming my signals."

\* \* \*

WASTE

2543 -- HE THREW AWAY HIS BEST TALENTS

A man past middle life came to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, bringing with him some sketches and drawings. The fumes of liquor were on his breath; his eyes were bloodshot, his hands unsteady. Rossetti saw at a glance that the drawings were hopeless, and told him so. For a moment the visitor hesitated. Then, he drew from an inside pocket another portfolio of drawings, saying they were the work of a young student. Rossetti was delighted and asked that the youth be sent to him. "Ah, sir," said the man, "I am, or rather I was, that youth. Your words, sir, have only confirmed my own suspicions. I have thrown away my best talents."

\* \* \*

WASTE

2544 -- OMNISCIENT USE, NOT DIVINE WASTE

Go to the old burying-ground of Northampton, Mass., and look upon the early grave of David Brainerd, side by side with that of the fair Jerusha Edwards, whom he loved but did not live to wed. What hopes, what expectations for Christ's cause went down to the grave with the wasted form of that young missionary, of whose work nothing now remained but the dear memory, and a few score of swarthy Indian converts!

But that majestic old Puritan saint, Jonathan Edwards, who had hoped to call him his son, gathered up the memorials of his life in a little book, and the little book took wings and flew beyond the sea, and alighted on the table of a Cambridge student, Henry Martyn.

Poor Martyn! Why would he throw himself away, with all his scholarship, his genius, his opportunities? What had he accomplished when he turned homeward from India's coral strand, broken in health, and dragged himself northward as far as that dreary khan at Tocat by the Black Sea, where he crouched under the piled up saddles, to cool his burning fever against the earth, and there died alone?

To what purpose was this waste? Out of that early grave of Brainerd, and that lonely grave of Martyn far away by the splashing of the Euxine Sea, has sprung up the noble army of modern missionaries. -- Leonard W. Bacon

\* \* \*

## WATCHFULNESS

### 2545 -- THE FALCON AND THE SHRIKE

The ancient sport of falconry employed trained hawks in the chase of wild game. When the "educated predator" was allowed to fly, however, it often rose too high for human eyes to see it against the blue sky. It was therefore not uncommon to carry a small caged bird called a shrike. The hunter could then easily tell where his hawk was located by watching the antics of the little creature in front of him, for it instinctively feared the falcon and always cocked its head to keep it in view.

The Christian desperately needs the sensitivity and perception of the shrike when it comes to the detection of his spiritual adversary! Satan, the prince of the power of the air, dwells in high places and is a master deceiver. He often subtly camouflages himself against the beautiful background of attractive people and exciting activities. His presence is hard to detect if we are not on guard.

\* \* \*

## WAY -- CHRIST THE

### 2546 -- BETTER THAN DIRECTIONS

It was a dark, stormy night, and a little child, lost in the streets of the city, was crying in distress. A policeman, gathering from the child's statement enough to locate the home, gave directions after this manner: "Just go down this street half a mile, turn and cross the big iron bridge, then turn to your right and follow the river down a little way, and you'll see then where you are." The poor child only half comprehending, chilled by the wind, and bewildered by the storm, was turning about blindly, when another voice spoke, and said in a kindly tone, "Just come with me." The little hand was clasped in a stronger one, and the corner of a warm cloak was thrown over the shoulders of the shivering child. The way home was made easy. The first one had told the way; this one condescends to be the way. -- The Expositor

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## WAY -- RIGHT

### 2547 -- THE CROWD'S ATTRACTION

Some time ago a scientific magazine published an article concerning a certain species of alligator. Being lazy beasts, they seldom hunt for their dinner but just wait for their unwary victims to come to them. They lie near the bank with open mouths, acting as if they are dead. Soon flies begin to light on their moist tongues, and several other insects gather. This crowd attracts bigger game. A lizard will crawl up to the alligator to feed on the bugs; then a frog joins the party. Presently a whole menagerie is there; then there is a sudden "earthquake" -- WHAM -- the giant jaws come together and the party is over! Here's the lesson: don't be lured by large groups of people. Remember, the crown is always found on the "broad way." The "narrow way" of life admits only individuals, one by one. Most people take the easy, downward path. You as a Christian must follow Jesus on the upward road; it is the only safe way.

\* \* \*

WAY -- RIGHT

2548 -- THE RIGHT WAY, EVIL SPOKEN OF

"You're just out of date," said young Pastor Bate to one of our faithful, old preachers who had carried for years, in travail and tears, the Gospel to poor sinful creatures. "You still preach on Hades, and shock cultured ladies, with your barbarous doctrine of blood. You're so far behind, you will never catch up; you're a flat tire, stuck in the mud." For some little while a wee bit of a smile enlightened the old pastor's face. Being made the butt of ridicule's cut did not ruffle his sweetness or grace. Then he turned to young Bate, so suave and said, "Catch up, did you say? Well, I couldn't succeed if I doubled my speed. My friend, I'm not going your way!" -- Christian Victory

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WEAKNESS -- HUMAN

2549 -- HE WAS MISTAKEN

"A few years ago -- a friend asked a strange question. 'If Satan were to blow you out of the water, how do you think he would do it?' 'I'm not sure I know,' I answered, 'but I know there's one way he wouldn't get me -- He'd never get me in the area of my personal relationships. That's one place where I have no doubt that I'm as strong as you can get.' A few years after that conversation -- a chain of seemingly innocent choices became destructive, and it was my fault. Choice by choice by choice, each easier to make, each becoming gradually darker. And then my world broke -- in the very area I had predicted I was safe. Oswald Chambers comments on the tendency of men and women to lose major personal battles not at the points of their weaknesses but, strangely enough, at the points of their perceived strengths. He wrote, 'The Bible characters never fell on their weak points but on their strong ones; unguarded strength is double weakness.' Funny! During my earlier years I'd thought we were most vulnerable at our weakest points -- until I realized from personal experience that where we perceive ourselves to be the strongest is where we're least likely to be prepared for a battle that isn't psychological or emotional. It's spiritual! -- Gordon MacDonald

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## WEARINESS -- OF LIFE

### 2550 -- GET BACK ON THE BUS!

Patsy Clairmont shares the following true story about her son, Jason:

When he was 7, I sent him off to school one day and a little while later there was a knock at the door and I opened the door and it was Jason. I said "Jason, what are you doing here?"

He said, "I've quit school!"

I said, "Why have you quit school?"

He said, "Well, it was too long, it was too hard, and it was too boring."

I said, "Jason, you have just described life, get back on the bus!" -- God Uses Cracked Pots

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## WILL -- GOD'S

### 2551 -- IT JUST AIN'T WHERE I WANT IT

After an unusually severe windstorm, Dorsey, a farmer friend of mine, called his insurance claims adjuster to come to his farm to survey the damage. One major mishap was that the barn roof had been lifted off intact and carried about 50 yards from the barn. The adjuster had been there for ten minutes when he said, "Well, it looks like you lost your roof." "Nope," Dorsey replied. "It's not lost. It just ain't where I want it." -- Mike Herbst, Olathe, Kansas

It is possible to be out of God's will without being lost. Still, like the displaced barn roof, if one is not where he or she belongs it is impossible to function as God has designed, and unless there is restoration into the place of God's purpose one is in danger of being spiritually destroyed for lack of usefulness. -- Duane Maxey

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## WILL -- GOD'S

### 2552 -- LIGHTS THAT MUST LINE UP

When I was crossing the Irish Channel one dark, starless night, I stood on the deck by the captain and asked him "How do you know Holyhead Harbor on so dark a night as this?" He said, "You see those three lights? Those three must line up behind each other as one, and when we see them so united we know the exact position of the harbor's mouth."

When we want to know God's will there are three things which always concur -- the inward impulse, the Word of God, and the trend of circumstances! God in the heart, impelling you forward. God in His Book, corroborating whatever He says in the heart; and God in circumstances, which are always indicative of His will. Never start until these three things agree.  
-- F. B. Meyer

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## WILL -- GOD'S

### 2553 -- SWEET ACCEPTANCE OF THE FATHER'S WILL

Once a minister paid a visit to a deaf and dumb asylum in London for the purpose of examining the children in the knowledge they possessed of the divine truth. A little boy on this occasion was asked in writing, "Who made the world?" The boy took up the chalk and wrote underneath the question, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Then the minister inquired in a similar manner, "Why did Jesus Christ come into the world?" A smile of delight and gratitude rested on the countenance of the little fellow as he wrote, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

A third question was then proposed, eminently adapted to call his most powerful feelings into exercise: "Why were you born deaf and dumb, while I can hear and speak?" "Never," said an eyewitness, shall I forget the look of holy resignation and chastened sorrow which sat on his countenance as he took up the chalk and wrote: "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

These were truly beautiful answers, especially the last. Many of us, I fear, think much more of our tiny troubles than did that dear boy of his one great trouble of not being able to join in conversation with those around, and hear what they said. Oh! let us remember that nothing happens by chance to those who call God their Father. If trouble fall to our lot, say, like the deaf and dumb boy, "For so it seemeth good in thy sight" -- Sunday School Evangelist

\* \* \*

## WILL POWER

### 2554 -- CARNALITY IS STRONGER THAN WILL POWER

Strong will power is no guarantee of getting a thing done. The trouble with our common worship of will power is that we leave out of account another factor that is even stronger. It is like the predicament of an old man who was wrestling with a balky mule. Concerning why he had not conquered the mule, He was asked, "Where's your will power?" "My will power's all right," came the reply, "but you ought to come out here and see this here animal's won't power." There is in all of us a "won't power" that is more powerful than the strongest will power any human being ever had. Its name is sin. -- Sunday School Times

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## WILL POWER

### 2555 -- GOD RESPECTS MAN'S FREEDOM

It was said by a celebrated orator in the House of Lords a century ago, that an Englishman's house is his castle, that the winds of heaven might enter by every window, that the rains might penetrate through every cranny, but that not even the sovereign of the land dare enter into it, however humble, without its owner's permission. God treats you in the same way. He says: "Willingly open your heart to Me, and I will give you every blessing, but I must be made welcome." -- G. Warner

\* \* \*

## WINNER

### 2556 -- THE WINNER IS THE LOSER!

"I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." Ecc. 9:11 At the close of some contests, the crowd waits anxiously, hopefully, for the decision to be announced as to who is the winner. Can you imagine how surprised and puzzled the crowd might be if the announcer proclaimed: "and the winner is...the loser!" Many might question after such an announcement, "What?" "How can the winner be the one who lost?!" Yet, paradoxically, and sometimes tragically, this is so. "In the early '20s two boys of kindergarten age staged a race across a boulevard. One boy won the race by a stride -- just enough to place him in front of an onrushing car. The winner was killed instantly! The loser escaped unhurt." (from Saints Alive) -- Duane V. Maxey

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## WISDOM

### 2557 -- SAY YOU NEED THE \$1000 YOU LOANED HIM

A young man got into a financial tangle by loaning a friend in another town \$500 without the benefit of a written note. He didn't even ask for a receipt indicating the amount loaned.

When the young man needed his money, he realized he had nothing to document his claim. In desperation he consulted his father. After a moment of consideration, the father said, "Oh, that's easy. Write him and say you need the \$1,000 you loaned him." The young man said, "You mean \$500." "No," said the father. "You say \$1,000, and he will immediately write back that he owes you only \$500. Then you will have it in writing."

If an earthly father can be clever enough to devise such a plan, imagine the possibilities available from the heavenly Father. God is the source of all true wisdom.

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#### WISDOM -- EXAMPLES OF MEN HAVING

##### 2558 -- ONLY ONE TO OUTFRAN

John and Dave were hiking when they spotted a mountain lion staring at them. John froze in his tracks, but Dave sat down on a log, tore off his hiking boots, pulled a pair of running shoes from his backpack and hurriedly began to put them on.

"You can't outrun a mountain lion!" John hissed.

"I don't have to," shrugged Dave. "I just have to outrun you."

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#### WISDOM -- PROMISED

##### 2559 -- GOD'S PROMISED WISDOM SHOULD BE OBTAINED

The superintendent of the Ohio State House at Columbus decided that the oil paintings which hang in the rotunda needed to be cleaned. He gave his force of janitors orders to that effect and said no more about it. The janitors went to work as though they were going to scrub windows, and washed the priceless paintings with common soap and water, and it is feared that some of them, if not all, are badly damaged. Some people go about trying to restore people who have wandered from righteousness with the same lack of skill and delicacy. We should all seek that spiritual wisdom and gentleness of love that will make us wise in restoring souls. David's grandest tribute to God is: "He restoreth my soul." -- Banks

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#### WISDOM -- PROMISED

##### 2560 -- GOOD QUESTIONS

A little boy came to his father and asked him, "Dad, who made God?" The father, engrossed in the evening paper, responded, "Beats me, son." The little boy would not be put off. "Dad, why is the earth round?" The dad answered, "I don't know, son." The boy played for a minute, then asked, "Dad, is there life on other planets?" The father patiently answered, "Nobody knows the answer to that." Finally the boy asked his father, "Dad, do you mind me asking you all these questions?" The father put down his paper, "Why not at all son," he said, "how else are you going to learn?"



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## WISDOM -- PROMISED

### 2561 -- LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

A young man of 32 had been appointed President of the bank. He'd never dreamed he'd be president, much less at such a young age. So he approached the venerable Chairman of the Board and said, "You know, I've just been appointed President. I was wondering if you could give me some advice."

The old man came back with just two words: "right decisions!" The young man had hoped for a bit more than this, so he said, "That's really helpful, and I appreciate it, but can you be more specific? How do I make right decisions?"

The wise old man simply responded, "Experience."

The young man said, "Well, that's just the point of my being here. I don't have the kind of experience I need. How do I get it?"

Came the terse reply, "Wrong decisions!"

\* \* \*

## WISDOM -- THE SEARCH FOR

### 2562 -- I PRAYED FOR MORE LIGHT

In an interview with the great inventor of the Telegraph, Samuel F. B. Morse, George Hervey inquired, "Professor Morse, when you were making your experiments at the university, did you ever come to a standstill, not knowing what to do next?" "Oh, yes, more than once." "Then what did you do?" "I've never discussed this with anyone, so the public knows nothing about it. But now that you ask me, I'll tell you frankly -- I prayed for more light." "And did God give you the wisdom and knowledge you needed?" "Yes, He did," said Morse. "That's why I never felt I deserved the honors that came to me from America and Europe because of the invention associated with my name. I had made a valuable application of the use of electrical power, but it was all through God's help. It wasn't because I was superior to other scientists. When the Lord wanted to bestow this gift on mankind, He had to use someone. I'm just grateful He chose to reveal it to me." In view of these facts, it's not surprising that the inventor's first message over the telegraph was: "What hath God wrought!"

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## WITNESSES

### 2563 -- WITNESS BECAME EQUIVALENT TO MARTYR

In the early days of Christianity they who confessed Christ became witnesses for Christ, and so many of them died for their profession that they gave new meaning to the word "witness," making it equivalent to martyr. -- Topical Illustrations

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#### WITNESSES -- FALSE

##### 2564 -- LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE

In the early days of rail travel, crossing guards warned travelers of approaching trains. These men were especially important at night. When trains came, they stood in the middle of the road, swinging a lantern to warn coach drivers of the impending danger. One night, there was a terrible accident at a particular crossing. A coach collided with a train, killing a family of six. An inquest by the railroad authorities subpoenaed Ben, the guard on duty that night. "Ben," the chairman of the review board asked, "were you on duty the night of the accident?" "Yes, sir, I was Ben replied nervously. "Did you know the train was coming?" "Yes, sir, I did." "Did you take your place in front of the crossing?" "Yes, sir, I did." "Did you have your lantern with you?" "Yes, sir, I did." Then the chairman thanked Ben and told him to step down. The inquest closed the case without knowing the cause of the accident. Speculation was that the coach driver was drunk or blind.

Many years later, Ben lay on his deathbed, surrounded by his family. Softly he began to moan, "Those poor people. Those poor, poor people." His oldest son leaned down to hear his father. "Are you talking about the people in that coach, Dad?" "Yes. Those poor, poor people." "But, Dad! Don't you remember? There was an inquest. You were cleared; it wasn't your fault!" "They forgot to ask one question," Ben gasped. "What didn't they ask?" "They forgot to ask," Ben whispered, "if my lantern was lit." -- Chris Wiley

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2565 -- A CHANGED LIFE

A holdup man was caught and sent to prison. While there, he came face to face with the claims of the Gospel and was born again by the Spirit of God. His life completely changed, he served the rest of his sentence in an exemplary manner and was released several years later. As he was leaving, the chaplain handed him a letter written by another prisoner. It said, "I came to this place despising both preachers and the Bible. When you told me you were saved, I said to myself, 'There's another one taking the Gospel road just to get an early parole'; but Roy, I've been observing you for a couple of years, and your testimony has rung true. I kept track of you when you were in the yard exercising or working in the shop or eating your meals. you never made a slip. Now I'm a Christian, too, because I watched you! The Savior who saved you has saved me!"

Others had tried to convince him through argumentation of the claims of the Lord, but Roy had exhibited a changed life before him -- that made the difference!

\* \* \*

## WITNESSING

### 2566 -- A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

A Michigan town was blessed with a good revival. The evangelist at an afternoon meeting had asked the children to rise who would stand by the work and the Lord Jesus. In the home of an elegant family this conversation took place later in the day between a little child and her mother: "Mamma, we've got to have a blessing asked at our table." "How so, my child?" "Well, I promised this afternoon to stand by this work and to stand by the Lord. Mr. K\_\_ said we must pray and thank God for our food; and I think I'll have to do it, as you don't and pa don't. So, if you'll speak to pa about it, I'll ask the blessing."

The fact was reported to the husband, who said: "Well, it won't hurt to let the child have her own way. We ought to be glad that she is inclined to be religious. We can stand it." So, at the supper table the little one was allowed to take up the task that had been unperformed in that home. She did it about like this: "O Lord, bless us all, and have mercy upon us. There's father, he isn't a Christian. And there's mother, she isn't a Christian. Bless them. I've promised to stand by you in this work, and to stand by the meetings. Bless me. Amen." By the time the blessing was closed, four eyes were filled with tears, and the mother's heart opened for the coming in of the King of glory; and the mother, as well as the child, is a bright convert today. -- Topical Illustrations

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## WITNESSING

### 2567 -- A VOICE FROM ETERNITY

You lived next door to me for years  
We shared our dreams, our joys, our tears,  
A friend to me you were indeed--  
A friend who helped me when in need.

My faith in you was strong and sure  
We had such trust as should endure,  
No spats between us ever rose--  
Our friends were alike, also our foes.

What sadness, then, my friend, to find  
That after all, you weren't so kind.  
The day my life on earth did end--  
I found you weren't a faithful friend.

For all those years we spent on earth,  
You never talked of Second Birth,  
You never spoke of my lost soul,  
And of the Christ Who'd make me whole.

I plead today from hell's cruel fire  
And tell you now my last desire,  
You cannot do a thing for me,  
No words today my bonds will free.

But do not err, my friend, again,  
Do all you can for souls of men,  
Plead with them now quite earnestly  
Lest they be cast in hell with me.

\* \* \*

#### WITNESSING

##### 2568 -- A WISE ANSWER

I remember hearing of a young convert who got up to say something for Christ in the open air. Not being accustomed to speak, he stammered a good deal at first, when an infidel came right along and shouted out, "Young man, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, standing and talking like that." "Well," the young man replied, "I'm ashamed of myself, but I am not ashamed of Christ." That was a good answer. -- Moody

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2569 -- AN ANT'S EXAMPLE

A man once laid a piece of chocolate candy on a table. Then, picking up an ant, he put it near the delicious bon bon. He was surprised to see it take a single bite and then hurry off to inform the rest of the colony. Soon the little creature returned, followed by a long train of other ants who enjoyed the treat with him. Many Christians who have tasted that the Lord is good can learn a lesson from that little insect. Having found God's rich supply of grace, they ought to spread the glad tidings to others.

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2570 -- HE CLUNG TO EVERY WORD

As long as a person has life, there is hope for his conversion to Christ. One of Jesus' last acts on the cross was to give salvation to a dying man.

A sea captain by the name of Bjorn Kristiansen lay at the brink of death in a hospital bed. There was no pulse and no breath. A Norwegian nurse spoke to him, "Captain Kristiansen, you are dying. Do you know Jesus Christ? I'm going to pray with you." Kristiansen heard her voice, and later recalled that he clung to every word "like a lifeline." To the astonishment of the doctors, Bjorn revived. He said he had trusted Christ, and he knew he was saved.

We never know when we might be in the presence of a dying person whose spiritual condition is unknown. Our witness could mean the difference between heaven and hell for that one in life's final moments.

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#### WITNESSING

#### 2571 -- HOW TWO CAME INTO BELATED CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

I have a friend, Judge C\_\_\_, an excellent gentleman, eminent in his profession. Once a year or oftener, he was visited in the way of business by a gentleman from Texas, and a cordial friendship sprang up between the two, founded on esteem. During one of these annual visits, at the conclusion of the business the Texas gentleman said, Judge C\_\_\_, we have known each other for many years. I have the highest regard for you as a man of honor and I have no doubt you have an equal regard for me. In all this acquaintance, I am ashamed to confess I have never inquired whether you are consecrated to the service of the Master I love, nor do I know. The judge was completely broken down. "God forgive me," he cried. The ice was broken. The two Christian brothers, with flowing tears and clasped hands, begged each other's pardon and there on their knees upon the dusty office floor they held a blessed prayer-meeting, one never to be forgotten by either of the participants. If we have friends who do not know that we are Christians, we would better start such an experience and prayer-meeting as that. -- Topical Illustrations

\* \* \*

#### WITNESSING

#### 2572 -- IT ALL STARTED WITH A VISIT

A Sunday School teacher, a Mr. Kimball, in 1858, led a Boston shoe clerk to give his life to Christ.

The clerk, Dwight L. Moody, became an evangelist. In England in 1879, he awakened evangelistic zeal in the heart of Fredrick B. Meyer, pastor of a small church.

F. B. Meyer, preaching to an American college campus, brought to Christ a student named J. Wilbur Chapman.

Chapman, engaged in YMCA work, employed a former baseball player, Billy Sunday, to do evangelistic work.

Billy Sunday held a revival in Charlotte, N. C. A group of local men were so enthusiastic afterward that they planned another evangelistic campaign, bringing Mordecai Hamm to town to preach.

During Hamm's revival, a young man named Billy Graham heard the gospel and yielded his life to Christ.

Only eternity will reveal the tremendous impact of that one Sunday School teacher, Mr. Kimball, who invested his life in the lives of others.

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2573 -- MR. HEINZ

Almost everyone has heard of Mr. Heinz whose "57 varieties" of pickles have distinguished his name. One day after an evangelistic service the speaker turned to him and said, "You are a believer, but with all your energy why aren't you up and at it for the Lord?" Heinz went home in anger. That night he couldn't sleep, however, and at 4 o'clock in the morning he prayed that God would use him to lead others to the Savior. A day or so later at a meeting of bank presidents, he turned to the man next to him and told him of his joy in knowing Jesus. His friend looked at him in surprise and said, "Because I knew you were a Christian, I've wondered many times why you never spoke to me about salvation." That gentleman became the first of 267 converts -- people of different varieties, from all walks of life -- that Mr. Heinz eventually won to Christ!

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2574 -- REACHING OUT FOR OTHERS

An artist, seeking to depict on canvas the meaning of evangelism, painted a storm at sea. Black clouds filled the sky. Illuminated by a flash of lightning, a little boat could be seen disintegrating under the pounding of the ocean. Men were struggling in the swirling waters, their anguished faces crying out for help. The only glimmer of hope appeared in the foreground of the painting, where a large rock protruded out of the water. There, clutching desperately with both hands, was one lone seaman.

It was a moving scene. Looking at the painting, one could see in the tempest a symbol of mankind's hopeless condition. And, true to the Gospel, the only hope of salvation was "the Rock of Ages", a shelter in the time of storm.

But as the artist reflected upon his work, he realized that the painting did not accurately portray his subject. So he discarded the canvas, and painted another. It was very similar to the first: the black clouds, the flashing lightning, the angry waters, the little boat crushed by the pounding waves, and the crew vainly struggling in the water. In the foreground the seaman was clutching the large rock for salvation. But the artist made one change: the survivor was holding on with only one hand, and with the other hand he was reaching down to pull up a drowning friend.

That is the New Testament picture of evangelism -- that hand reaching down to rescue the perishing. Until that hand is extended, there is no Gospel -- and there is no hope for the world. -- Robert E. Coleman

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## WITNESSING

### 2575 -- SECOND HAND CLOTHES

Fred Jordan once went into Oviatt's, one of Los Angeles exclusive men's stores. He says, "A clerk came up to me: "Can I help you?" he asked. "Yes, if you sell secondhand clothing," I answered. He looked around the well-appointed shop and murmured, "I'm afraid we don't." Then he studied my clothes, and said, "If you wear secondhand clothes, they are pretty good." "They are secondhand all right." I glanced at my shoes. "They used to belong to a cow, and my coat once belonged to a sheep." The man laughed, but I had made my point, and was able to explain that as an animal died that we might have clothes, so the Son of God had to die that we might be clothed in His righteousness." -- Moody Monthly

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## WITNESSING

### 2576 -- SHARING OUR COAT

In an article on China in Eternity Magazine, the writer records a story of Christian love and kindness. "A Chinese cook was put into prison one night. It was bitterly cold. About 26 degrees below zero. He had on his padded clothes and a big fur coat. But a heathen man who was later thrown in with him had no wraps at all. The Christian man began to pray that God would get him out of prison. While he was praying, it seemed God spoke to him. 'I won't hear your prayer until you've taken off your fur coat and given it to this man who had none.' 'But if I do that, I'll be frozen to death by morning,' the man thought. 'Well, if you don't,' he seemed to hear God's reply, 'this man will be dead before morning.' So he took off his fur coat and gave it to the man and his life was saved. Later on at a Christian gathering in Communist China, the heathen man who had received the coat got up and gave his testimony. "I am here today because a man shared his coat with me in

prison." People are in need. People are suffering. The winning of souls to Christ could well depend on how willing we are to share our coat.

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2577 -- STARTING BOLDLY

A friend who is deeply interested in work for Christ among our sailors, told me that at the close of a prayermeeting of which he had been the leader, a young seaman, who had only a few nights before been converted, came up to him, and, laying a blank card before him, requested him to write a few words upon it, because, as he said, "You will do it more plainly than I can." "What must I write?" said my friend. "Write these words, sir: I love Jesus, do you?" After he had written them, my friend said, "Now, you must tell me what you are going to do with the card." He replied, "I am going to sea tomorrow, and I am afraid if I do not take a stand at once I may begin to be ashamed of my religion, and let myself be laughed out of it altogether. Now, as soon as I go on board, I shall walk straight to my bunk and nail up this sign upon it, that every one may know that I am a Christian, and may give up all hope of making me either ashamed or afraid of adhering to the Lord." -- Clerical Library

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2578 -- TAYLOR'S ADVICE TO A NEW CONVERT

Christ expects us to begin witnessing for Him from the first moment of our new life. Some make the mistake of thinking to wait until they become stronger. Hudson Taylor tells of a young Christian who had received Christ as his Saviour, but who said to the missionary that he would wait until he learned more about Him before making a public profession. "Well," said Mr. Taylor, "I have another question to ask you: When you light a candle, do you light it to make the candle more comfortable?" "Certainly not," said he, "but in order that it may give light." "When it is half burnt down, do you expect that it will first become useful?" "No; as soon as I light it." "Very well," he said, "go thou and do likewise; begin at once." Shortly after that there were fifty native Christians in the town as the result of that man's work. -- Topical Illustrations

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#### WITNESSING

##### 2579 -- TELLING THE WORLD ABOUT CHRIST

In a prayer meeting at Boston I once attended, most of those who took part were old men, but a little towheaded Norwegian boy, who could only speak broken English, got up and said : " If



I tell the world about Christ, He will tell the Father, about me." That wrote itself upon my heart, and I have never forgotten what that little boy said. -- Moody

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WITNESSING

2580 -- THE LACK OF CLEAR CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

Michael Green tells of his visit with a cancer specialist who was dying of leukemia while still in his forties. At the beginning of his illness, the man was an agnostic, but he read two books that brought him to a clear and joyful faith in the risen Christ. However, he said he felt some anger: "Why have I never had the evidence clearly put to me before?" Many of us try to keep informed about the Bible and how it applies to relevant topics like marriage, the family, abortion, and pornography. It's good when we can talk intelligently about these subjects. But it is even more important that we be prepared to show why we believe in the resurrection of Christ. People around us need to hear resurrection talk. After all, belief in the resurrection is a matter of life or death! -- Michael Green

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WITNESSING

2581 -- TOO TIMID TOO LONG

A young lady called to see a friend who was ill, and on leaving, one of the children, a sweet, intelligent little girl, took her down stairs. She was her own special favorite and pet, and yet, being naturally of an extremely reserved disposition, she had never spoken one word to her on the subject of religion. Looking down into the thoughtful, loving eyes, under a sudden impulse she asked the question: "Maud, my darling, do you love Jesus?" To her astonishment, the child stopped abruptly, and drawing her into a room which they were passing, she shut the door, and, clinging closely to her, burst into a flood of tears. Looking up at last, with a glad, happy face, she said: "Miss Alice, I have been praying for six months that you would speak to me of Jesus and now you have! Every time I have been to your house I hoped you would say something, and I was beginning to think you never would." It was a keen reproach to her friend and one that she never forgot. -- Treasury

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WITNESSING

2582 -- TRUE WITNESSES DON'T RECANT THEIR TESTIMONY

The famous Venetian traveler of the thirteenth century, when he lay dying, was urged by his attendants to recant, to withdraw the stories he had told about China and the lands of the Far East. But he said, "I have not told half what I saw."

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## WITNESSING

### 2583 -- WORTH MORE THAN KNOWLEDGE OR WORDS

We can not but admire the spirit of the Scotch woman who, when asked many questions by her minister on her application for communion, could not answer one; and on retiring, by his advice, to learn something, turned to him, and with tears on her cheeks said, "Sir, sir, I canna speak for Christ, but I can dee (die) for Him." -- Topical Illustrations

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## WITNESSING -- BE PERSISTENT

### 2584 -- HIS WORK HAD NOT BEEN IN VAIN

Perhaps you recall the story of a man who distributed tracts for many years on a street corner. Finally, seeing no visible results, he gave up. When he returned to the same spot two years later, he saw another individual handing out Gospel leaflets as he had done. Striking up a conversation, he discovered that the man had become a Christian through a salvation tract given him on that corner about two years before. The convert added, "Many times I've come back here to find that earnest worker and thank him, but he never returned. I decided he must have died, and so I've taken his place!" The first man suddenly realized that his work had not been in vain. Much encouraged he went back to giving out tracts the very next day.

It takes many blows to crack a hard boulder; and if one stops too soon, all his previous efforts go to waste, for the work of the sledge is cumulative. It is the constant pounding on the same spot that weakens the stone. This is also true of the flinty hearts of men. The Word of God, "Like a hammer," may have to be applied often before it breaks "the rock in pieces" (Jer. 23:29). So don't stop witnessing to that needy soul -- BE PERSISTENT! The next word of Scripture he hears may be the final stroke that will open his heart to the Gospel!

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2585 -- A GREAT REBIBLE

A native of India, writing to a friend about a great revival they were having said, "We are having a great rebible here." The Church needs to be rebibled. -- C. E. World

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2586 -- A HOPELESS END -- AND ENDLESS HOPE

Other men see only a hopeless end, but the Christian rejoices in an endless hope. -- Gilbert Beenken

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2587 -- ABOUT A BIBLE THAT IS FALLING APART

A Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to a person who isn't.

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2588 -- ABOUT BLOWING YOUR HORN

Get someone else to blow your horn, and the sound will carry twice as far. -- Will Rogers

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2589 -- ABOUT CYNICISM

Cynicism is cancer of the spirit. The bad cells of sarcasm attack the good cells of hope and, if undiagnosed, will eventually destroy them. -- Fred Smith

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2590 -- ABOUT FASCINATION WITH THE FUTURE

W. A. Criswell said, "We're all fascinated with the future because that is where we will live the rest of our lives."

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2591 -- ABOUT LOCAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Leadership in the local church should be determined by spirituality, not notoriety. -- Tony Evans

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2592 -- ABOUT PRAISE

"Praise is the honey of life which a devout heart extracts from every bloom of providence and grace." -- Charles H. Spurgeon

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2593 -- ABOUT REMAINING STATIONARY

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. -- Will Rogers

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2594 -- ABOUT REWARD FROM GOD

There is no reward from God to those who seek it from men. -- Spurgeon

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2595 -- ABOUT SEEKING THE LORD

Spurgeon wrote: "If you are not seeking the Lord, the Devil is seeking you. If you are not seeking the Lord, judgment is at your heels."

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2596 -- ABOUT SIN, YOURSELF, AND THE BIBLE

Sin will keep you from this Book or this Book will keep you from sin. -- Dwight L. Moody

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2597 -- ABOUT STAYING ON THE GROUND

Some prefer to stay on terra firma. Their philosophy is: "The more firmah, the less terrah!"

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2598 -- ABOUT THE ACLU

One man said of the ACLU, "You can't find one virgin or three wise men among them."

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2599 -- ABOUT THE SPEED OF FALSEHOOD

"A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes." -- Mark Twain

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2600 -- ABOUT THE WAY TO LIVE

"Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip."  
-- Will Rogers

\* \* \*

WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2601 -- ABOUT THE WEDDING RING

The wedding ring is that small piece of jewelry placed on the finger that cuts off your circulation.

No! Jewelry on your finger won't stop one's circulation among illicit romantic pursuits, but Jesus in your heart will do the job! -- Duane V. Maxey

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2602 -- ABOUT THOSE WHO DESERVE LOVE LEAST

Those who deserve love the least need it the most.

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2603 -- ABOUT THOSE WHO HUSTLE

"Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle." --  
Abraham Lincoln

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2604 -- ABOUT WHAT FAULTS ARE LIKE

Faults are like the headlights of a car; those of others seem more glaring than your own.

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2605 -- ABOUT WHAT YOU BELIEVE

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

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2606 -- ABOUT WHEN LOVE IS A MIRACLE

Sam Levison once said, "Love at first sight is nothing special. It's when two people have  
been looking at each other for years that it becomes a miracle." -- Paul Harvey

\* \* \*

WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2607 -- DISTURBANCE

Be not disturbed at being misunderstood. Be disturbed, rather, at not being understanding.

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2608 -- FALSE MODESTY

False modesty is the refinement of vanity. It is a lie. -- Jean De La Bruyere

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2609 -- IF YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL -- IF YOU FAIL

Samuel Chadwick said, "If you're successful, don't crow. If you fail, don't croak."

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2610 -- KEEPERS OF THE AQUARIUM

Paul Harvey said, "Too many Christians are no longer fishers of men but keepers of the aquarium."

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2611 -- LIKE WHEELBARROWS

Too many of us are like wheelbarrows -- useful only when pushed, and too easily upset.

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#### WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

##### 2612 -- LIVE YOUR LIFE IN SUCH A MANNER

The Indians have a wonderful saying: "When you were born, you cried, and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a manner that when you die, the world cries, and you rejoice."

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2613 -- MY NEW ADDRESS WILL BE...

Most people who fly from temptation usually leave a forwarding address.

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2614 -- NEEDS A CONDUCTOR

Christianity is like electricity. It cannot enter a person unless it can pass through. --  
Richard C. Raines

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2615 -- NO FISHING!

When God buries our sins in the deepest sea, He posts a sign which reads: No Fishing!

\* \* \*

WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2616 -- SUBPOENAED

God hasn't retained many of us as lawyers, but He has subpoenaed all of us as witnesses.  
-- Heart and Life

\* \* \*

WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

2617 -- THE MAN TO WATCH OUT FOR

The man who goes down swinging is very admirable; but the man to watch out for is the  
one who gets up swinging. -- D. O. Flynn

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WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS



## 2618 -- THE MOST DIFFICULT THING

The most difficult thing in the world is to know how to do a thing, and to watch somebody else doing it wrong -- without comment.

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2619 -- THE ONLY PLACE SUCCESS COMES BEFORE WORK

The dictionary is the only place where success comes before work.

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2620 -- THE SCRIPTURES THAT BOTHERED MARK TWAIN

Most people are bothered by those passages in Scripture which they cannot understand. The Scripture which troubles me most is the Scripture I do understand. -- Mark Twain

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2621 -- THE SHORTEST PERIOD OF TIME

The shortest recorded period of time lies between the minute you put some money away for a rainy day and the unexpected arrival of rain. -- Reader's Digest

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2622 -- WHAT A NONCONFORMIST HATES MOST

If there is anything that the nonconformist hates worse than a conformist its another nonconformist who doesn't conform to the prevailing standards of nonconformity.

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2623 -- WHAT CHARACTER IS

Character is simply long habit continued. -- Plutarch

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2624 -- WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

What makes the difference is not how many times you have been through the Bible, but how many times and how thoroughly the Bible has been through you. -- Gipsy Smith

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## WITTY AND WISE QUOTATIONS

### 2625 -- WHEN WE ARE RIGHT -- WHEN WE ARE WRONG

"Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we are right, make us easy to live with." -- Peter Marshall

\* \* \*

## WOMEN

### 2626 -- WHAT'S IN A NAME?

When the gender is unknown, why must it ever be that the person spoken of is always called a "he"? Though Women's Lib has tried to change what Adam started, when we examine certain words it makes us feel downhearted.

Chairpersons we are sometimes called; the name's a current one. But the gender isn't changed: you see, it ends in "son". Suppose we call ourselves "females", this really isn't fair. Look closely at the spelling: the "male" is ever there.

Then refer to us as "ladies", but that is just as bad -- we can't escape the male idea: the word begins with "lad".

Maybe we can just be humans; oh, what a bitter pill. No matter what we call ourselves, the "man" is with us still. Although I do not like the word, I guess I'll be a madam. Oh, no! Here we go again, we're back to that word "Adam"! -- Agnes W. Thomas

\* \* \*

## WORDS -- EVIL

### 2627 -- TWO VERBAL SWORD THRUSTS

British author and playwright George Bernard Shaw once sent Sir Winston Churchill two tickets to the opening night's performance of one of his plays. Accompanying the tickets was Shaw's terse note, "Bring a friend if you have one."

Churchill, also adept at saying a lot in a few words, replied: "I'll wait for the second night if there is one."

\* \* \*

## WORDS -- EVIL

### 2628 -- WORDS CAN SPREAD LIKE FIRE

When D. L. Moody and his family retired for the evening on October 8, 1871, Mr. Moody felt sure his family was a safe distance from a fire that was burning in another part of Chicago. But in the early morning hours the Moodys were awakened and warned to flee their home. Fanned by fierce winds, the great fire raged throughout the city, devouring everything -- including Moody's home and church -- in its path. A fire that had reportedly started in a cow's stall leveled an entire city in a matter of hours, leaving 100,000 people homeless, 17,500 buildings destroyed, and 300 people dead.

We know that words can spread like fire, too. Since words implant ideas in our minds and stir emotions, their effects for good or evil can be profound. -- Moody

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## WORDS -- KIND

### 2629 -- A WORD FITLY WRITTEN

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." A word written for Christ is also beautiful. It is a silent confession of Christ, but it may be richly blessed in leading others to confess Him. A lady once writing to a young man in the navy, who was almost a stranger, thought: "Shall I close this as anybody would or shall I say a word for my Master?" and lifting up her heart for a moment, she wrote telling him that his constant change of scene and place was an apt illustration of the word: "Here we have no continuing city," and asked if he could say, "I seek one to come." Tremblingly, she folded it and sent it off. Back came the answer, "Thank you so much for those kind words! I am an orphan, and no one has spoken to me like that since my mother died long years ago." The arrow shot at venture hit home and the young man shortly after rejoiced in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace. -- Topical Illustrations

\* \* \*

## WORDS -- WISE

## 2630 -- A COMPARISON OF WORD AMOUNTS

Consider this: The Lord's Prayer contains 56 words; the Gettysburg Address, 266; the Ten Commandments, 297; the Declaration of Independence, 300; and a recent U. S. government order setting the price of cabbage, 26,911.

It's not how long we talk, it's what we say that is so important.

\* \* \*

## WORDS -- WISE

### 2631 -- HOW THE WISE AVOID BECOMING A PREY

We would all cringe at the thought of a mouth full of gravel. Think of the pain and discomfort! But a stone in the mouth can actually be desirable -- at least that seems to be true for the cranes that inhabit the Taurus mountains of southern Turkey.

These cranes tend to cackle a lot, especially while flying. All that noise gets the attention of eagles, who swoop down and seize them for a meal. The experienced cranes avoid this threat by picking up stones large enough to fill their mouths. This prevents them from cackling -- and from becoming lunch for the eagles.

People have a problem with their mouths too. The writer of Proverbs said, "He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction." (13:3)

\* \* \*

## WORDS -- WISE

### 2632 -- MOTIVATED FLATTERY, NOT WISE WORDS

Our Pastor was teaching Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." The minister then added, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

My wife leaned over, put her head on my shoulder and whispered in my ear, "I just love to watch your muscles ripple when you take out the garbage." -- Reader's Digest

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## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

### 2633 -- NOT TIME FOR A COMMITTEE MEETING

On a freezing winter day in December 1987 three children were playing on the icy surface of a Vermont pond when the ice gave way under their combined weight. The two girls pulled themselves out, but four-year-old Zeke flailed helplessly in the water, clinging to a broken chunk of ice. Suddenly, their 80-pound dog let out a series of barks and plunged into the frigid water. She snagged Zeke's coat securely in her teeth and pulled the terrified youngster toward the bank and into shallow water, where he could stand. The dog then turned and offered her tail to Zeke. The boy grabbed it and was towed to safety.

There are times when believers find themselves in a spot similar to Zeke's. When a fellow soldier is down on the battlefield, it's not time for a committee meeting. We need to plunge in and help pull him to safety.

\* \* \*

## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

### 2634 -- SITTING STILL

Dressed as a rag doll, Melody Schick, 24, sat with a teddy bear cradled in her left arm and staring into space from a revolving platform. Only her eyes moved. Then, five hours and 43 boring minutes later she rose slowly and tried to smile. Miss Schick was seeking to beat the world record for sitting still! The previous record was 5 hours and 32 minutes. The record attempt took place at a Dallas shopping center as hundreds of shoppers watched.

There are surely some saints in the Church who could compete for that record. They have been sitting still -- metaphorically if not literally -- for years. They never become involved in the work of the local church. They criticize the church frequently, but they never participate in the program.

\* \* \*

## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

### 2635 -- THE JOB NOBODY DID

Once upon a time there were four men named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody . There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. But Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it. But Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about it, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, and Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody and Nobody did the job that Anybody could have done in the first place.

\* \* \*

## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

## 2636 -- THREE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Three men worked on a large building project. One was asked, "What are you doing?" "I'm mixing mortar," he said. The second man said, "I'm helping put up this great stone wall." When the third man was asked, he replied, "I'm building a cathedral to the glory of God."

Those three men could just as well have been working on a car, a truck, a house, a road, or any legitimate product or service a man or woman might provide. Most people work to earn a living, attain success, or amass wealth. Such reasons, however, must not be the Christian's primary motive for working. Like the third man in our story, we need to see that what gives work eternal value is not the product or service of our labor but the process of laboring itself -- doing the job faithfully to the glory of the Lord.

\* \* \*

## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

### 2637 -- WHEN HER WORK CHANGED

An executive secretary once said, "When I began to envision Jesus standing behind my boss, my work changed. I had to do my very best. Even the menial task of serving coffee became a joy, and my attitude changed from arrogance to respect." -- Worldwide Challenge Magazine

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## WORK -- RELIGIOUS

### 2638 -- WORKING TO BE SEEN OF MEN

It is to be feared that many of our protestations of consecration really mean nothing, because we mean that we will do for God what we like to do and what is pleasant to do and nothing more. Some one likens such consecration to a horse that he once possessed:

"I had a horse once that was a trifling horse, one of those highbred, blooded horses; but he would not work at anything in the world, except a red-striped buggy. Hitch him to a wagon, and he would not pull a hen off a roost; he was no good at all. But hitch him to a red-striped buggy, and he would just trot it off at a three-minute gait."

How like many members of the church! Hitch them to a prayer meeting and they won't budge; hitch them to a family prayer and they won't work at all; but Sunday morning hitch them to a red-striped buggy and they will go down the road lickity-spindle! -- Topical Illustrations

\* \* \*

## WORKERS -- PERSONAL

## 2639 -- IT TOOK ONLY A FEW WORDS SPOKEN PERSONALLY

A noted evangelist was once holding a series of services in a church whose minister was a man of long experience and of great influence. One night as they sat on the platform together the minister pointed out to the evangelist a man in the audience.

"For twelve years," he said, "I have tried to win that man to Christ; I have preached to him so long that I sometimes find myself doing it almost unconsciously."

"From the pulpit?" asked the evangelist.

"From the pulpit, yes."

"How many times have you gone to him with the love of God in your heart and said: 'I want to see you become a child of God'?"

"I must confess," said the minister, "that I have never spoken to him personally and directly concerning his salvation."

"Then," said the evangelist, "perhaps he is not beyond winning after all."

That night the evangelist, after the service, caught the man before he got to the door. He spoke only a few words, but they were earnest and loving. And the next evening in the "after service," in which many souls have found lasting peace and eternal life, the man was on his knees with the tears streaming down his cheeks. It was the personal touch that did it.

The sermon is effective with many. Music has brought salvation to many a life. But on thousands and thousands of cases it is only the personal touch that wins. -- William Thomas McElroy

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## WORKERS -- PERSONAL

### 2640 -- THE VALUE OF ONE

It was early morning. On the beach was an elderly man. He walked with a cane, carefully surveying the beach that the receding tide had left exposed. Every now and then he bent to pick something up and toss it into the ocean. I watch with fascination as he carefully scanned the beach before him. It was then that I realized he was looking for starfish. Every time he saw one lying helpless in the sand, unable to get back to the ocean on his own, he would lovingly pick it up and toss it gently back into the sea. Curious as to why he was doing this, I approached him. He told me, "The starfish are left behind after the tide goes out. If they don't get back into the ocean they will dry up and die beneath the hot summer sun."

"But there are endless miles of beach and there must be millions of starfish," I said. "Surely you don't think you can save them all. What difference can your efforts possibly make?" Slowly the old man bent over and picked up another starfish. As he tossed it into ocean he looked at me and said, "It makes a difference to that one."

I was deeply touched by this story. How easy it is to become so discouraged by the sheer magnitude of the task that Christ has set before us that we fail to focus on the value to Him of each one. We are called to be faithful in scanning those "beaches" and in making a difference to "that one" and "that one" and "that one" in the name of Christ.

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- EVIL

### 2641 -- HE GOT EVEN

The farmer had been pestered by a carload of people who delighted in climbing an orchard fence and eating his apples without asking permission.

One day, as he walked up to them, one of them smiled sheepishly and said, "We hope you don't mind that we took a few of your apples."

"No, not at all," said the farmer, "and I hope you don't mind that I took some of the air out of your tires."

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2642 -- ALWAYS POINTING TO CHRIST

We are told that in the prairies of South America there grows a flower that always inclines in the same direction. The traveler may lose his way while crossing one of these prairies, and he may have neither compass nor chart by which to steer his course, but turning to this lowly flower he will find a guide on which he can implicitly rely. No matter how heavily the rains may fall, or how violently the winds may blow, its leaves and petals invariably droop toward the north. If whilst we live, we serve a purpose analogous to that of this humble flower, we shall not have lived in vain. If we live to God, if we turn to him in faith and love and prayer and service, as the prairie flower turns toward the north, then some, seeing our good works and our comely life, will be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven. -- F. E. Marsh

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2643 -- AN UNUSUAL BURYING PLACE



Right in the middle of the highway at Midlothian, Virginia there is a singular monument to an old-time country doctor. He had done such service to the community that the people wanted to erect a memorial to him in the village while he was yet alive. But the doctor was too modest for that, and said: "When I die, you all just bury me wherever I be." Shortly afterward, as he was driving his buggy on his way to a sick patient, he died there in the middle of the road, and there today, right in the middle of the road so that you have to drive your automobile round it as you pass through the village, stands that singular monument.

\* \* \*

WORKS -- GOOD

2644 -- DO YOU PRAY ABOUT IT?

Bible scholar Adam Clarke was a very slow and deliberate worker. He therefore disciplined himself to rise early every morning and get started on his work. A young preacher who admired Dr. Clarke and wanted to follow his example asked him how he could get up early so consistently. "Do you pray about it?" the man asked. "No," Clarke responded, "I just do it."

Sometimes God wants us to take action rather than pray. Today's scripture gives us an example. Pharaoh had pursued the Israelites and seemed to have them trapped. The people cried out to God. Moses encouraged them by assuring them that the Lord would destroy the enemy. It was then that God told Moses to move ahead. The time had come to act.

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WORKS -- GOOD

2645 -- GOALS CAN HELP YOUR RESULTS

Inventor Thomas A. Edison set himself an ambitious goal. It was to come up with a major new invention every six months, a minor invention every ten days. When he died, he had 1,092 US patents and over 2,000 foreign ones.

Edison knew that by setting such goals for himself, and striving to reach them, he was bound to increase his output. The same principle applies in our work. No matter what goals you set for yourself, they are bound to help your results. Challenge yourself -- then rise to meet the challenge.

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WORKS -- GOOD

2646 -- GOOD WORKS REWARDED

Over the door to the operating theater of one of the Philadelphia hospitals, I used to read these words: "Think not the beautiful doings of thy soul shall perish unremembered. They abide with thee forever, and alone the good thou doest nobly, truth and love approve. Each pure and gentle deed of mercy brings an honest recompense, and from it looms that sovereign knowledge of thy duty done, a joy beyond all dignities of earth." -- McCartney

Yet, we must ever remember that one's good works do not guarantee an entrance into heaven, for Jesus Himself tells us that many who have done "many wonderful works" will be forced to depart from Him into everlasting fire. -- Duane V. Maxey

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2647 -- HOW TO DO YOUR BEST

In a certain factory for textile goods, part of the instructions set up in the workroom read: "If your threads get tangled, send for the foreman." One of the workers, a diligent and busy woman, got her threads tangled and she tried to disentangle them but only made them worse. After that, she sent for the foreman. He came and looked. Then he said to her: "You have been doing this Yourself." "Yes," she replied. "But why did you not send for me according to instructions?" he asked. Rather sullenly, she answered: "I did my best." And with that tact which a real leader should possess, he said quietly, "Remember, that doing your best is sending for me." -- Failure And Recovery

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2648 -- LOVE WROUGHT IT

On one of the arches in a magnificent cathedral in Europe is sculptured a face of wondrous beauty. It can be seen only once a year when the sun is in a certain position, for then its rays streaming through a small window illuminate the exquisite carving. According to legend, when the structure was being built, an old man came and begged permission to work on some portion of the great church. He had been a well-known artist, but now his trembling hands and failing sight caused the architect to fear that he would mar the beautiful edifice. Out of respect for his age and reputation, however, he allowed the artisan to chisel a design under the shadows of the vaulted roof, thinking no one would ever see it there. After months of painstaking labor, the elderly gentleman could hardly work his way up to the platform high above the floor, yet he insisted on one more climb to make a few finishing touches. When he failed to come down by nightfall, a workman went up and discovered his lifeless body. His tools lay beside him, and his sightless eyes were fixed on the marvelous face he had wrought in the marble. Although he thought it would never be seen, he had given his all to produce a masterpiece. An authority on sculpture recently declared, "This is the most magnificent work of all, for love wrought it!"

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2649 -- NOT SAVED BY SELF-SACRIFICE

When John McNeill, the Scottish evangelist, landed in France for Y. M. C. A. duty during the World War, he was introduced to the general in command, who said that he would like to give him suggestions about his preaching to the men. McNeill's biographer, Alexander Gammie, describes the incident: "What the general wanted him to do was to instruct the men that, when they went over the top, if they fell, it would be all right for them in the next world. They had died for their country. Mr. McNeill replied: General, if one of the men under your command were to win the Victoria Cross for valor, and I were to belittle the deed by which the decoration was won, you would not like it. And I want to tell you, General, that you are cheapening my Lord's sacrifice." The incident ended at that point." -- Selected

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2650 -- NOW WHAT, YOUNG MAN?

We don't always know the motives of others -- good or bad.

One minister was walking down a row of fine old Victorian homes on a cold day when he spotted a young boy on the front porch of one home. The old-fashioned doorbell was set high in the door, and the little fellow was too short to ring it despite his leaping attempts.

Feeling sorry for the youngster, the minister stepped up onto the porch and vigorously rang the bell for him. "And now what, young man?" inquired the minister.

"Now," exclaimed the boy, "we run like crazy!"

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2651 -- OUR DEAD LEVEL BEST

Some years ago in the North western University, near Chicago, a rescue crew was organized. Their purpose was the rescue of the drowning on the lake. One day the news came that a magnificent vessel was wrecked just off the shore. The young men hurried at once to the scene of the disaster, and plunged into the angry waters to rescue those who were going down. Soon they all returned, but one. Finally, he came in bringing one man with him. Immediately he returned, and soon brought another, and then another, and so on until he had rescued ten. During this time his mates had built a fire and were warming themselves, all the time trying to persuade the young hero

against his conviction of duty. By the time he had brought the tenth man he was completely exhausted, and had to rest for a while.

Regaining sufficient strength, he again plunged into the water and brought another man. Now he was completely overcome. During the night he died from exposure. It was a sad scene. While friends stood around weeping, and his fellow students were regretting that they had not forced him to do as they had, he called one of them to his bedside, and said in a low, subdued tone, just before he died: "Did I do my best?" Instantly his friend said: "Yes, I should think you did do your best. You saved eleven, but you have lost your life." "But," said he, "did I do my best, my dead level best?" "Yes, you did your dead level best." Then a smile seemed to come over his face as if to say: "Then I am satisfied to die. -- L. G. Broughton

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WORKS -- GOOD

2652 -- SENTIMENT VERSES PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Sentiment is not life; and many approve sentiments who never attempt to follow them. "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." This is a beautiful sentiment, but suppose we thus translate it: "I had rather be a hodcarrier to build a church for God than to act as architect to build a palace for myself." The sentiment is none the less beautiful, but it jars upon the nerves because it is so practical. Let your Christianity be a matter of life, and not of dreams and fancies. -- The Lookout

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WORKS -- GOOD

2653 -- THE DOCTOR IS UPSTAIRS

An old Southern doctor had his office over a drugstore. In front of the drugstore was a sign reading: "Dr. Riley is upstairs." When the old doctor died, after a long life of day and night service for mankind, he left no money even for his burial, and across account after account on his books they found the entry "Paid off". When he was buried, his friends wanted to put up some memorial or stone on his grave. They had no money for an expensive stone or marker, so they set up over his grave the sign that was in front of the drugstore, and that was his beautiful epitaph: "Dr. Riley is upstairs." -- McCartney

If indeed he shall be in heaven, however, it will be because of what Christ did for him at Calvary, and not because of what he did for others. Sometimes the good deeds of kindly people have caused others to pronounce their sainthood or sure entrance into heaven. Such sentiment in itself is no guarantee that the one whom they revere shall truly enter into heaven. Note this in regard to the following illustration as well. -- Duane V. Maxey

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2654 -- THE PROVERB IS TRUE

Ecclesiastes 11:1 says: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." The Moslems have a proverb which is probably a comment on this verse: "Strew thy bread upon the surface of the water and on the dry land, and thou shalt find it in the end of days."

The caliph of Bagdad had a son who was drowned while bathing in the river. He offered a large reward to anyone who should recover the boy's body. After seven days, a bather discovered the boy alive in a cavern in a precipitous mountain, past which the river flowed. The caliph learned that the boy had been kept from starvation by cakes of bread floating on the water, on which cakes were stamped the name of a Moslem of Bagdad. The caliph summoned the Moslem and asked him what had induced him to throw bread into the water. He replied that he had done so every day for a year in order to test the truth of the proverb. The caliph thereupon rewarded him with five villages in the vicinity of Bagdad.

The legend, which has all the elements of possibility in it, reiterates the truth of the proverb that deeds done unselfishly for others, not only do good to the one for whom they are done, but return in blessings upon the head of the doer. -- McCartney

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## WORKS -- GOOD

### 2655 -- THE WITNESS OF WORKS

"A missionary returning after many years of service was asked, "Rev. Jones, tell me what you found at your station in New Guinea." "Found? I found something that looked more hopeless than if I had been sent into a jungle of tigers." "What do you mean?" "Why, those people were so fierce and degraded that they seemed utterly devoid of moral sense. If a mother were carrying her little baby and the child began to cry, she would throw it into the ditch and let it die. If a man saw his father break his leg, he would leave him upon the roadside to suffer by himself. They had no compassion whatever. They didn't even know what the word meant." "Well, what did you do for them? Did you preach?" "No, not at first. I thought it better to show them my faith by my works! When I saw a baby crying, I picked it up and consoled it. When I saw a man with a broken leg, I sought to mend it. When I found people distressed and hungry, I took them in, comforted them, and fed them. Finally they inquired, "What does this mean? Why are you doing this for us?" Then I had my chance, and I preached the Gospel!" "Did you succeed?" "My friend," said the missionary, "when I returned home on furlough, I left a church." (Read James 2:17, 18 and then ask yourself, "How well do I witness by my works?"

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- GOOD

## 2656 -- TOO MUCH SNAPPING, NOT ENOUGH SHINING

Singer Johnny Cash says religion has kept him inspired during his 36-year career. "I make my daily commitment to God. And so long as I keep the commitment, the day goes really good," said Cash. "If I try to break it and run everything myself, I usually mess it up." The 59-year-old country singer was addicted to drugs in the 1960s and was jailed several times. Cash says he overcame his addiction by renewing his faith. He tells how a shoeshine man taught him a lesson for living back in 1956. "I was expecting a fast, snappy job like the young folks do, and he was going real slow, and I said, 'You don't seem to be doing too much snapping.' He said, 'That's the problem with the world today -- there's too much snapping and not enough shining.'" -- Columbus Dispatch

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## WORKS -- GOOD

## 2657 -- USEFUL EXPOSITORY NOTES

An associate of Wesley, Samuel Bradburn, was highly respected by his friends and used by God as an effective preacher. On one occasion he was in rather desperate financial need. When Wesley learned of his circumstances, he sent him a five-pound note (then worth about \$10) with the following letter: "Dear Sammy: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed'. Yours affectionately, John Wesley." Bradburn's reply was prompt. "Rev. and Dear Sir: I have often been struck with the beauty of the passage of Scripture quoted in your letter, but I must confess that I never saw such a useful expository note on it before."

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## WORKS -- GOOD

## 2658 -- WANTED: WORK HORSES

Sometimes even the brute creation shames us by their faithfulness. Henry Ward Beecher once, when about to take a ride, said to the man who brought the horse: "That is a fine-looking animal; is he as good as he looks?" The man replied: "Mr. Beecher, that is the best horse in our stable. He will work in any place you put him, and he can do anything any horse can." The great preacher eyed him for a moment with increased admiration, and then humorously remarked: "I wish...he was a member of our church." -- Topical Illustrations

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## WORKS -- GOOD

## 2659 -- WESLEY'S RULE OF LIFE

John Wesley had this for his rule of life:

Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- OF CHRIST

### 2660 -- CHRIST PERFECTS HIS WORK

Among the art treasures of Rome, there is a mysterious statue. It represents a barbarian king in chains -- one of those tall fair-haired men of the North -- men who, even when they stood in captivity before their Roman conquerors, extorted admiration by their splendid physique and their royal dignity of bearing. The peculiarity of this statue is that it has never been finished. The work is wrought with great care and skill up to a certain point, then it suddenly stops short. Conjecture has been busy about the statue. Why did the sculptor stop after having done so much? Was the reason caprice, or accident, or sudden death, or impatience at his failure to realize the ideal aimed at? Who can tell? The secret lies buried in a forgotten past.

But He who labors at the chiseling of new men and women in Christ never loses patience, never tires of His task. Obstacles may delay, but they can never finally baffle His sublime purpose. He Who has begun a good work in us will perform it unto its final and eternal perfection on the day of Christ. -- Martin Lewis

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## WORKS -- OF CHRIST

### 2661 -- KEEP PLAYING

The concert hall was teeming with elegance-debonair gentlemen in tuxedos escorted refined ladies in evening dress, glittering from head to toe with diamonds and fine jewelry. They had come to hear the great composer-pianist Ignacy Jan Paderewski in concert. Almost swallowed up by the crush of socialites, a small, fidgety nine-year-old squirmed impatiently. His mother had brought him, hoping that hearing the virtuoso would inspire him to take his own piano lessons more seriously. But so far, the youngster was uninspired and stifled. If there was one place he didn't want to be, it was a concert hall filled with stuffy adults who seemed afraid he would soil them if he came too close! As he was furtively looking around for an escape route, he saw it. There, glowing under the footlights, stood an ebony grand piano.

In an instant, as his mother's attention was diverted, he scaled the stage and was at the keyboard. Confidently, he began pounding out the one piece he had committed to memory -- Chopsticks." For a moment, the milling ceased. Then the crowd became indignant. Somebody backstage shouted, "Git that' kid outta here!" as stagehands dropped everything to apprehend the miscreant. Emerging from his dressing room, Paderewski quickly sized up the situation. Striding to the piano, he leaned over the aspiring concert artist and whispered, "Keep playing!" As the boy continued hammering out "Chopsticks, " Paderewski's fingers deftly flew over the keys, intricately weaving a counter-melody to the boy's simple tune. As he played, the great pianist kept whispering to the boy, "Don't stop. Just keep playing!" -- Charles Swindoll

Even thus, Christ can take the works of men and, by adding His Divine touch, produce the music of Heaven in the souls of His people. Sometimes the works which He thus transforms are the works of those whom we fear will destroy and hinder His cause. -- Duane V. Maxey

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## WORKS -- OF CHRIST

### 2662 -- THE ETERNALLY PERFECTED CHURCH

Almost thirteen centuries before the birth of Christ, the prophet Balaam stood on Pisgah's summit and surveyed the encampment of Israel. Having had his eyes miraculously opened to the grandeur of the destiny of the people of God, he exclaimed: "It shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" (Num 23:23)

Thirty-one centuries passed. In the chamber of the Supreme Court, in the Capitol at Washington, Samuel Morse, an American painter who had turned inventor, tapped out a message on a new device. The message was received and recorded by those who were waiting in a room in Baltimore. The telegraph, which since that time has transmitted to many thousands of messages of joy and sorrow of birth and death of war and peace, was an accomplished fact. May 24, 1944 was the hundredth anniversary of the sending of the first message. Again, that first message, the exclamation of that eloquent seer on Pisgah's height was flashed over the wires sounding this time around the world: "What hath God wrought!" -- McCartney

Perhaps, when the vast throng of Christ's perfected Church enter eternally into the City-Foursquare, this will be the spontaneous, and astounded, cry of all: "What hath God wrought!"

\* \* \*

## WORKS -- PROVE

### 2663 -- WHAT LED STANLEY TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

When H. M. Stanley went to Africa in 1871 to find and report on David Livingstone, he spent several months in the missionary's company, carefully observing the man and his work.



Livingstone never spoke to Stanley about spiritual matters, but Livingstone's loving and patient compassion for the African people was beyond Stanley's comprehension. He could not understand how the missionary could have such love for and patience with the backward, pagan people among whom he had so long ministered. Livingstone literally spent himself in untiring service for those whom he had no reason to love except for Christ's sake. Stanley wrote in his journal, "When I saw that unwearied patience, that unflagging zeal, and those enlightened sons of Africa, I became a Christian at his side, though he never spoke to me one word."

\* \* \*

## WORLD -- PASSETH AWAY

2664 -- COME, GONE

Come, gone, -- gone forever;  
Gone as an unreturning river;  
Gone as to death, the merriest liver;  
Gone as the year at the dying fall,  
To-morrow, to-day, yesterday, never:  
Gone once for all.

\* \* \*

## WORLD TO COME

2665 -- THE WORLD WHERE WE MUST BE KNOWN

William Kelly was an outstanding student of the Bible whose scholarship and spirituality made him a real power for God in Great Britain at the close of the last century. Mr. Kelly helped a young relative prepare for Trinity College in Dublin, and in this way came to the attention of the professors there. They urged him to take up work at the college and thus distinguish himself. When Mr. Kelly showed a complete lack of enthusiasm, they were nonplussed.

One of them asked in exasperation, "But Mr. Kelly, aren't you interested in making a name of yourself in the world?"

To which Mr. Kelly adroitly replied, "Which world gentlemen?"

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS

2666 -- WHEN THEY WALKED LIGHTLY AGAIN

The army of Alexander the Great was advancing on Persia. At one critical point, it appeared that his troops might be defeated. The soldiers had taken so much plunder from their

previous campaigns that they had become weighted down and were losing their effectiveness in combat. Alexander immediately commanded that all the spoils be thrown into a heap and burned. The men complained bitterly, but soon came to see the wisdom of the order. Someone wrote, "It was as if wings had been given to them -- they walked lightly again." Victory was assured.

As soldiers of Christ we must rid ourselves of anything that would hinder us in the conflict with our spiritual enemy. And to fight the battle effectively, we must be clad only with the armor of God (Eph. 6:11-17). -- Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations

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## WORLDLINESS -- CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

### 2667 -- HIS MOTHER'S QUESTION

"Yes, I saw considerable of John," said the member of the family, who had been away among friends. "John is getting on in the world." There was a moment's pause, and then the grayhaired mother by the fireside asked, "Which world?" -- Sunday School Times

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## WORLDLINESS -- CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

### 2668 -- MORE LIKE BUFFALOES

It is a dangerous thing to be an imitator. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his famous essay on self-reliance says, "Imitation is suicide." This means, I believe, that if you try to be anyone other than yourself, you kill your own personality and you actually kill your own soul. I sometimes think we ought to bring a bill into Congress changing our national symbol from the eagle to the buffalo, because we are more like the buffaloes today than we are like the eagles. The eagle is a powerful bird. He flies alone. He rises up with authority into the sky. He is master of all he surveys. He is an individualist and was selected in the old days from among the rest of the birds to be our symbol. But the buffalo was never alone. He always ran in a herd with the rest of the buffaloes. And, friends, I call to your attention that the buffaloes are gone from the open range, but the eagles are still here.

The lesson is clear. Any nation that becomes a nation of the herd ceases to produce great figures. If ever the idea comes to your mind, "Don't be different, because people will think you are peculiar," remember what Emerson said: "Imitation is suicide." If you try to imitate someone else, you become second-rate. All great thinkers are people who dare to be themselves. -- Norman Vincent Peale

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS -- CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

## 2669 -- THAT MANY FLIES WERE WRONG!

Once a spider built a beautiful web in an old house. He kept it clean and shiny so that flies would patronize it. The minute he got a "customer" he would clean up on him so the other flies would not get suspicious.

Then one day this fairly intelligent fly came buzzing by the clean spider web. Old man spider called out, "Come in and sit." But the fairly intelligent fly said, "No, sir. I don't see other flies in your house, and I am not going in alone!"

But presently he saw on the floor below a large crowd of flies dancing around on a piece of brown paper. He was delighted! He was not afraid if lots of flies were doing it. So he came in for a landing.

Just before he landed, a bee zoomed by, saying, "Don't land there, stupid! That's flypaper!" But the fairly intelligent fly shouted back, "Don't be silly. Those flies are dancing. There's a big crowd there. Everybody's doing it. That many flies can't be wrong!" Well, you know what happened. He died on the spot.

Some of us want to be with the crowd so badly that we end up in a mess. What does it profit a fly (or a person) if he escapes the web only to end up on the glue? -- The Log

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS -- CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

### 2670 -- THE PREACHER'S BUSINESS

G. Campbell Morgan heard this statement made: "The preacher must catch the spirit of the age;" and gave the following answer: "God forgive him if he does. The preacher's business is to correct the spirit of the age." -- Watchman-Examiner

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## WORLDLINESS -- CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD

### 2671 -- THREE MONKEYS

Once upon a time there were three monkeys standing on a seesaw. Above them hung a bunch of bananas. The three monkeys all scampered toward the high end of the board in order to reach the bananas. As they did, the high end tilted downward and became the low end. The monkeys then scampered back to the other end, with the same result. Whereupon, the brightest of the three had an idea: he would stay at one end of the board and wait for the other two to run to the other end and raise him up. Consequently, the bright monkey reached the bananas by not conforming to what the others were doing.

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS -- PERILOUS

### 2672 -- THE BRAZILIAN MATADOR PLANT

Brazil is home to a plant which forest-dwellers call the "matador," or "murderer." At first its slender stem creeps along the ground. But once it meets a vigorous tree, the matador cleaves to the tree and climbs it. As it climbs it sends out arm-like tendrils that continue to grow larger and clasp tighter. The matador climbs the tree until, as if in triumph, it shoots a huge, flowery head above the strangled tree's summit. From there this "murderer" scatters its seeds to repeat their work of death.

Like that vine, worldliness will choke the spiritual life of any believer who allows it to grow and send out its tentacles.

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS -- WARNINGS AGAINST

### 2673 -- KEEPING UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD

"I think a Christian can go anywhere," said a young woman who was defending her continual attendance at some doubtful places of amusement. "Certainly she can," rejoined her friend, "but I am reminded of a little incident which happened last summer when I went with a party of friend's to explore a coal mine. One of the young women appeared, dressed in a dainty white gown. When her friends remonstrated with her, she appealed to the old miner who was to act as guide to the party. "Can't I wear a white dress down into the mine?" she asked, petulantly. "Yes, mum," returned the old man, "there is nothing to keep you from wearing a white frock down there, but there will be considerable to keep you from wearing one back." -- L. A. Banks

\* \* \*

## WORLDLINESS -- WARNINGS AGAINST

### 2674 -- SPIRITUAL DEATH BY A LOOK

One look, and Lot's wife was a pillar of salt. Just a look! There is "life for a look." There is also death for a look.

Augustine, in his Confessions, relates the story of a young man at Rome who had been won from a life of sin and licentiousness to Christ. He forsook his old ways. One day, some of his friends persuaded him to go with them to the Colosseum. He took a seat with his companions far up on the topmost bench of that colossal ellipse.

As soon as the trumpet rang for the spectacle to commence, he firmly closed his eyes, resolved not to look upon the unholy sights. So the spectacles passed. But at one act, or conflict, the excited and blood-intoxicated thousands put up a mighty roar of acclaim. At the sound, Alypius opened his eyes, just for a moment. But by the one look he was lost. He forsook Christ and went back to the world.

Do not imagine that it is safe to take even one look at sin, just for a moment to caress it with the touch of furtive imagination. One look turned Lot's wife to a pillar of salt. -- McCartney

\* \* \*

## WORRY

### 2675 -- HOW TO CROSS FOX RIVER

When Lincoln was on his way to Washington to be inaugurated, he spent some time in New York with Horace Greeley and told him an anecdote which was meant to be an answer to the question which everybody was asking him: Are we really to have Civil War? In his circuit riding days, Lincoln and his companions, riding to the next session of court, had crossed many swollen rivers. But the Fox River was still ahead of them; and they said one to another, "If these streams give us so much trouble, how shall we get over Fox River?"

When darkness fell, they stopped for the night at a lodging place, where they fell in with the Methodist presiding elder of the district who rode through the country in all kinds of weather, and knew all about the Fox River. They gathered about him and asked him about the present state of the river. "Oh, yes," replied the circuit rider, "I know all about the Fox River. I have crossed it often and understand it well. But I have one fixed rule with regard to Fox River: I never cross it till I reach it." -- McCartney

\* \* \*

## WORRY

### 2676 -- LET GOD WORRY

A widow who had successfully raised a very large family was being interviewed by a reporter. In addition to six children of her own, she had adopted 12 other youngsters, and through it all she had maintained stability and an air of confidence. When asked the secret of her outstanding accomplishment, her answer to the newsman was quite surprising. She said "I managed so well because I'm in a partnership!" "What do you mean?" he inquired. The woman replied, "Many years ago I said, 'Lord, I'll do the work and You do the worrying.' And I haven't had an anxious care since." We could all profit by following the example of that mother. When we carry our part of the load, we need not be disturbed by the demands of life.

\* \* \*

## WORRY

### 2677 -- OVERHEARD IN AN ORCHARD

Said the Robin to the Sparrow,  
"I should really like to know  
Why these anxious human beings  
Rush about and hurry so."

Said the Sparrow to the Robin,  
"Friend, I think that it must be  
That they have no Heavenly Father  
Such as cares for you and me."

-- Elizabeth Cheney

\* \* \*

## WORRY

### 2678 -- THE FOG OF WORRY OFTEN HAS LITTLE SUBSTANCE

According to the National Bureau of Standards, a dense fog covering seven city blocks to a depth of 100 feet is composed of something less than one glass of water. That is, all the fog covering seven city blocks 100 feet deep could be, if it were gotten all together, held in a single drinking glass; it would not quite fill it.

This can be compared to the things we worry about. If we could see into the future and if we could see our problems in their true light, they wouldn't blind us to the world -- to living itself -- but instead could be relegated to their true size and place. And if all the things most people worry about were reduced to their true size, you could probably stick them all into a water glass, too.

\* \* \*

## WORRY

### 2679 -- WORRY CAN BE GROUNDLESS AND SENSELESS

Many folks worry about things that never happen. It is like the patient in the mental hospital, holding his ear close to the wall, listening intently. The attendant finally approached.

"Sh!" whispered the patient, beckoning him over.

The attendant pressed his ear to the wall for a long time. "I can't hear a thing," he finally said.

"No," replied the patient, "it's been like that all day!"

\* \* \*

WORSHIP -- FALSE

2680 -- ALL WHO CAME TO WORSHIP GOD MAY REMAIN

One of the real problems of our time is the near celebrity status of many preachers. Many men are almost worshipped by their followers. I am reminded of an incident Lyman Beecher Stowe wrote about in his book *Saints, Sinners, and Beechers*. Stowe told that on one occasion Thomas K. Beecher substituted for his famous brother Henry Ward Beecher at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. Many curiosity seekers had come to hear the renowned Henry Beecher speak. Therefore when Thomas Beecher appeared in the pulpit instead, some of the people got up and started for the doors. Sensing that they were disappointed because he was substituting for his brother, Thomas Beecher raised his hand for silence and announced, "All those who came here this morning to worship Henry Ward Beecher may withdraw from the church; all who came to worship God may remain."

\* \* \*

WORSHIP -- FALSE

2681 -- BUDDHA'S EYETOOTH

A two inch long discolored eyetooth is revered by 400 million Buddhists as the most sacred object on earth. The tooth is supposed to have been reclaimed from Buddha's funeral pyre in 543 B. C. and was brought to Ceylon 800 years later.

Today the tooth sets upon a golden lotus in the glorious temple of the tooth in Kandy, Ceylon. It is surrounded by rubies and tons of flowers.

Each year a hundred thousand faithful Buddhists come from many countries to gaze at the sacred tooth. They bring gifts of gold, silver and jewels to place within the temple.

\* \* \*

WORSHIP -- FALSE

2682 -- NOT BIBLICAL SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

In the year 1403, one of the wealthiest men in Paris died, leaving his entire estate to his teenage daughter Agnes. She was a beautiful and virtuous young woman, and many men wanted to marry her. But Agnes decided to give up her fortune and become a recluse. To isolate herself from society, she asked to be sealed into a cell within the wall of a church. The entrance was

plastered shut except for one small hole through which food could be passed. She was confined in that small area at 18 years of age and remained there until she died at age 98.

We may admire this woman's determination to be free from the world's influence, but we cannot help but feel that hers was a tragically wasted life.

To serve the Lord effectively, we must not isolate ourselves from the world but rather be a witness to the world.

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- FALSE GODS AND GODDESSES

### 2683 -- NOTHING BUT A MATERIAL IDOL

Hideyoshi, a Japanese warlord who ruled over Japan in the late 1500s, commissioned a colossal statue of Buddha for a shrine in Kyoto. It took 50,000 men five years to build, but the work had scarcely been completed when the earthquake of 1596 brought the roof of the shrine crashing down and wrecked the statue. In a rage Hideyoshi shot an arrow at the fallen colossus. "I put you here at great expense," he shouted, "and you can't even look after your own temple."

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- OF CHRIST

### 2684 -- SHE OFFERED THEM ALL TO CHRIST

I love what Corrie ten Boom once taught me. She said, "Jill, people thank me so much, and it used to worry me because I didn't want to get a big head. So I began to collect those compliments like flowers. 'Thank you,' I'd say. 'Thank you, thank you, thank you.' Then at the end of the day I'd kneel down and I'd say, 'Here You are Jesus, they're all Yours.'" -- Jill Briscoe

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- OF GOD COMMANDED

### 2685 -- WHAT GOD WANTS FIRST FROM HIS CHILDREN

G. Campbell Morgan told a story about a father and his young daughter who were especially close. They enjoyed spending time together. If he went for a walk or made a social call, she wanted to go along. But then he began to notice a change. When he asked her to accompany him on errands, she made excuses. As the weeks passed, he became concerned about it.

When his birthday came, she presented him with a pair of slippers she had made. Then he realized that she had been working on them while he was out of the house. "Darling, I like these



slippers very much," he said gently, "but next time buy the slippers and let me have you all the days. I would rather have you than anything you can make for me."

Beyond any work we may do for God, time spent in His presence must take priority. He desires our fellowship first of all. If our worship is neglected, our work will be deficient.

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- OF IDOLS

### 2686 -- IDOLATRY? OR OBEDIENCE?

A story is told in Benjamin Franklin's autobiography of a clergyman ordered to read the proclamation issued by Charles I, bidding the people to return to sports on Sunday. To the congregation's amazement and horror, he did read the royal edict in church, which many clergy had refused to do. But he followed it with the words: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" and added, "Brethren, I have laid before you the commandment of your king and the commandment of your God. I leave it to you to judge which of the two ought rather to be observed." -- W. J. Isbell

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## WORSHIP -- OF IDOLS

### 2687 -- PARABLE OF THE MONUMENT

Not long ago, the Wall Street Journal carried this two-sentence news story that is really a parable: "The elms in, South Park, Pa., must be cut down because they are obstructing the monument to Joyce Kilmer. They have lifted their leafy arms so high that passersby can no longer read the inscription that begins, "I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree." We sometimes lose sight of what is most important and begin worshipping idols. -- Eugene Brice

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- OF IDOLS

### 2688 -- WEANED FROM WORLDLY IDOLS

Dannecker, the German sculptor, spent eight years in producing a face of Christ. At last, he wrought out one in which the emotions of love and sorrow were so perfectly blended that beholders wept as they looked upon it. Subsequently, being solicited to employ his great talent on a statue of Venus, he replied: "After gazing so long into the face of Christ, think you that I can now turn my attention to a heathen goddess?" Here is the true secret of being weaned from worldly idols -- "the expulsive power of a new affection."

"I have heard the voice of Jesus;  
Tell me not of ought beside;

I have seen the face of Jesus,  
All my soul is satisfied."

-- A. J. Gordon

\* \* \*

## WORSHIP -- TRUE ATTITUDE IN

### 2689 -- FLATTERY OF MEN

The following true story is from the life of Louis XIV of France: One Sunday when he and his royal party arrived at church, no one was there except Archbishop Fenelon, the court preacher. Surprised to see all the vacant seats, the King inquired, "Where is everybody?" Why isn't anyone else present this morning?" The minister answered "I announced that Your Majesty would not be here today, because I wanted you to see who came to the service just to flatter you and who came to worship God."

Most people do not have opportunities to be in meetings where such dignitaries are in attendance. Yet many of them go to church for reasons other than communing with the Lord, enjoying Christian fellowship, and being instructed from the Word. They may not be there to impress royalty, but their motives for coming are just as vain and selfish. Some think it's good for business or that it enhances their social standing. Others put in an appearance to display their piety, and some merely attend out of a sense of duty. But not one of these actions truly brings honor to God.

\* \* \*

## WORTHINESS -- DIVINE

### 2690 -- ONLY ONE

Is Worthy To Possess Us There is a story told of a cottage in a little country village, in which lived a family of four: father, mother, and two small children. One evening something happened, what, no one knows, and the little cottage caught on fire. In a few seconds the thatched roof, and wooden timbers were ablaze. There was no fire engine in this remote spot, and the villagers stood round helpless. But suddenly a young man, who had only recently come to the place, came striding up.

"What, can nothing be done to rescue the inmates?" he cried, and as no one responded, he dashed through the flames. A moment later, he emerged bearing under each arm a little child. They were unhurt, for Andy had hidden them under his coat, but he was terribly burned. Scarcely had he got out before the roof of the cottage fell in with a sickening crash, and the parents of the children were never seen alive again.

A kind old woman took Andy into her home and nursed him carefully. Meanwhile, there was much discussion in the village as to what was to become of the two rescued children. It was decided that a council should meet to decide what was to become of them. When the day of the decision arrived, there were two who claimed the little ones. The first was the squire of the village. He had money, position, and a home to offer the children. The second claimant was Andy! When asked what right he had to the little ones, he said never a word, but held up his hands, burned and scarred for them.

Friends, the Lord Jesus comes and just holds up His pierced hands as His reason for claiming you and yours. -- Christian Life

\* \* \*

WORTHINESS -- DIVINE

2691 -- UNWORTHY OF THE SACRIFICE

During the Vietnam War, a young West Point graduate was sent to lead a company of new recruits. One night he and his men were overrun by the Viet Cong. During the ensuing battle, the young lieutenant was able to get all his men to safety -- except one. The soldier who was left behind was badly wounded. From their trenches, the rest of the company could hear their comrade moaning and calling for help. To climb out of the trench to attempt a rescue would have meant almost certain death. Eventually the young lieutenant could endure the wounded man's crying no longer. He crawled out and stealthily made his way toward the wounded soldier. Finally reaching him, he pulled him back to the trench. But just as he pushed the wounded man over the side of the trench, a bullet ripped through the lieutenant's back, killing him instantly.

Several months later, the rescued man returned to the States. When the dead hero's parents learned this man was in the vicinity, they planned to have him to dinner. They wanted to know this young man whose life was spared at such a great cost to them. On the evening of their dinner party, the honored guest arrived late. He was drunk. He was loud and obnoxious. He told off-color jokes, seasoned his language with profanity, and showed no concern for his hosts' feelings. The lieutenant's parents did what they could to redeem the evening, but to no avail. At the end of the ordeal, the husband ushered the obscene visitor to the door. As he bid the guest goodnight and closed the door, his wife collapsed in tears, crying, "To think that our precious son had to die for somebody like that!" -- Anthony Campolo

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," and we should walk worthy of the Lord. -- Duane V. Maxey

\* \* \*

WORTHINESS -- DIVINE

2692 -- WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN

Christ alone is worthy of our unreserved love and devotion:

There was once a Roman patrician girl of high birth and finished culture. "No one," she said, "shall ever win my hand, unless he gives me proof that he would die for me." Years passed, and one day, in one of the Roman streets, she heard an outcast Christian speaking of his Lord. When she heard, with amazement breaking on her soul, she exclaimed: "Here is One Who has died for me; to Him alone shall my heart's love be devoted forever." -- D. M. Panton

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WRATH -- OF GOD

2693 -- ACCUMULATING WRATH

It is related that some years ago, in a mountainous region on the continent of Europe, an enormous avalanche of snow came down from one of the overhanging rocks in such a vast body as to entirely dam up a river into which it fell. What was the effect it produced? Since the river could no longer flow, it went on forming itself into an extensive lake, threatening, whenever it should burst through its snowy barrier, to carry desolation and ruin upon men and villages in the country beneath. The larger the quantity of water suspended, the greater would be its violence when it obtained its liberty; and so it proved. The devastation caused was said to be terrible in the extreme.

It is thus with every unconverted sinner. The longer he lives, the greater is the amount of wrath he is accumulating, or treasuring up against his day of destruction. -- C. Clayton

\* \* \*

WRONG

2694 -- THE WRONG DEMAND

Family vacations are wonderful times, but they do have their tedious moments.

Dad, Mom, and the two boys were about 200 miles into their trip, when Dad had enough! "Ever since we left home," he said, "you boys have been picking on each other, yelling names and tearing up the back seat of the car. I am putting an end to this now!" He slammed on the brakes, pulled the car off to the side of the road, jerked his sons out and spanked them both soundly. "I don't want to hear one word out of either of you for 30 minutes," he shouted, "not one word!" The two boys sat still and quiet for at least 30 minutes until the youngest one meekly said, "Daddy, do you remember when you spanked me? Well, one of my shoes came off...!"

\* \* \*

WRONG

## 2695 -- SHE DREW THE WRONG CONCLUSION

Little Chad was a shy, quite young fella. One day he came home and told his mother, he'd like to make a valentine for everyone in his class. Her heart sank. She thought, "I wish he wouldn't do that!" because she had watched the children when they walked home from school. Her Chad was always behind them. They laughed and hung on to each other and talked to each other. But Chad was never included. Nevertheless, she decided she would go along with her son. So she purchased the paper and glue and crayons. For three whole weeks, night after night, Chad painstakingly made thirty-five valentines.

Valentine's Day dawned, and Chad was beside himself with excitement! He carefully stacked them up, put them in a bag, and bolted out the door. His mom decided to bake him his favorite cookies and serve them up warm and nice with a cool glass of milk when he came home from school. She just knew he would be disappointed -- maybe that would ease the pain a little. It hurt her to think that he wouldn't get many valentines -- maybe none at all.

That afternoon she had the cookies and milk on the table. When she heard the children outside she looked out the window. Sure enough here they came, laughing and having the best time. And, as always, there was Chad in the rear. He walked a little faster than usual. She fully expected him to burst into tears as soon as he got inside. His arms were empty, she noticed, and when the door opened she choked back the tears.

"Mommy has some warm cookies and milk for you."

But he hardly heard her words. He just marched right on by, his face aglow, and all he could say was: "Not a one -- not a one."

Her heart sank.

And then he added, "I didn't forget a one, not a single one!" -- Dale Galloway

So it is when God is in control of the servant's mind. We realize as never before that life's greatest joy is to give His love away -- a thought that brings to mind the saying:

It isn't a song until it's sung.

It isn't a bell until it's rung.

It isn't love until it's given away!

\* \* \*

WRONG

2696 -- BIBLE ARGUMENT -- THE WRONG WAY TO WIN SOULS

Bearing fruit is essential to Christian discipleship.

A life well lived is a more effective witness than words well said.

Benjamin Franklin learned that plaster sown in the fields would make things grow. He told his neighbors, but they did not believe him and they argued with him trying to prove that plaster could be of no use at all to grass or grain.

After a little while he allowed the matter to drop and said no more about it. But he went into the field early the next spring and sowed some grain. Close by the path, where men would walk, he traced some letters with his finger and put plaster into them and then sowed his seed in the field.

After a week or two the seed sprang up. His neighbors, as they passed that way, were very much surprised to see, in brighter green than all the rest of the field, the writing in large letters, "This has been plastered." Benjamin Franklin did not need to argue with his neighbors any more about the benefit of plaster for the fields. For as the season went on and the grain grew, these bright green letters just rose up above all the rest until they were a kind of relief-plate in the field -- "This has been plastered."

"By your fruits shall all men know that you are my disciples."

\* \* \*

WRONG

2697 -- THE WRONG ATTITUDE ABOUT GIVING

Once again it is the end of the year and every Christian organization badgers its constituents for funds to balance the year's budget. It is hard not to resent such pleas. But President Pearson of Miami Christian College offers us a sobering reminder to be patient:

"The trouble is, you are always asking for money. You are probably right. But let me tell you a personal story.

I had a little boy; my firstborn. He was a delight to our hearts, but he was always costing me something. He needed clothing, shoes, food, and had special needs that I gladly provided, for he was my son. Then one day he died. It was an experience that I hope you will never have. He does not cost me a dollar now.

Every need is an unfailling sign of life and growth. Body, mind and soul have their needs and they must be met continually. A ministry that is constantly in need of funds is alive and growing and going somewhere. A dead ministry has no need, and will not bother you."

\* \* \*

WRONG

2698 -- THE WRONG WORDS -- THE RIGHT DESIRE

In his beautiful book, *I Shall Not Want*, Robert Ketchum tells of a Sunday school teacher who asked her group of children if any of them could quote the entire twenty-third psalm. A golden-haired, four-and-a-half-year-old girl was among those who raised their hands. A bit skeptical, the teacher asked if she could really quote the entire psalm. The little girl came to the rostrum, faced the class, made a perky little bow, and said: "The Lord is my shepherd, that's all I want."

She then bowed again and sat down. She may have overlooked a few verses, but that little girl captured David's heart in Psalm 23.

\* \* \*

WRONG

2699 -- THE WRONG PLACE TO FIND HAPPINESS

Where is true happiness found?

Not in unbelief --

Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type. He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in pleasure --

Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure, if anyone did. He wrote: "The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

Not in money --

Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

Not in position and fame --

Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake; manhood, a struggle; old age, a regret."

Not in military glory --

Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept, because, he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

Where, then, is happiness found? The answer is simple: In Christ alone. He said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man can taketh from you."

\* \* \*

WRONG

2700 -- WRONG DIRECTION? THAT DEPENDS UPON ONE'S GOAL

I heard Pat Boone interviewed shortly after Elvis's untimely death. He said, "I cared a lot for Elvis. But he went in the wrong direction. Ironically, we met for the last time when I was going to do a show back east and he was going to Vegas. He said to me, 'Say, Pat, where are you going?' I told him where I was going and how I looked forward to being involved in some kind of Christian ministry. He said, 'Hey, I'm going to Vegas. Pat, as long as I've known you, you've been going in the wrong direction.' I answered, 'Elvis, that just depends on where you're coming from.'"

We might also add "...and where you expect to arrive." I'm sure Elvis would see Pat's wisdom, now! The world thinks that Christians are heading in the wrong direction, when it is actually they who are headed wrong -- toward everlasting punishment in the lake of fire!

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THE END