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# DAILY *manna*

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GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

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*Daily devotions for reading through the Bible*

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

In this quarter, we will be considering the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus as recorded in the Gospels of Luke and John. The Gospel stories are the old old stories which we know so well. But I pray that familiarity will neither breed contempt nor complacency in our hearts.

I pray that we have the heart of the one whom the hymn-writer pens about: the one who loves to tell and hear the story, the one who knows it best and yet hungers and thirsts to hear the same old stories like the rest. I trust that the story of our dear Saviour will be your theme in glory!

For those who are new, we welcome you aboard. By following the daily scripture readings assigned in the *Daily Manna*, you will cover the whole Bible in two years. So, please do not just read the exhortation; it is far more important that you read the Bible. It is our prayer that reading through the Bible with the accompaniment of the *Daily Manna* will help you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### ***A note to new Daily Manna readers***

In this book, you will find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. You will also find a simple exposition based on the reading of the day. From the day's Bible passages, *Daily Manna* highlights biblical principles which may be applied in the Christian's daily living. We pray that the *Daily Manna* readings will make your reading through the Bible a more meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the New Testament with the aim of giving you a more in-depth study of the NT books.

### ***A step-by-step approach***

1. Read the day's Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you have just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

Yours in Christ,  
**Pastor Isaac Ong**  
**Calvary B-P Church**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Luke 1:1–25*

**LESSON**

**Godliness of life over  
outward blessings**

**VERSE 6**

*And they were both  
righteous before God,  
walking in all the  
commandments and  
ordinances of the Lord  
blameless.*

**L**uke claims that his report is infallible and perfect. This is so because Luke received knowledge and understanding “from above”, which is from God Himself [2 Timothy 3:16]. As a result, every reader can have certainty of what is reported here to be trustworthy.

We are immediately introduced to an elderly but godly couple, Zacharias and Elisabeth. For years, they had walked in God’s commandments and ordinances blamelessly. However, they were childless and it was a reproach among the Jewish people not to have any descendant. Regardless of this inhibition, they remained firm and faithful. God remembered their prayers and answered it in His own good time.

The birth of John the Baptist was indeed a miraculous act of God. Like Abraham, Zacharias could hardly believe what he had heard from the mouth of angel Gabriel. He too was rebuked because he did not believe the words of God [cf. Genesis 17:17 with 18:14]. How often have we allowed our own human wisdom to limit the power of God! Have we forgotten that with Him, nothing is impossible [Luke 1:37]?

How often have we professed that we know and love God but our actions and lives indicate otherwise? We are only duty-bound and have routinely done our Christian works, not realising that there is hardly any life in our labour. Why do we often feel so weary and tardy in our efforts [Revelation 3:1–2]? Arise, look away from yourself and turn your attention to the Lord and see what He can do for you!

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 4**  
**LUKE 1:1–25**

**PRAYER**

**Lord, help Thou my unbelief.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 1:26–56***LESSON****Humble submission to  
the will of God****VERSE 38***And Mary said, Behold  
the handmaid of the Lord;  
be it unto me according to  
thy word. And the angel  
departed from her.*

**M**ary, like Zacharias and Elisabeth, feared God. Here is an even greater miracle than that of John's birth. God is actively and personally involved in His plan for man's salvation. Not only did He send a wonderful preacher, now He sent a Saviour.

Again, the angel Gabriel was tasked to make the announcement to Mary that she was God's choice to conceive the coming Messiah. She had found favour with God. She was overwhelmed by this unexpected message, which seemed incredible. Her question, "How shall this be?", indicates not her disbelief in the matter but her desire to know the truth.

The truth that Mary longed to know is found in the work of the Holy Spirit in her. He is described as "the power of the Highest". What may seem impossible to man is possible to God. More importantly, this sanctifying act of the divine Spirit is to prepare the sinless body for Christ. He will preserve the purity and immaculateness of Christ's human nature, which He will assume at birth.

Mary was of humble disposition. Although she had been declared to be highly favoured by God Himself, she still regarded herself as a lowly handmaid of God. She desired to submit herself fully to do the will of God in her life. Truly, she was indeed, as announced by God, angel and man, "blessed art thou among women". We can learn much from this woman of humility and faith, so we too may find grace in the eyes of God.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 5**  
**LUKE 1:26–56**

**PRAYER**

**O Lord, let my soul magnify Thee and my spirit  
rejoice in Thee, my Saviour, now and forever  
more.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Luke 1:57–80*

**LESSON**

**Saved to live a  
consecrated life**

**VERSE 74**

*That he would grant unto  
us, that we being delivered  
out of the hand of our  
enemies might serve him  
without fear,*

There had never been a miracle in the whole of the Bible without a distinct purpose in God's mighty acts. He divided the Red Sea for the children of Israel to cross to prove that He alone is God and that He fights for His own. He would not have used His power had there been no reason for Him to do so. Similarly, Jesus healed the blind man in the temple so that the works of God would be manifested in Him [John 9:3].

John's miraculous birth was for him to be "the voice in the wilderness" to make preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus. The promised Messiah would come to deliver us from our greatest enemy, Satan. Christ would be the Dayspring, the greater Light and the Guide leading us to the way of peace through reconciliation with our holy God.

Once we have tasted His mercies in the deliverance of our souls from the penalty of sin, we respond by consecrating our all to Him [Romans 12:1–2]. According to Paul, this is our reasonable act of giving back to Him that which is not our own. After all, we belong to God in creation and redemption, for His Son has bought us with His redeeming blood [1 Corinthians 6:19–20].

From here on, we should be encouraged to strive on with God's help to live a holy life, just like our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, Who is separated from sin and corruption [Hebrews 7:26].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 6**  
**LUKE 1:57–80**

**PRAYER**

**Lord, keep me close to Thee so that I may be kept safe from the pollutions of the world.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 2:1–20***LESSON****Learning to still your  
heart before God****VERSE 18***And all they that heard it  
wondered at those things  
which were told them by the  
shepherds.*

The events surrounding Jesus' birth were equally amazing. Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, made a decree to all his subjects to be taxed. Providentially, both Joseph and Mary were of the house and lineage of David, and so the Saviour would be born in the ancestral home of David—Bethlehem—in exact fulfillment of Bible prophecy [Micah 5:2].

When Christ was born, it was noted that there were shepherds in the field near the ancient city. In the quietness of the night, they saw a glory far exceeding all the stars that they had ever seen. It was the glory of the Lord. They were filled with fear and astonishment. They heard words of consolation and good tidings of great joy. Moreover, they were treated to an amazing choral concert of angels. They sang the perfect praises of Him Who deserves the highest glory and honour.

The shepherds then made haste to find the Saviour Who had been born in their hometown. Having caught a glimpse of the Child in the manger, they immediately knew their responsibility: to publish God's peace and goodwill to all who would believe. These urgent proclamations were heard near and far; Mary and Joseph would have been the first to hear it from the mouths of the shepherds.

All these incidents are subjects for deep consideration and holy contemplation to a devout person. They warm the hearts and thrill the spirits of those who set their thoughts on Him Who is their Lord and Saviour.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 7**  
**LUKE 2:1–20**

**PRAYER**

**O Lord, set my heart and thought on Him Who is  
the Beloved of the Father and the sweetest song  
of the angels.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Luke 2:21–52*

**LESSON**

**Doing our Father's will by  
engaging in His business**

**VERSE 49**

*And he said unto them,  
How is it that ye sought me?  
Wist ye not that I must be  
about my Father's business?*

It is a great delight to see the development and growth of our own child. This is especially true to the mother, who is closer to the child than anyone. After all, she is the one who has carried him for nine months in her womb. As such, who can understand a child more than his mother? And yet, Mary had her surprises.

In verse 33, “Joseph and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him”. The words they heard from the lips of this just and devout man, Simeon, in the temple left a deep impression on them. They were doubtless surprised to find that an utter stranger should speak thus about their child. Another old saint, Anna, instantaneously gave thanks upon seeing Him. By now, they should have been clearer about the future of this special Child.

However, in due process of time, they had forgotten all those intimations about the young Child. They could not grasp the higher purpose of His coming for “they understood not the saying which He spake unto them”. Christ came to be engaged in the work of His heavenly Father. He was passionate concerning the truths of Scripture. He was deeply conscious that He was the only begotten Son of God and that His life was not just to be an ordinary man.

May we appreciate and emulate the heart and warmth of our Saviour towards His Father in our own calling, wherever it may be, so that we will see it to be God's business for us on earth.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 8**  
**LUKE 2:21–52**

**PRAYER**

**Lord, may I know Thy will and be prepared to do  
it and finish it for Thy glory and honour.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 3***LESSON****Fruits worthy of  
repentance****VERSE 8**

*Bring forth therefore fruits  
worthy of repentance, and  
begin not to say within  
yourselves, We have  
Abraham to our father: for  
I say unto you, That God is  
able of these stones to raise  
up children unto Abraham.*

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
LEVITICUS 9  
LUKE 3**

**A**re you truly saved? Have you really confessed your sins and repented of them? In this chapter, we read of John the Baptist. His ministry was to call people to repent and prepare the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus. He quoted Isaiah in verses 4–6 on the prophecy of the coming Messiah and urged people to “bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance”. In other words, he asked the people to present proofs of their salvation.

The people were eager to know what they should do. To the masses, John the Baptist pointed out that they should share with others what they had in excess [v. 11]. The publicans should not extort money [v. 13] and the soldiers should neither do violence nor accuse any falsely and should be contented with their wages.

The fact that John the Baptist named these specific things suggested that selfishness and extortion, violence and discontentment were prevalent in those days. It is natural for an unbeliever to demonstrate these sinful behaviours. Obviously, a person who does so willingly would have undergone a certain transformation; he must have truly repented and can thus bring forth these precious fruits of repentance.

This was important during John’s time because people had the misconception that they were saved simply because they were sons of Abraham. However, John dismissed this by saying that blood ties did not guarantee them anything. For us who are saved by faith through grace, are we truly saved if we don’t demonstrate fruits of repentance?

**MEDITATION**

**Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. – James 2:17**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 4:1–15***LESSON****Departure of the devil****VERSE 13**

*And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*

The temptation of Christ is well known to most of us. The Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness and he did not eat anything for 40 days. That was probably why the devil tempted Jesus with food in his first attempt. Failing that, he next tried tempting Christ with earthly power. Finally, he used the tendency in man to want to put God to the test.

Every attempt by the devil failed, as we see how Jesus fended them off by quoting Scripture. All of us should see the importance of knowing the Bible well. In doing so, we equip ourselves with the precious sword [Ephesians 6:17], an important component of the armour of God.

We should also take note that after the devil ended his temptations, he departed from Jesus for a season. We read in the next verse that Jesus returned to Galilee and increased in fame [v. 14]. His success in withstanding the devil's temptations marked the initiation of His ministry.

The Christian walk is a constant struggle with temptation. Yet let us be wary when we think that the devil has departed from us, for this often marks the beginning of one of man's greatest sins, pride. What happens when you have successfully fled from temptation? Do you congratulate yourself? Or do you disdain those who are not as strong as you are? Beware! The temptation may not be over yet. The devil is cunning and full of tricks. He may let you win a small battle only to lose a greater one later.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 10**  
**LUKE 4:1–15**

**MEDITATION**

**Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. – 1 Timothy 3:6**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 4:16–44***LESSON****Sent to preach the kingdom of God****VERSE 43**

*And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.*

Many a time people will ask about the purpose of missions, and one common question raised is, “Why do we go for missions overseas if there are still many opportunities to evangelise in the country?” From these verses today, we see at least three reasons.

First, no prophet is accepted in his own country [v. 24]. During Jesus’ time, the people found it difficult to believe in what He preached because they were familiar with Him and had probably even seen him grow from a young child. Some older people probably even found it hard to learn from a younger person. Indeed, familiarity breeds contempt.

Second, the Gospel is for the poor, the broken-hearted, the captive, the blind and the bruised [v. 18]. People from richer countries may want to share with their materially less-privileged neighbours while people from poorer countries may wish to share their joy with brethren from richer ones who may be blind captives of materialism. Whether rich or poor, we have our broken-heartedness and bruised moments. By stepping out, we get to empathise with one another and be useful vessels for Christ.

Third, and perhaps the most important, Jesus said in verse 18 that He was led by the Spirit of the Lord. It was imperative for Him to preach the kingdom of God, for therefore was He sent [v. 43]. Jesus is the pioneering missionary and He emphasised the importance of following our calling. Missionaries are called to wherever God sends them, even if it means going to the uttermost parts of the earth.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**LEVITICUS 11–12**  
**LUKE 4:16–44**

**MEDITATION**

**Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. – Isaiah 6:8**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 5:1–15***LESSON****A peculiar response****VERSE 8**

*When Simon Peter saw it,  
he fell down at Jesus' knees,  
saying, Depart from me; for  
I am a sinful man, O Lord.*

**H**ow would you feel if you should meet our Lord face to face one day? What would your response be when He sends you great blessings? We observe two miracles in these verses: the miracle of the fishes [v. 1–11] and the healing of the leper [v. 12–15]. In the latter, the leper was healed when Jesus put forth His hand and touched him. The leper was charged not to tell anyone, though we don't know if he eventually did. What we know is that a great multitude soon came to seek Jesus after that miracle.

It is perhaps not difficult for us to imagine the joy we will feel if we are healed of our infirmities or rescued from our predicament. But given a similar situation, the fishermen in the first miracle reacted differently. They had not been very fruitful in their fishing but by the word of Jesus, their nets fetched so many fishes that they filled the ship and broke their nets. How will you feel if you are one of the fishermen? Simon Peter, together with James and John, felt fearful.

Before the Almighty God, they felt inadequate and sinful. Simon Peter felt so undeserving and guilty that he actually asked the Lord Who was able to give Him great blessings to leave him. What a deep sense of contrition he had in his heart!

Will you be able to give an account of your life with a clear conscience when Christ comes again? Or will you try to hide from His presence then?

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
LEVITICUS 13  
LUKE 5:1–15**

**MEDITATION**

**So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. – Luke 17:10**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 5:16–39***LESSON****What reason ye in your heart?****VERSE 22***But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?*

**H**ow do you reason? In these verses, we read many accounts of Jesus' ministry whereby He condescended to using human reasoning. In verses 16–26, Jesus' forgiving the sins of the man taken with a palsy was met with indignation among the scribes and Pharisees. They questioned His power to forgive sins, and Jesus rebuked them by healing the man. Using their reasoning, surely this Man Who could heal must be God. Since that was so, then He could forgive sins.

Human reasoning is often established by what we see. Yet sometimes we are stumbled by the very thing that we have seen. In verses 30–32, the scribes and Pharisees asked why the Son of man sat with sinners. Jesus provided an answer: precisely to save these people. This attempt to explain at the human level repeats itself in the Bible, mainly in the form of metaphors and parables, even in the same chapter—as we read of the metaphor of the bridegroom [v. 35] and the parable of the wine and bottles [v. 36–39].

Yet it is not so in verses 27–28, where we read of Levi who “left all, rose up, and followed” Jesus upon hearing His command, “Follow me.” The publican did not ask any questions and Jesus, perceiving his thought, did not offer to reason it out with him either. Levi was evidently a man with wealth, as we read that he made Jesus a great feast in his own house [v. 29], yet he “left all” to follow Christ.

What great faith this is!

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 14**  
**LUKE 5:16–39**

**MEDITATION**

**Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. – Matthew 9:29**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 6:1–19***LESSON****Keeping the Sabbath day  
holy****VERSE 2***And certain of the Pharisees  
said unto them, Why do ye  
that which is not lawful to  
do on the Sabbath days?*

Jesus' disciples were caught 'working' on the Sabbath when they plucked and ate the ears of corn. His rejoinder to this accusation left His accusers tongue-tied. Not only did He cite the example of David and his men eating the shewbread when they were hungry but He also said that the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

It is interesting to note that Jesus received greater criticism for the miracles He performed on the Sabbath than he got for any other feat [see Mark 3:1–6; Luke 4:31–39; Luke 13:10–17; John 5:5–18; John 9:1–16]. The Pharisees were so obsessed with removing Jesus that they had failed to see the wonders of His miracles. They also missed the meaning of the Sabbath. "Working" on a Sabbath is allowed if it is an act of mercy or necessity.

What do you do on a Sabbath? Don't be so hung up with the outward appearance of keeping the Sabbath. Some Christians don't eat out, take public transport or carry heavy loads on the Sabbath. If one believes that this is adhering to the Fourth Commandment, one would have fallen into the same legalistic trap of the Pharisees. On the other hand, don't swing to the other extreme by refusing to take a break from the daily routine of work under the notion that remembering God in your heart is sufficient.

The Sabbath is designated as a day of rest, a day of worship. It is better to keep to the spiritual principle rather than the physical display of it.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 15**  
**LUKE 6:1–19**

**PRAYER**

**Help us, God, to keep the Fourth Commandment. Take us away from the trivial pursuits of our daily work. Let us worship and enjoy You on this day that You have set aside for us.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 6:20–49***LESSON****Loving your enemies****VERSE 27**

*But I say unto you which  
hear, Love your enemies, do  
good to them which hate  
you,*

**L**ove your enemy? Yes, this is what Jesus taught **L**us. Jesus further elaborated on how and why we should love our enemy [v. 28–36].

“Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.” An enemy is defined as “one who feels hatred towards, intends injury to, or opposes the interests of another”. So to love your enemy is contrary to normal human behaviour. Nevertheless, if this is what Jesus has instructed, we should follow. If one can only love and do good to another person who loves or does good to you, how different are we from sinners? Jesus teaches us not only to love our enemies but also to do good to them and bless them. If we do these to our enemies, our reward from our heavenly Father will be great.

Christian charity, which is very different from worldly charity, doesn’t seek revenge in injuries, even those inflicted by our enemies. These are hard lessons to apply as we sojourn on earth. However, if we are thoroughly grounded in the faith of Christ’s love, obeying His commands will not be difficult. Everyone who comes to Him for cleansing in His blood and knows the greatness of the mercy and love there is in Him can say in truth and sincerity, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?”

Let us therefore aim to be merciful, as our heavenly Father is kind even to the unthankful and the evil.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
LEVITICUS 16  
LUKE 6:20–49**

**CHALLENGE**

**Think of your enemies and pray for blessings for them today.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 7:1–35***LESSON****A second chance for all  
of us****VERSE 14**

*And he came and touched  
the bier: and they that bare  
him stood still. And he said,  
Young man, I say unto thee,  
Arise.*

Jesus was in the city of Nain (between Capernaum and Samaria) when He performed the miracle of raising the dead. A widow's only son had just died. The widow's situation was dire. She had no husband or son to provide for her. She was probably past her childbearing age and could not remarry. Unless a relative or friend comes to her aid, she would be reduced to begging to sustain her life. Jesus had compassion for her. He touched the bier (bed) and raised her only son from the dead [v. 14].

Reaction to this miracle these days is muted. In today's world of multi-media and visual effects, fact and fiction have become blurred. Hardly anyone reacts to the raising of the dead anymore. If they do, they will probably say that this story is fictional. When Jesus performed this miracle, He did it amidst a multitude of people. It was at the gate of Nain during the funeral procession that He performed the miracle, so there were many witnesses.

This miracle had more than a physical meaning. It also illustrated for us the salvation of God. The world was dead in sin. Because God had compassion on us, He sent Jesus to raise us to life with Him. Like the dead boy, we now have a second chance.

This is pure grace and mercy from God to us and we have done nothing to deserve it. Therefore, we are to embrace salvation and thank God for saving us.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
LEVITICUS 17  
LUKE 7:1–35**

**PRAYER**

**Dear God, thank You for salvation. Thank You for saving us from the wages of sin and the fires of hell.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 7:36–50***LESSON****Seeking forgiveness from  
sin****VERSE 48***And he said unto her, Thy  
sins are forgiven.*

**W**ho has the power to forgive sins? Only God. Here we read of a wonderful parable of the two debtors. The first debtor owed more than the second. When the creditor forgave both debtors, which debtor gained more and who would love the creditor more? Simon the Pharisee gave the correct answer—the debtor who owed a larger debt.

Simon and the woman were both sinners but their interaction with Jesus was totally opposite. Simon, as the host, did not accord Jesus the customary hospitality whereas the woman washed Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed and anointed them with ointment.

The more we express our sorrow for sin and our love to Christ, the clearer evidence we will have of the forgiveness of our sins. For it is by the experience of a work of grace wrought in us that we obtain the assurance of an act of grace. The woman, the greater debtor in the eyes of Simon, was totally contrite and looking for forgiveness. Jesus forgave her sins in front of everyone. The people present knew that only God could forgive sins and Jesus had shown them that He was God.

Are you like Simon the Pharisee or the sinful woman? Simon thought himself to be righteous enough when, in fact, he was a sinner destined for hell. The other was a woman of terrible reputation, shunned and despised by all, but she had shown real repentance. Let us therefore emulate the sincerity of the woman when we seek forgiveness for our sins.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**LEVITICUS 18**  
**LUKE 7:36–50**

**THOUGHT**

**Only God has the prerogative to pardon sin. Are you looking to only Him for forgiveness from your sin?**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 8:1–21***LESSON****The parable of the four types of soil****VERSE 8**

*And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

**E**vangelism or the conversion of souls is fully explained in the parable of the four soils [v. 5–18]. When a farmer scatters seeds, some will fall by the wayside, some will fall on rocks, some on thorns and some on good ground. Seeds that don't grow are of no fault of the farmer or of the seed. When the farmer sows, his goal is to scatter as many seeds as possible on good soil but some will be blown away and fall on bad ground. Whether the seed takes root will depend on what kind of soil it falls on. What is this seed that Jesus is alluding to? The seed is the Word of God.

The seeds falling on the four different kinds of soil describe the various kinds of people receiving God's Word. Wayside people, like many of the religious leaders, refuse to believe God's message. Hard-rock people, like many who followed Jesus around, believe the message but never got around to doing anything about it. Thorn-patch people, overcome by materialism, leave no room for God. The good-soil people, in contrast to all the other groups, obey God's Word no matter what the cost.

The yield of the seed depends on the condition of the soil. While we don't always know the soil condition, we can all sow. It is our responsibility to spread the seed (the Word of God) and we should not give up when a seed doesn't grow because not all seeds fall on good soil.

Which type of soil are you?

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
LEVITICUS 19  
LUKE 8:1–21**

**CHALLENGE**

**Be a faithful farmer and sow as many seeds as possible. Some will eventually fall on good soil and take root.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 8:22–39***LESSON****Sin of the Gadarenes****VERSE 37**

*Then the whole multitude  
of the country of the  
Gadarenes round about  
besought him to depart  
from them; for they were  
taken with great fear: and  
he went up into the ship,  
and returned back again.*

This portion of Scripture reveals the humanity and deity of Christ, and shows His power over the wind and the devils. As a man, Jesus slept. As God, He stilled the storm. Our Lord Jesus needed the rest of sleep to refresh His physical body. As He was sleeping, the disciples thought that their lives were in danger due to a great storm. They woke their Master and cried for help. With a command from His voice, the storm was stilled. Then Jesus rebuked His disciples, asking, “Where is your faith?” [v. 25].

Jesus went to the other side of the lake to heal the Gadarene demoniac. Christ used His divine power to deliver the man from enslavement by the devil but the Gadarenes were unhappy and demanded His departure from them. This is a sharp contrast to the Galileans waiting eagerly on the other side for His return [v. 40]. The Gadarenes loved the world and mammon and were not willing to give them up.

Notice that the legion of devils in the demoniac recognised and acknowledged the absolute supremacy of Christ, and begged for mercy [v. 32]. The evil spirits were intent on destruction—if not of that man, then the animals. “The devils also believe, and tremble” [James 2:19b], though not out of reverence, but with hatred and opposition to that one God Whom they believe.

Beware the sin of the Gadarenes; don’t be overtaken by worldliness and indifference.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 20**  
**LUKE 8:22–39**

**THOUGHT**

**Be not like the Gadarenes, but set your heart and mind on higher things.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 8:40–56***LESSON****Faith in action****VERSE 48**

*And he said unto her,  
Daughter, be of good  
comfort: thy faith hath  
made thee whole; go in  
peace.*

Compare the faith of this woman [v. 48] with those of the disciples [v. 25]. She put her faith into action by reaching out to Jesus for healing. She had been suffering from this disease for 12 years and had depleted all her means to find a cure. Though she was ashamed to appear before Christ, she came from behind Him to touch His clothes with an assurance that He had the power to cure her. Jesus met her need the instant she touched the hem of His garment. This sick woman came to Christ trembling but would go away in triumph.

“Who touched me?” [v. 45] Christ asked the question to draw the woman out from the crowd so that she could publicly declare the miracle before everyone. Her confession must have encouraged Jairus, who was begging Jesus to heal his dying 12-year-old daughter. Imagine his devastation when he received news of his daughter’s death. Jesus was able to heal the sick woman but would He be able to raise the dead?

How assuring it is to know that our Lord is always ready to comfort believers in their greatest trials and needs. He revived the ruler’s failing faith with words of comfort—not to fear but only believe, and she shall be restored to life [v. 50]. Those who exercise faith in Christ will surely experience joy and deliverance.

By only words from His mouth, Jesus raised Jairus’ daughter to life [v. 54], just as He did for Lazarus [John 11:43] and the son of the widow in Nain [Luke 7:14].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**LEVITICUS 21**  
**LUKE 8:40–56**

**PRAYER**

**Dear Lord, grant me faith and give me peace.  
Help my unbelief!**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 9:1–17***LESSON****Equipped for the ministry****VERSE 1**

*Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.*

Jesus commissioned 12 disciples for preaching and teaching ministries, and empowered them for healing and exorcism. This miraculous power for public service was to authenticate and testify that such abilities came from God. Christ gave His disciples a three-fold charge before sending them forth to preach the Gospel. First, He forbade them to be too concerned about victuals, money and clothes. Then, He instructed them not to change their lodging but stay put at one place. Finally, He told them to shake the dust off their feet in judgement against those who rejected the Gospel.

The ministry of Jesus and His disciples reached the ears of king Herod who was stricken with a guilty conscience after hearing that Jesus could be John the Baptist brought back to life [v. 7].

The disciples reported to Jesus all that they had done and He brought them to a quiet place in Bethsaida [v. 10]. The crowd followed our Lord and He gave them what they came for. The disciples wanted to send them away as there was insufficient food but our compassionate Lord provided for the physical needs of 5,000 people by miraculously multiplying five loaves and two fish. There was even a surplus of 12 basketfuls of leftovers.

Jesus both qualified and authorised the disciples whom He had called [v. 1]. Our Lord is equipping us even now in our service for Him. Let us call upon Him daily for wisdom, grace and strength to be effective instruments of blessing for His use.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**LEVITICUS 22**  
**LUKE 9:1–17**

**THOUGHT**

**We are equipped “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” [Ephesians 4:12].**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 9:18–36***LESSON****Who is Christ to you?****VERSE 20**

*He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.*

The people had various opinions about the identity of Jesus. Some said He was John the Baptist while others claimed that He was Elijah or one of the prophets raised to life [v. 19]. Jesus wanted to know the minds of the Apostles and asked them directly, “But whom say ye that I am?” [v. 20] He had given them abundant time and opportunities to form a correct judgement. Peter rightly proclaimed, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” [Matthew 16:16]. He asserted this as an assured fact and not as a mere opinion. Jesus blessed Peter for this special revelation from God the Father in heaven [Matthew 16:17].

“Whom say ye that I am?” The answer to this pertinent question is critical as it reflects the relationship between man and Christ. Our answers will reveal our standing with Christ. The proper answer to this question from the heart marks the starting point of the true Christian life.

Jesus then challenged His disciples on faithfulness, self-denial and daily sacrifice [v. 23–24]. When called upon to do God’s work, we must be willing to part with all our earthly comforts and temporal enjoyment for Christ’s sake. As His followers, we have to patiently bear our cross daily and give Him first place in our lives. This is the cost of discipleship that is expected of every believer.

Who is Christ to you? Take time to reflect carefully on it, as your answer will decide your standing in eternity.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**LEVITICUS 23**  
**LUKE 9:18–36**

**MEDITATION****Christ is either Lord of all or not at all.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 9:37–62***LESSON****Save, not destroy****VERSE 56**

*For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.*

Jesus' disciples were rebuked for their lack of faith and prayer. They were unable to heal a boy with an evil spirit despite being empowered by Christ. The distraught father looked to Jesus for help, knelt down and begged for mercy for his son [Matthew 17:14–18]. Our compassionate Lord strengthened the father's faith when He healed the sick boy.

Later, Jesus prophesied His coming death once again but His disciples did not understand, as they could not fit a crucified king into God's plan. They were looking forward to a conquering Messiah rather than a suffering Saviour. They were self-seeking and self-exalting in personal ambitions even as they disputed who the greatest among them was. Jesus used a child to teach them humility and the way of the Cross.

Two other disciples, James and John, were rebuked for their vindictive spirit when they asked for permission to destroy the inhospitable Samaritans [v. 54–55]. John forgot the earlier reprimand by Jesus against exclusiveness in ministry [v. 49–50]. Take note that zeal for Christ is no excuse for fanaticism and sectarianism. Our Lord is not a destroyer but a Saviour.

“For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them” [v. 56b], as witnessed by the many miracles of healing. He also came to save our souls from the bondage of sin and from Satan. Have you entrusted your life to the Saviour?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 24**  
**LUKE 9:37–62**

**THOUGHT**

**For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. – Luke 19:10**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 10:1–16***LESSON****Lessons for mission trips****VERSE 2**

*Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*

This passage relates our Lord's appointment of His 70 followers in pairs to prepare the way for His visits. If you are planning for a mission trip, take note of this. Here are seven lessons about mission work that we can draw from the instructions He gave them.

First, before you embark on the trip, pray [v. 2]. Not all believers have money to give to missions and few have great intellectual gifts. But all can pray. Second, you must be sent [v. 2]. No one should go without being sent. Even our Lord was sent by the Father.

Third, be aware that mission work can be perilous [v. 3]. You may be in unfamiliar territory with hostile people. So expect to be ill treated and persecuted by those who do not know Christ. Fourth, abstain from being covetous or materialistic [v. 4]. You are there to win souls. Don't show off your material possessions. So travel light and trust God for the provisions needed. Fifth, be conscious of distractions that may eat up your time and thoughts [v. 4]. Time spent on dealing with foreign culture and traditions must not be done at the expense of the Gospel work. Sixth, avoid being fickle-minded or hard to please concerning food and lodging, as long as your health is not compromised [v. 7].

Finally, proclaim the Gospel [v. 9]. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. It is souls that we must win.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 25**  
**LUKE 10:1–16**

**THOUGHT**

**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. – Matthew 28:19**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 10:17–42***LESSON****True neighbourly love****VERSE 29**

*But he, willing to justify  
himself, said unto Jesus,  
And who is my neighbour?*

These words lead us into the well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. The parable was told in response to the question from a certain lawyer who asked, “Who is my neighbour?” While the answer becomes self-explanatory towards the end of the passage, there are three lessons we can draw from this parable about the nature of true neighbourly love.

First, true neighbourly love is rare. Selfishness is the leading characteristic of the great majority of mankind. The priest and the Levite represent a striking description of what is continually going on in the world. Don’t expect much from the kindness of man.

Second, true neighbourly love shows no regard for background or race. Samaritans were enemies of the Jews. Yet this Samaritan had no concern for this and had gone on to help. We ought to be ready to show kindness to anyone who is in need. Our kindness must extend beyond our family members and friends.

Finally, true neighbourly love is sacrificial. The Samaritan not only felt but also acted, using his own time and resources. He dressed the man’s wound, transported him to the inn on his donkey, stayed overnight to look after him and, before he departed, left money with the innkeeper so that the man could stay on until he recovered. All these actions took up his time, money and resources. Let us learn to do likewise.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 26**  
**LUKE 10:17-42**

**THOUGHT**

**For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. – Galatians 5:14**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 11:1–13***LESSON****Teaching us to pray****VERSE 1**

*And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*

This passage contains the Lord's Prayer [v. 1–4], a parable on the importance of persistence in prayer [v. 5–8] and some promises given to those who persist [v. 9–13].

The Lord's Prayer provides us with a prayer model to follow. If we pray the way Jesus has instructed, we will focus on the Father's purpose—that His name be honoured and His kingdom be established on earth. We also focus on our needs for provision, pardon and protection from sin, not so that we will be comfortable and happy but so that we will have what we need to carry out our Father's purpose.

The parable that follows teaches us that we may approach God with bold persistence, knowing that, as a loving Father, He will provide us with spiritual good. It also shows us that necessity drives bold prayer. All too often, we fail to pray because we assume our own sufficiency or competence. Furthermore, the need in this case was not directly personal but the need of someone else. While we should go to God to seek help for our own needs, we should keep in mind that the main thrust of prayer is not to meet our needs but to further the kingdom of God.

Let us approach God with persistence and trust, as a child would come to a loving father. If our requests are for our spiritual good, the Father will grant us our request.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 27**  
**LUKE 11:1–13**

**THOUGHT**

**Father-like giving is the divine response to childlike living. – Andrew Murray**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 11:14–36***LESSON****Seeing, but not believing****VERSE 15**

*But some of them said, He  
casteth out devils through  
Beelzebub the chief of the  
devils.*

For months, our Lord had been performing works of healing and casting out demons. His works were powerful, miraculous and spectacular. Yet there were Jews who continued to doubt His power. Not only did they not believe what they had seen, they also attributed what Jesus had done to the power of demons [v. 15].

When some pressed Him for more signs, our Lord replied that the sign of Jonah was all they would get to see. He was, of course, referring to His own death on the Cross and His subsequent resurrection on the third day.

Why did thousands of Jews not believe the miracles that they saw Jesus perform while He was on earth? Even His own brethren did not believe in Him at one point in time [John 8]. Our Lord Himself provided the answer: “Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep” [John 10:26]. So let it never surprise us to see unbelief abound, both in the church and in the world. For people to believe, something must fundamentally change within them and it is of God’s doing, not ours [Ephesians 2:8].

The unbelief of the Jews reminds us that not only is seeing believing, but the converse is also true. We need not see Christ’s miracles or hear Christ’s voice. All this could have done no more for us than simple faith can do now. No man can be nearer and dearer to Jesus than the man who simply believes. Let us thank God for the gift of faith.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS I**  
**LUKE 11:14-36**

**THOUGHT**

**Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. – John 20:29**

**BIBLE LESSON**  
*Luke 11:37–54*

**LESSON**  
**Woe unto you**

**VERSE 44**

*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.*

In this short passage, our Lord uttered the expression “Woe unto you” six times. These judgements were directed against the scribes, Pharisees, lawyers and hypocrites.

What is it that elicits this woe? It was their disregard for justice [v. 42], love for honour [v. 43], inner corruption [v. 44], introduction of burdensome regulation [v. 46], persecution of prophets [v. 47] and taking away of the key to the understanding of the Scriptures [v. 52].

But why were they pictured as “graves which appear not” (unmarked graves)? The Old Testament had laws about touching a dead body. If you touch a dead body, you are considered ceremonially defiled [Numbers 9]. The Jews, however, extended the law beyond that and stated that one could not touch a grave as well. So every grave in Israel was marked so that the people would not touch them inadvertently or step on them. Jesus used this picture to illustrate this point: “You are like unmarked graves. People have no idea that they are walking over you and being defiled by you all the time.”

This is precisely the case for those who practise false religions; they are unmarked graves. For us who practise the true religion—leaders of the church, teachers of young people, heads of households—the lesson is this: Take heed how you live out your lives. You must practise what you preach and teach. No lessons produce such effect on men as those that the teacher illustrates by his own daily life.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
 IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 2**  
**LUKE 11:37-54**

**THOUGHT**

**For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. – 1 Samuel 16:7c**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 12:1–21***LESSON****Accumulating eternal  
wealth****VERSE 21***So is he that layeth up  
treasure for himself, and is  
not rich toward God.*

A great multitude had gathered to hear Jesus speak and He spoke to His disciples first. He warned them to be wary of the hypocrisies of the Pharisees and to fear the one who can banish the soul to hell, as compared to those who can only kill the body.

At that time, a certain man requested Jesus to divide his inheritance with his brother. Jesus sent him away, saying that He was not an arbiter of material things. He then told the parable of a man who had much wealth. This rich man had reconstructed his storehouses to keep his growing stocks. He was so preoccupied with his wealth accumulation that he did not know that God would take his life that very night.

The accumulation of physical wealth is very much on the minds of most people these days. Everyone wants a larger piece of the pie. Not many are concerned about the state of our souls. This parable that Jesus told many years ago is still very true today.

While it is not wrong to have and enjoy material blessings, let us take stock of our spiritual state as well. Let us be reminded of the One Who has the power to judge us even after our physical body has decayed. Let us set our affection on things above, not on things that will perish or which we will have to leave behind upon our death.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 3**  
**LUKE 12:1–21**

**MEDITATION**

**For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. – 1 Timothy 6:10**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 12:22–40***LESSON****Watching without ceasing****VERSE 40**

*Be ye therefore ready also:  
for the Son of man cometh  
at an hour when ye think  
not.*

Our Lord Jesus teaches us not to worry about things over which we have no control [v. 22–32]. He tells us that life is more than food and our bodies are more than clothes. God is the One Who feeds the birds and dresses the fields. We should not worry about adornment or sustenance but should instead strive for things with eternal value.

We are also to watch without ceasing for His second coming [v. 33–40]. We should be like good servants keeping a lookout for the return of our Master. We should watch earnestly and be ready to serve our Master when He returns [v. 37]. No one knows when He is coming so we should remain steadfast in our watch.

How timely is this exhortation in the light of the way the people in the world are living their lives today. They strive so hard to accumulate material wealth and are so easily worried about losing it. They not only fret when they lose their jobs or when a natural disaster destroys their property but they also worry when they don't get a long-awaited promotion or miss out on good investment deals.

We worry when we don't have. When we do have, we worry that we don't have enough. Christians, let us be concerned about heaven. Let us be watchful for the coming of our Lord. Let us strive for the Gospel and occupy ourselves with the business of our King.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 4**  
**LUKE 12:22–40**

**HYMN**

**Trust and obey,  
For there's no other way,  
To be happy in Jesus,  
But to trust and obey.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 12:41–59***LESSON****Doing the right thing  
with what we have****VERSE 51***Suppose ye that I am come  
to give peace on earth? I  
tell you, Nay; but rather  
division.*

Once again, Jesus talks about the obedient servant who watches and waits for his master. In this parable, the master has put this servant in charge of all his affairs and he will administer his master's affairs until he comes again.

Jesus also mentions that a servant who knows his master's will but doesn't do it will be punished more severely than another who doesn't know it. To put this in context, Christians who know and have ready access to God's truth will be punished more severely than non-believers if we wilfully break God's laws.

This is enough to wake us up from our slumber and cause us to reflect on our spiritual condition. Do we read the Bible and pray every day? Do we seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord? What are we doing with our Bible knowledge? Do we put into practice what we have learnt? Our Lord Jesus says that the man who hears and does is a wise man who builds his house on strong foundation. Conversely, the man who hears and doesn't do is a foolish man who builds his house on sand.

In the final section, Jesus pronounces that He has come not to give peace but to bring division on earth—a division between truth and falsehood. Truth divides. It exposes the false. It reveals the fraudulent. It uncovers the counterfeit. There is truth when there is real peace, which comes by way of the Gospel and obedience to God's Word.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 5  
LUKE 12:41–59**

**PRAYER****Lord, use me to edify a soul for You today.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 13:1–22***LESSON****Living like Christ****VERSE 21**

*It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*

Our Lord Jesus went from place to place to teach the multitudes. He taught them in parables so that they would be able to understand Him. When asked about the kingdom of God, He likened it to a mustard seed and the leaven of bread.

Jesus was trying to show that a tiny mustard seed could grow into a huge tree to provide shade and solace for God's creatures. Like the leaven of bread, a little Christ-likeness is all it takes to make the whole community so.

Shortly before this, Jesus healed a woman from her affliction of 18 years but His act of healing was criticised by the hypocritical Pharisees, who disapproved of His healing on a Sabbath. Jesus rebuked them for their hypocrisy, as the Pharisees would no doubt rescue their trapped animals on a Sabbath. The value of a human life is definitely more important than that of an animal.

Many a time, we tend to see the mote in our brother's eye and miss the beam in our own [Matthew 7:3]. We feel justified to correct others but forget we often do things that cannot be justified. Perhaps pointing out the blameworthiness of others gives us the temporal but pleasant feeling of self-righteousness. We rarely see the wrong things that we do. Applying Jesus' parables in our lives, showing a little Christ-likeness will allow us to see more of others and less of ourselves. This seed of considering for others will grow and the fruits will multiply. Let us be encouraged to sow this seed instead.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**NUMBERS 6**  
**LUKE 13:1–22**

**PRAYER****Lord, help me learn to be more like You.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 13:23–35***LESSON****To be accepted by Christ****VERSE 25**

*When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are.*

Jesus was asked if heaven was only reserved for a few people. He answered that the path to heaven was straight and narrow, and that every effort to enter should be made. Once the door to the house is closed, the knocker will have to stand outside knocking in vain. So it is with salvation. God's grace is freely offered but what He freely offers today, He may also rightfully withdraw tomorrow.

From verses 31 to 35, attention is switched to Jesus' sorrow for Jerusalem. The Pharisees sought to threaten Jesus by telling Him that Herod wanted Him dead. Jesus accepted the warning and responded: "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected" [v. 32]. Jesus also lamented on the sorrowful state that Jerusalem had become. Once God's favoured nation, Jerusalem was now a nation that killed and stoned her prophets.

Our Lord's lament teaches us that our lives are safe in God's hands and no wicked men can do us harm unless God permits it. This should motivate us to press forward with our duty despite threats and trials.

Albert Barnes writes: "How beautiful and consistent is the example of Christ! How wise was He to detect the arts of His foes! How fearless in going forward, in spite of all their machinations, to do what God had appointed for Him to do!"

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 7  
LUKE 13:23-35**

**PRAYER****Lord, help me to walk just as You have walked.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 14***LESSON****The cost of discipleship****VERSE 33**

*So likewise, whosoever he  
be of you that forsaketh not  
all that he hath, he cannot  
be my disciple.*

Christians, you must be ready to give up everything in your lives for Christ's sake. Our Lord Jesus demands that we love Him more than our parents and loved ones, even more than our very own lives. Sometimes we have to choose to offend those we love on earth than to displease our Lord who died for us on the Cross.

Many may have professed to follow Jesus but do so lightly and carelessly. They eventually fall away and go back into the world. When a builder builds a tower, he must plan and assess whether he has sufficient resources to complete it. Before a king goes to war, he must consider whether his army is confident of victory. Likewise, Jesus bids us to count the cost when deciding to follow Him. If we have decided, let us persevere to do His work and not shy away from the difficult decisions, trusting in the Lord for His grace and mercy.

A man who doesn't count the cost will end up a backslider, going astray with his eyes open and sinning against God. Like salt, he will lose his flavour.

Jesus has told us the cost of discipleship and promised to be with us always. So let us not be afraid to serve Him and begin with this objective in mind. He will never forsake us if we pray for grace to be faithful and never fall away.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 8**  
**LUKE 14**

**THOUGHT**

**Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?  
Your heart does the spirit control?**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 15***LESSON****The prodigal son****VERSE 24**

*For this my son was dead,  
and is alive again; he was  
lost, and is found. And they  
began to be merry.*

The parable of the prodigal son contains many useful lessons for us. It is a story of God's great love towards a repentant sinner, no matter how great his sin is. The "younger son" represents the sinner who finds no pleasure in having fellowship with God. He departed from God and spent his time and money on things that are not profitable. He was spiritually blind. "They know not, neither will they understand: they walk on in darkness" [Psalm 82:5a].

He soon became weary of his own wretchedness through bitter experience. A "famine" grew in his heart. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" [Galatians 6:8a]. He was abandoned by those around him and had to fill himself with food for swine. He was convicted of his miserable state and resolved to repent. He did not stop to think but just "arose and went" home. He returned to his father in true repentance and humility.

He wanted to confess his iniquities and did not attempt to find excuses for his sins. His father, filled with loving compassion, did not rebuke his son but instead welcomed him home with great joy and called for a celebration. "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Likewise, our Heavenly Father waits with loving compassion for us to return to Him with true repentance and humble hearts. He offers us everything in His kingdom and seeks to restore our relationship with joyful celebration.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 9**  
**LUKE 15**

**THOUGHT**

**Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. – Luke 15:10**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 16:1–18***LESSON****Redeeming the time,  
because the days are evil****VERSE 11***If therefore ye have not been  
faithful in the unrighteous  
mammon, who will commit  
to your trust the true  
riches?*

This is the parable of an unrighteous servant, who, when confronted by his master to account for his doings, decided to make amends with his master's debtors so that he could still have friends if he was thrown out of his master's service. For one who owed a hundred measures of oil, he reduced the debt to 50; for another who owed a hundred measures of wheat, he gave a discount of 20 per cent. His master might not have approved of his unrighteous dealings but he commended his cunning ways.

This is a reflection of the ways of this world. When confronted with problems, a worldly response would be to find worldly ways to deal with them, even though it may mean lying and cheating. To the human master, who was probably a businessman himself, the servant did what seemed right as a means of survival. Indeed, in this world today, every man still does that which is right in his own eyes.

Are you a good steward of the manifold grace of God? Or are you in danger of being accused of wasting our Master's goods? Like the servant in the parable, we will also have to give an account of our works.

Let us strive to do that which is right in God's eyes only. The Bible is our only guide for this purpose because it contains God's instructions for righteousness.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 10  
LUKE 16:1–18**

**THOUGHT**

**For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? – 1 Peter 4:17**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 16:19–31***LESSON****Lifting up his eyes in hell****VERSE 24**

*And he cried and said,  
 Father Abraham, have  
 mercy on me, and send  
 Lazarus, that he may dip  
 the tip of his finger in water,  
 and cool my tongue; for  
 I am tormented in this  
 flame.*

**O**soul, how have you been nourished with the goodness of this earth? Have you not been blessed with fine linens and have you not been fed sumptuously? So we must remember the goodness of the Lord, lest you are taken from your bed of luxury and be placed in that nether region where endless flames and unbearable torments abound.

Thank God that He has shown in His marvellous words the destruction of those who follow the ways of the devil. Thank Him also for showing you the way to salvation through His death on the Cross. Trust now in Him Who has died for you and turn from your sinful ways so that you may be saved.

Thank the God of your salvation and remember your brethren that you may be a blessing to them in word and in deed. Share the good news so that they who hear may also be awakened from their deadly slumber. Don't wait, for then there shall be no more occasion for good news.

**O** sinner, awake and take heed! For there is nought an escape from the torments of hell, once you have fallen therein. Awake, and do the Lord's commandments, for the glory of the heavenly kingdom awaits. Let this be your desire, that you may dwell in the house of the Lord and behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
 IN 2 YEARS, READ  
 NUMBERS 11  
 LUKE 16:19-31**

**PRAYER**

**O Lord, we thank You for the salvation that You have given to us on the Cross.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 17:1–19***LESSON****Faith in God****VERSE 19**

*And he said unto him,  
Arise, go thy way: thy faith  
hath made thee whole.*

**F**aith is the theme of today's Bible passage. In the first instance, the Lord asked His followers to forgive those who had trespassed against them. Even if they had been offended seven times in a day, and the offender had repented seven times, faith required that they forgive the offender.

Knowing that it would be a hard thing to do, the disciples asked the Lord to increase their faith. The Lord responded by saying that they could not rely on their own strength, and the kind of faith that they had was not sufficient. Faith is to be found in our obedience to His commandments. Therefore, should there be anyone who trespasses against us, we should forgive him, putting our faith in the Lord to work a good work out of this.

Similarly, in the case of the lepers, their faith made them whole. Even though it was difficult to show themselves to the priests (they were outcasts of the society in those days), their obedience to our Lord's command demonstrated their faith, and the Lord rewarded their faith by healing them.

How is your faith today? Are you trusting in the Lord and doing His commandments? Let us be true followers of Christ. Our Lord says to all of us, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" [Luke 9:23]. Let us therefore put our faith in these commandments to follow Him, and understand how blessed it is to be called a Christian.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 12–13  
LUKE 17:1–19**

**THOUGHT**

**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen. – Hebrews 11:1**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 17:20–37***LESSON****Linger not****VERSE 32***Remember Lot's wife.*

There are few warnings in the Bible more solemn than this: “Remember Lot’s wife.” Jesus sounded this warning when He was talking about the last days.

Notice that our Lord did not say “Remember Sodom” but said, “Remember Lot’s wife”. So what is it about Lot’s wife that He wanted us to remember? Did she not want to be saved? Yes. Did she not wish to escape destruction? Yes. Did she not make an attempt to escape judgement? Yes. But did she escape in the end? No. She could have been saved but she was not. She was judged not by the fire and brimstone that fell on Sodom but by her own unbelief and disobedience to God’s express command of not looking back.

While Lot’s wife appeared to be leaving the city of sin, her heart remained in the world. She probably did not take the coming judgement seriously. There were no signs of disaster. She could have whispered in her heart: “I shall see if what those angels said is true.” She turned to give a lingering glance at the condemned city. By that glance, she perished.

Did the judgement come? Yes. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. As it was in the days of Lot, Jesus said: “Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed” [v. 30], referring to His second coming to judge the world. Before God judges, He always warns. Take heed and believe in the Lord. Remember Lot’s wife.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 14**  
**LUKE 17:20-37**

**THOUGHT**

**Many of us don’t deny that judgement is coming, and yet we linger.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 18:1–17***LESSON****Losing heart in prayer****VERSE 1**

*And he spake a parable  
unto them to this end, that  
men ought always to pray,  
and not to faint;*

In this parable of a persistent widow and an unjust judge, Jesus shows us that if an unjust judge can finally cause justice to be done in response to persistent requests, our just God will bring justice to His children who pray and not faint.

Jesus is not equating God as the unrighteous judge. The point He is getting across is that if an unrighteous judge could be moved by perseverance, a loving God will be moved by the persistent prayer of His child. Our Lord Jesus uses this parable to teach us the value of fervent petitions that we can put forth until God is moved and He responds. This type of prayer focuses our attention and priorities.

We all have problems with prayer. Sometimes we wonder if our prayer is really heard by God, as so many of our prayers seem to go unanswered. We pray for health, but we fall sick. We pray for peace, but wars rage on. We pray for our children, but they still get into trouble. Our real problem is that we faint or lose heart easily. We lose confidence that our prayers may not be heard. We are not always convinced of the power of prayer. Too often, prayer becomes the last resort instead of the first recourse.

When our Lord tells us to pray always and not faint, He doesn't mean we should bend our knees and close our eyes and repeat the same prayers all day long. Instead, He wants us to have a spirit of prayer and a desire to keep an unbroken fellowship with Him.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 15**  
**LUKE 18:1–17**

**THOUGHT**

**Let us imitate the persistence of the widow; God is waiting to hear our petitions.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 18:18–43***LESSON****A sorrowful rich ruler****VERSE 22**

*Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.*

A rich young ruler asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. Jesus cited some commandments that forbid adultery, murder and stealing. The young ruler replied, “All these have I kept from my youth up.”

Life was before the young man and wealth around him, yet he hungered. He must have felt an emptiness in his life, or else he would not have come to Jesus and asked, “What shall I do?” Though he had everything, Jesus affirmed his need: “Yet lackest thou one thing.”

However, Jesus’ prescription to “sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor” was unpalatable to the young ruler. Would he exchange his wealth here on earth for the greater wealth in God’s kingdom? He would not, even when Jesus promised him “treasure in heaven”. When he heard this, “he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich”. He went away sad because he could not part with his great wealth, not even in exchange for eternal life. His treasure and his hope for happiness were misplaced.

Treasure has a special connection to our heart, the place of desire and longing, of will and focus. The thing we set our heart on is our greatest treasure. The young ruler’s riches was an anchor dragging his soul down. We usually think of poverty as a problem but Jesus reminds us that riches may pose a greater danger. Wealth and material comfort tend to make us feel satisfied with this earthly life alone.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 16  
LUKE 18:18-43**

**THOUGHT**

**Jesus is the greatest treasure we can have.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 19:1–27***LESSON****An overjoyed Zacchaeus****VERSE 9**

*And Jesus said unto him,  
This day is salvation come  
to this house, forsomuch  
as he also is a son of  
Abraham.*

In Luke 18:22, Jesus asked the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and distribute them to the poor. When he heard this, he became sorrowful, as he was very rich. In contrast, we now read that the wealthy tax collector Zacchaeus volunteered, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” [v. 8].

Both men were very rich. The young ruler was respected and he lived by the Mosaic laws. Zacchaeus was despised because he was the chief among the publicans, who were notorious for amassing wealth by extorting money from their own people. Both men came to Jesus, Who invited them to follow Him. But their responses could not be more different. The rich young ruler rejected the Lord’s offer but Zacchaeus received the Lord joyfully.

No one wished to be associated with Zacchaeus the publican except Jesus, Who also invited Himself to his home. Zacchaeus was overwhelmed. When he saw the holiness of Jesus, he instantly recognised the ugliness of his own sinful condition. He believed in Jesus and turned away from his wicked ways. He demonstrated the fruit of his repentance by giving half of his wealth to the poor and returning every dollar he had stolen, multiplied.

The rich young ruler chose to put his faith in his wealth while Zacchaeus chose to place his faith in Jesus. The ruler would one day face eternal punishment while Zacchaeus would inherit eternal life.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 17–18  
LUKE 19:1–27**

**THOUGHT**

**What would you do if Jesus knocks on your door and says, “Today I must abide at thy house?” Will you feel excited or ashamed?**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 19:28–48***LESSON****The second cleansing of the temple****VERSE 45**

*And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;*

Our Lord's ministry was marked at the beginning and at the end by the cleansing of the temple. During the first cleansing, Jesus reproached the traders for turning His Father's house into "a house of merchandise" [John 2:16]. In the second cleansing, He said: "My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves" [v. 46].

The temple was supposed to be a centre of spiritual blessing and a refuge for all believers. When Jesus saw how it had degenerated into a marketplace and a robber's den, He was moved to righteous indignation. We see His startling and swift action in cleansing the temple of those who used it to exploit the worshippers of God.

If we ever see Jesus as mild and indulgent, then we have a serious misconception. Where sin is concerned, there is righteous anger and vigorous condemnation. While Christ is infinitely loving and kind, He is also infinitely just. His justice demands that sin be condemned and the corrupted be punished.

As the ancient magnificent temple had been corrupted by the sins of the world, so have men's hearts today. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Jesus came into the world to cleanse the hearts of men. We have become filthy and therefore must be cleansed. Jesus shed His blood on Calvary so that our hearts might be cleansed.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 19**  
**LUKE 19:28-48**

**THOUGHT**

**If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. – 1 Corinthians 3:17**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 20:1–19***LESSON****Following in His steps****VERSE 2**

*And spake unto him,  
saying, Tell us, by what  
authority doest thou these  
things? Or who is he that  
gave thee this authority?*

There are two movements in this passage. In the first, we see the authorities (the spiritual, the moral and the civil rulers) challenging our Lord Jesus. They were authoritatively challenging Him with regard to His nature and the derivation of His authority in His work and ministry.

In the second movement, we see how He, having dealt with these authorities, turned to the crowd and continued His preaching, relating a parable, undoubtedly in the presence of those whom He had so signally silenced, and doing so in the gravest solemnity.

These men had been watching Jesus for three-and-a-half years, convinced that Jesus had no authority at all. He was neither a priest, a scribe nor a ruler. While challenging His authority, the Pharisees ought to have examined His mighty works. In all fairness, they ought to have compared His teachings to the Scriptures. However, they refused to take either one course or the other. They preferred to call in question His commission. The spirit that prompted this demand is too evident to be mistaken. These men hated yet envied Christ. They saw His power increasing and their own power waning.

Every true-hearted Christian who tries to do good in the world must be prepared to be treated like his Master. He should not be surprised if the self-righteous, governed by their reputation and secular interest, don't agree with his ways. Worst of all, and with much irony, he will often meet enemies in situations where he ought to find friends.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 20**  
**LUKE 20:1–19**

**THOUGHT**

**For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. – Hebrews 12:3**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 20:20–47***LESSON****Life beyond death****VERSE 38**

*For he is not a God of the  
dead, but of the living: for  
all live unto him.*

In this passage, we find our Lord's answer to the question put to him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Caesar, His vindication of that great fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and the future state, against the foolish complaints of the Sadducees. He puzzled the scribes with a question concerning the Messiah being the Son of David, before cautioning His disciples to be wary of the scribes.

The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, came with a stale piece of casuistry to cast ridicule upon this doctrine. They cited a woman who had seven husbands, and asked whose wife she should be when they were to meet on the other side after the resurrection. Jesus replied by lifting up the veil that hides the future world and gave them a glimpse of new conditions of life there, and also bestowed upon mankind the definite assurance of the immortality of the soul.

The children of the resurrection will be like the children of God, partakers of the divine nature. Each individual is assured of immortality. Marriage is not needed to raise up a new generation to take the place of old in succession. It will be a state of perfect and unending blessedness in God. Death will be no more, as God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Let the words of Christ allay our doubts and fears concerning the future life, which, from time to time, troubles the hearts and conscience of all.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 21**  
**LUKE 20:20–47**

**THOUGHT****Read John 14:1–3 for encouragement.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 21:1–19***LESSON****Giving her all****VERSE 4**

*For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.*

We read in this passage of Christ relating an incident where rich men and a poor widow were casting their gifts into the treasury, and His revelation of the dreadful events yet to come—the overthrowing of the Jewish people, the destruction of the Temple and the startling phenomena that would usher in His second coming.

We learn how keenly our Lord Jesus observes events as they take place on earth. All things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. In His glorious majesty, He doesn't think it beneath Him to notice the devotion of a poor widow. Nothing is too small to escape His observation. No act is too trivial to be noted down in His book. He measures humility and greatness differently from the standards of man. The poor widow gave all she had while the rich men gave something they could afford to spare. The latter gave of their superfluity, and in this way gave less than the poor widow.

The giving of a poor believer has as much dignity as that of a wealthy man. This also serves as a good reminder for us to look beyond the superficial. Some people who appear to give much have given very little in God's sight, while others who might appear to give very little actually give very generously in God's view.

Let us watch against being miserly and, whatever else we do with our money, to give regularly and habitually to further God's kingdom on earth.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 22**  
**LUKE 21:1–19**

**THOUGHT**

**God judges what we give by what we keep. –  
George Muller**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 21:20–38***LESSON****Fleeing from danger****VERSE 21**

*Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.*

Our Lord, having partly lifted up the veil and disclosed to His disciples the unseen and mysterious future, now picked up the discourse on the righteous judgement and divine vengeance on the unbelieving Jewish nation. He gave them a chilling picture of the miseries that would come to Jerusalem. Instead of satisfying their curiosity of the future, He forewarned them against dangers that would especially assail them in order to strengthen their faith.

When the Roman armies began to compass the city, they must save themselves by flight. A place of refuge would be opened to them, and they must hasten to take advantage of it. The danger and the mode of deliverance were plainly pointed out, and history records the fact that none of the Christian community perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The lesson here is very instructive. “There is nothing cowardly or unworthy of a Christian in endeavouring to escape from danger. There is nothing unbecoming of our high vocation in a diligent use of the means in order to secure our safety. To meet death patiently and courageously, if it comes on us in the path of God’s providence, is a duty incumbent on every believer. But to court death and suffering, and rush heedlessly into danger, is the part of the fanatic and enthusiast, not of the wise disciple of Christ.” – J. C. Ryle

It is when we use all means that God has placed within our reach that we may confidently expect God’s protection. There is a wide difference between presumption and faith.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 23**  
**LUKE 21:20–38**

**THOUGHT**

**Safety lies not in the absence of danger but in the presence of the Almighty God.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 22:1–20***LESSON****Entering a sinful course****VERSE 2**

*And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.*

In this portion on the partaking of the Passover with His disciples and the instituting of the Lord's Supper, we see the unfolding of the evil plot to capture Jesus, and how Judas came into the picture.

So great was the enmity of the chief priests and scribes against Jesus that they were resolved to put Him to death, by whatever means. The unexpected offer of traitor Apostle, Judas, to deliver Him into their hands initiated an unholy pact that set the plot in motion to achieve their wicked end. The chief priests and scribes, as well as the turncoat disciple, were led by their alienation from Christ to perpetrate this most shameful deed.

All checks of conscience became powerless to control them. The priests forgot their sacred office, claims of justice, solemn memorial of the feast, and the covenant between God and Israel. Judas forgot all his Master's love and compassion, His wonderful deeds and teachings, His holy and innocent life. He forgot all that was expected of him as a disciple, a friend and a follower of the Master, with whom he had the closest fellowship and intimate communion.

Take heed! A sinful course is a course downhill. It may be in our choice to enter into it or not, but when we have wilfully entered into it, it is not in our power to check ourselves and fix a point at which we can stop.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 24**  
**LUKE 22:1–20**

**THOUGHT**

**If thou least fallen into sin through violent temptations, seek speedily for repentance for it, recovery out of it, and reformation from it. – Vavasor Powell**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 22:21–38***LESSON****The greater sin****VERSE 22**

*And truly the Son of man  
goeth, as it was determined:  
but woe unto that man by  
whom he is betrayed!*

Jesus had a discourse with His disciples on several issues after the Last Supper. He spoke concerning the person who would betray Him, and who was then present at the very table. He showed them the folly and sin of striving among themselves for supremacy. He also spoke of Peter's denial of Him.

While the chief priest and scribes were guilty of the grave sin in plotting Jesus' death, Judas was guilty of a worse offence. The former, never having been disciples of Christ, had proclaimed their enmity to Him openly, from the beginning of Christ's ministry. However, the peculiar infamy of Judas is even indicated in his numbering among the Twelve. The statement that Satan entered into his heart explained his shameful conduct. Christ did not speak of Satan as entering into the chief priests and scribes. The palliation of their guilt might be found in their ignorance of the Saviour and their false conceptions of Him. The experiential knowledge of Judas only intensified the extent of his sin in betraying Christ.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" [2 Peter 2:20].

A very solemn lesson here is for all who are professed disciples of Christ. Our responsibilities are increased by our relationship with Him. The sin of those who wilfully depart from Him is greater than those who have never acknowledged Him as their Lord and Master.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 25**  
**LUKE 22:21–38**

**THOUGHT**

**None sink so far into hell as those that come nearest heaven, because they fall from the greatest height. – William Gurnall**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 22:39–71***LESSON****Who exactly is Jesus Christ?****VERSE 70**

*Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.*

Jesus was in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, having to struggle with His being betrayed and His subsequent reprehensible treatment at the hands of the Jewish leaders. We read of the fall of the Apostle Peter. We also read of the Lord's full and bold confession of His Messiahship and divinity.

The Jewish leaders wanted to hear Him say with His own mouth that He was the Christ, the Son of God, so that they could condemn Him to death for blasphemy. What they did not know was that this same confession would deprive them of all excuses for unbelief.

This is a vital truth because how you respond to Jesus' declaration determines your ultimate destiny in all eternity. Jesus Christ is not a mere martyr who suffered physical torture and execution. He is the Lamb of God Who bore all our sins. He is the Messiah Whom God has promised our first parents in the Garden of Eden, the Saviour Who would rescue us from the Fall and reconcile mankind with their Creator. He is the only begotten Son of God Who died for our sins so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. He is the coming King of kings and Lord of lords Who will one day sit upon a throne of glory and judge all His enemies.

May our Master's confession be an example to us, His followers. Don't shy away when the occasion requires our testimony.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 26**  
**LUKE 22:39-71**

**THOUGHT**

**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. – Romans 1:16**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 23:1–31***LESSON****Being Barabbas****VERSE 25**

*And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.*

After the bloodthirsty mob had physically abused Jesus and mocked Him, they brought Him before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judaea, and levelled all sorts of false accusations against Him. Pilate, however, could “find no fault” in Jesus and so sent Him to King Herod. Herod likewise found Jesus guiltless and sent Him back to Pilate.

Altogether, Pilate declared Jesus innocent thrice. Nevertheless, the Jews’ hatred for our Lord was so deep that they were willing to let a convicted felon by the name of Barabbas be released and have Jesus crucified in his stead. To use the words of Peter in Acts 3:14, they denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them.

How would you respond if you were Barabbas? Here you were, a man condemned to die, knowing full well that you deserved your punishment. Then, along came an innocent man whom you had never met and who willingly took your place on the cross with the approval of the authorities. You were set free.

Would you be like the nine lepers in Luke 17, who were so happy to be cleansed by Jesus that they happily went away without even thanking Him? Or would you be like the tenth, who turned back, fell down on his face and thanked Jesus and glorified God with a loud voice? Would you go back to your old life of crime or would you turn to your Saviour in humble repentance?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 27**  
**LUKE 23:1–31**

**REMINDER****Thank Him. Love Him. Serve Him.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Luke 23:32–56*

**LESSON**

**Be like this thief!**

**VERSE 42**

*And he said unto Jesus,  
Lord, remember me when  
thou comest into thy  
kingdom.*

**W**e have just read some of the wisest words that have ever come from the lips of a mortal man. Surprisingly, he was neither a wise king nor a learned prophet, but an unnamed and condemned criminal. All mankind would do well to pay careful attention to his every word recorded for us in today's reading:

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*“Dost not thou fear God?”* In spite of his criminal ways, this man recognises and fears God in his heart.

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*“And we indeed justly”* He acknowledges his own sin and just condemnation.

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*“But this man hath done nothing amiss”* He openly confesses Christ's innocence.

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*“Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”* He is willing to accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour.

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The thief believed that God would raise Christ from the dead and that someday He would return to rule over His kingdom. Thus, he begged to be “remembered”, meaning that he wanted Jesus to do more than remember him mentally but to forgive his sins and admit him into heaven. Having done nothing to deserve a place in God's kingdom and being completely helpless to do any good works to justify himself, he could only throw himself at God's mercy.

And our Lord's reply is the sweetest and most precious promise that any sinner can ever hope to hear: “Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Do you want to hear those words for yourself?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 28**  
**LUKE 23:32–56**

**PRAYER**

**That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. – Romans 10:9**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 24:1–12***LESSON****Be not faithless, but believing****VERSE 8***And they remembered his words,*

The resurrection of Christ is one of the core tenets of the Christian faith. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:17–19, “if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins; ... we are of all men most miserable.”

For the same reason, the enemy is ever ready to refute the biblical account of the empty tomb. In 1920, an English journalist by the name of Albert Henry Ross set out to research and write an exposé on how impossible the trial and resurrection was. However, after an exhausting study, he became convinced that all the evidence actually supported the biblical story instead. In 1930, he published *Who Moved the Stone?* under the name of Frank Morrison.

Christians need not worry about detractors like Ross. Have the faith to trust that the omnipotent God we worship is able to bequeath us a Bible that is inerrant and infallible.

Our real problem is that we have a poor memory. We tend to forget what we have been taught in the Bible. We may believe it intellectually but, like the disciples of Jesus on that first Easter morning, we fail to demonstrate our belief in real practical terms. Had not the Master clearly told them that He would rise up the third day? Yet the ladies who went to embalm Him were surprised and even panicked when they saw the empty tomb. Worse, the disciples were “fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken”, as chastised by a risen Christ later.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 29**  
**LUKE 24:1–12**

**PRAYER****Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 24:13–35***LESSON****Not being a fool****VERSE 32**

*And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*

There are many modern-day Christians who are almost proud to announce that they only read the New Testament, saying that they find the Old Testament archaic and difficult. If you are such a Christian, be forewarned. When it is time to meet your Master, be prepared to be chided like the two disciples: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.”

Thankfully for them, the Master had gone on to expound unto them all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. After that, they recounted, “Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?” Yes, the Old Testament—beginning at Moses and all the prophets—is about Jesus Christ. If you have been reading the New Testament, you will realise that without a sound knowledge of the Old Testament, you will not be able to understand many things in the New Testament.

Many of us are privileged to live in societies where the Bible is freely available. Don’t take this privilege for granted. Don’t presume to think that this will always be the case. Furthermore, think of the millions in this world who are still deprived of this basic right.

Starting today, if you have not already done so, make it a point to set aside time daily to search the Scriptures because our Lord says, “For in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” [John 5:39].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 30**  
**LUKE 24:13–35**

**MEDITATION**

**And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. – Amos 8:12**

**BIBLE LESSON***Luke 24:36–53***LESSON****How to be a joyful  
Christian****VERSE 45***Then opened he their  
understanding, that they  
might understand the  
scriptures,*

At the beginning of this chapter, we read that the disciples were a sad and dejected lot. But, as Luke records for us, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. What caused the change? The answer is they finally understood the Scriptures. There are some useful lessons for us here.

Verse 45 says that Jesus opened their understanding. We cannot depend on human intellect alone to understand the teachings of the Bible. The apostle Paul tells us that these “things of the Spirit of God” can only be “spiritually discerned” [1 Corinthians 2:14]. We need the Holy Spirit to be our teacher.

We are to be “witnesses of these things” [v. 48], meaning that we are to share the Gospel with others. Again, we cannot rely on our own strength to do this. We are to wait patiently for the Holy Spirit to “endue with power from on high” [v. 49].

When we serve Him faithfully and joyfully, He will give us the strength to endure trials that may come our way. After the ascension of our Lord, His disciples went forth to carry out His Great Commission, enduring much persecution, suffering and even martyrdom willingly and joyfully. Likewise, history gives us many examples of saints who trod the same path as the disciples. May God give us this strength, if it is in His sovereign and perfect will, to help us go through a similar furnace of affliction.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 31**  
**LUKE 24:36–53**

**PRAYER**

**The joy of the LORD is your strength. – Nehemiah  
8:10b**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 1:1–28***LESSON****The Word is Jesus, our  
God****VERSE 1***In the beginning was the  
Word, and the Word was  
with God, and the Word  
was God.*

**T**he Word, as described by the Apostle John, is God Himself right from the beginning. It is not the beginning of time the way humans understand because God has no beginning. God has existed since eternity and all along the Word has been with God. And God lives forever and ever.

Thank God that, at a certain point in human history, the Word comes to us in flesh and as our Lord and Saviour. Jesus had to become flesh through the Virgin Birth in order to redeem the sins of those who are flesh (human beings). He took on a human form and had the same feelings as we, like thirst, hunger and anger.

In other words, He had the same physical body as we. He could feel pain, undergo emotions and bleed. However, there is a major difference. Though He lived in the same sinful environment (and was subjected to the same temptations) as we do, He did not and could not sin. He is sinless because He is God.

In order to live, we need light, air, water and food. Jesus is all these. Jesus is the light of the world [John 8:12]. He gives us the breath of life (air) [John 3:8; 20:22]. He is also the water of life [John 4:10]. Jesus is the bread of life [John 6:35]. Jesus not only has life and gives us life, He is life. When you trust in Jesus you will enjoy all these and thus live forever, because Jesus is the everlasting life.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
NUMBERS 32  
JOHN 1:1–28**

**THOUGHT**

**For there are three that bear record in heaven,  
the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and  
these three are one. – 1 John 5:7**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 1:29–51***LESSON****Jesus, the Lamb of God****VERSE 29**

*The next day John seeth  
Jesus coming unto him, and  
saith, Behold the Lamb of  
God, which taketh away the  
sin of the world.*

Jesus, being God, doesn't need to prove Himself to anyone. However, He understands that we are weak and our mind is finite. He shows to us some of His power so that our faith can be strengthened.

During the baptism of Jesus, God the Father spoke and the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove. God is three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Lamb of God. He acts on our behalf as the sacrificial Lamb. He shed His blood so that we need not shed ours. Since He is God and sinless, His sacrifice is sufficient to cleanse the sins of the whole world. It is enough for Him to only die once.

Jesus chose ordinary men to be His disciples—all seven in this passage were fishermen. He knew the background of each and every one of them and He had a purpose for each individual He chose. We are also called to be His disciples and fishers of men. A fisherman is known for his patience and toughness, and he sticks to his job no matter how difficult it may be.

A fisherman has also no control over the behaviour of the fishes. In the same way, when we are fishers of men, we have no control over the behaviour of men and the environment. We depend on God in everything that we do.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 33**  
**JOHN 1:29-51**

**THOUGHT**

**But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. – 1 John 1:7**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 2***LESSON****The glory of Jesus  
manifested****VERSE 19**

*Jesus answered and said  
unto them, Destroy this  
temple, and in three days I  
will raise it up.*

The first miracle that Jesus performed in the Bible was to change water into wine during a wedding feast. Jesus knew the heart of man is attracted to sensations. “Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe” [John 4:48].

However, people who only want His works but not His Word can never share Jesus’ life. “Seeing is believing” is not the Christian approach in life. We ought to first believe before we can see. Jesus used miracles to lead His disciples to the Word. Our faith is built on the Word of God, from which comes saving faith.

Jesus then went to the temple where he showed His disapproval to the merchants who were carrying out their businesses there. The church must be different because it is a sanctuary. There should be no other purpose than to worship God in the church. Anything that we do or say in church has to be God-honouring. This also means we are to be sanctified, for we are the temple of God in which the Holy Spirit dwells.

Jesus also delivered another message in this passage. He revealed that though the temple would be destroyed, He would raise it in three days. By this, He doesn’t mean the raising of the physical building. Instead, Jesus was predicting His own death and resurrection. Even His enemies remembered this claim and used it to challenge and humiliate Him, only to find out later how wrong they were.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 34**  
**JOHN 2**

**THOUGHT**

**Moses’ first miracle was the plague; he turned water into blood. Jesus’ first miracle was of grace; He turned water into wine.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 3:1–21***LESSON****The second birth that  
leads to eternal life****VERSE 5***Jesus answered, Verily,  
verily, I say unto thee,  
Except a man be born of  
water and of the Spirit,  
he cannot enter into the  
kingdom of God.*

**N**icodemus was a Pharisee and a very learned man, yet he sought Jesus' counsel. Anyone who is sincere in seeking God will get his answer. God loves all of us and would like us to come to salvation. Jesus told Nicodemus that he has to be born again in order to go to heaven. This is a mystery to Nicodemus. How can a person be put back into the womb and be reborn?

Jesus explains that there are two births. First, we are born of water (our natural birth as a baby). The second birth is a spiritual one. There are many similarities in the two. In the first, we have biological parents whereas in the second, we have the Spirit of God and the Word of God as our "parents." The Spirit of God takes the Word of God and when a sinner believes, imparts the life of God.

Furthermore, a baby cannot be arrested legally because it has no past record of crimes. Similarly, the new spiritual birth of a person cleanses him of all records of sin because they are forgiven. We have a new beginning. All glory and praise to Jesus for shedding His blood for us.

Nicodemus came in the darkness of night and Jesus taught him the most important lesson in life and he saw the light. We are afraid of darkness because we cannot see what is ahead and thus we become afraid. Jesus is Light and in Him we have nothing to fear for we can see clearly.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 35**  
**JOHN 3:1–21**

**THOUGHT**

**If you are born once, you die twice; but if you are born twice, you need only die once.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 3:22–36***LESSON****We all serve God****VERSE 30***He must increase, but I must decrease.*

No matter how effective a minister or servant may be, he is still a subordinate to his master. This is the same for us as servants of God. There is no point in competing with one another to claim credit for our work for God.

We cannot do anything in our own strength and “a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven” [v. 27]. John the Baptist was always mindful that he was only but a servant and the herald for the Lamb of God (Jesus). He called himself the “friend of the bridegroom” while Jesus is the bridegroom. Who should be the star of the occasion?

The most important thing for us to remember is that we are at best servants and that we are able to perform our jobs because God allows it and blesses us. Even the greatest servant of God must retire and exit the scene, as man is finite. The best works created by man will be forgotten by man but the smallest thing done for God will be remembered by God if it is done for Him and Him alone.

Jesus is the witness Who comes from heaven. He is authorised by God the Father. We often think of God’s love for the lost but John reminds us of the Father’s love for His Son. To receive the witness of Jesus is to share in His love. God loves Jesus His Son and we have the love of God through Jesus. To reject Christ’s witness is to sin against love and light.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**NUMBERS 36**  
**JOHN 3:22–36**

**THOUGHT****We are but clay in the Potter’s hands.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 4:1–26***LESSON****The self-revealed Christ****VERSE 26***Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.*

The main theme of the Gospel of John is to portray Christ in His deity, emphasising His divine power and authority. This chapter highlights the dialogue between Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well. In His journey from Judaea to Galilee, Christ detoured through Samaria for His evangelistic mission to reach out to the Samaritan woman. Christ's conversation with her was full of divine revelation of His attributes.

Jesus' witness to this woman has an important lesson on evangelism for us. First, the Gospel is good news for everyone. Our Gospel outreach should include everyone. That our Lord approached the Samaritan woman shows His love is genuine and reaches down to the most despised. The love of Christ overcomes all racial barriers and prejudices.

Many of us are more willing to reach out to the so-called lovable and presentable but ignore the poor and downtrodden. Learning from the example set by our Lord Jesus, let us be more concerned for the unloved and rejected, and not be guilty of preferential treatment.

The amazing truth of Christ's evangelistic encounter with the Samaritan woman is that He is what He claimed to be. What is also noteworthy is the fact that sin is not glossed over. In our witnessing, we must always point the person to Christ, Who can forgive sins. There will always be obstacles to thwart our ministry. Don't be disheartened when this happens. Trust in the Lord Jesus to help you overcome any obstacles.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY I**  
**JOHN 4:1–26**

**PRAYER**

**Thank You, Lord, for revealing Yourself in Your Son, Jesus Christ.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 4:27–54***LESSON****Doing it for Jesus****VERSE 37**

*And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.*

Continuing with Christ's discourse with the woman of Samaria, we read of her response from verses 27 to 42. How our Lord treated her shows His loving compassion for a sinner. Next, we read of the miraculous healing of a nobleman's son [v. 43–54]. Once again, the attribute of Christ's omnipotence is seen in His mastery over time and space when He healed the nobleman's son from afar.

As our very first missionary, our Lord Jesus was sent on an evangelistic mission. We must learn from Him to look at every person as a mission target. In His dealings with the Samaritan woman, Jesus confronted her and directed her in seeing her spiritual condition. His purpose was to lead her to repentance from her sin and find salvation in Him.

As God's children, we must also be concerned for the lost. It makes no difference whether we sow or reap. There must be no competition in our service for the Lord. Every believer, in his different area of service, is part of a team of labourers serving the Lord together. What He requires from us is to be faithful stewards in our labour of love.

Who is more important, the one who sows or the one who reaps? All believers are co-labourers, not competitors, in our service for the Lord [1 Corinthians 3:6–9]. Let us rejoice in the extension of God's kingdom [Luke 15:7] because it is God Who gives the increase. Keep on serving our Lord Jesus faithfully.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 2**  
**JOHN 4:27–54**

**PRAYER****Help me to be a faithful steward for Your sake.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 5:1–16***LESSON****Love above law****VERSE 16**

*And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.*

In this miraculous healing at Bethesda, the impotent man who had been infirmed for 38 years was cured instantly by our Lord Jesus [v. 1–9]. However, the Jews were offended, accusing Him of breaking the Sabbath law [v. 10–16].

There is nothing wrong in observing the Sabbath. In fact, it is the Fourth Commandment. However, our Lord Jesus wanted to point out the Jews' misinterpretation of the Law of Moses. They were legalistic in their observance, placing law above love, adding more than what was required. The law of love must be our primary motivation. Instead of rejoicing with the healed invalid, the Jews were more concerned with keeping the traditions of the law. They reacted self-righteously to Jesus' healing of the impotent man on the Sabbath day. In another incident, the Pharisees reacted likewise when Jesus' disciples plucked corn on a Sabbath [Mark 2:23–26].

Doing good works on the Sabbath is not breaking the law [Mark 2:27–28]. In fact, it is the fulfilling of the law as it is done out of love. God is love. As God's children, what we do must always be motivated by love. The Jews had their priorities wrong. Such was the state of Judaism in those days—they had kept the Sabbath to the letter of the law.

Remember the story of Mary and Martha [Luke 10:38–42]? Mary's decision to sit at the feet of Jesus over Martha's eager serving was the right priority. Trust in God to make the right decisions concerning our priorities in our daily responsibilities.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 3**  
**JOHN 5:1–16**

**THOUGHT**

**Keeping the spirit, and not the letter, of the law is the right priority.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 5:17–30***LESSON****Power over life and death****VERSE 21**

*For as the Father raiseth up  
the dead, and quickeneth  
them; even so the Son  
quickeneth whom he will.*

In this short passage, we read about the Jews' hostile reaction to Jesus. This persecution was the outcome of Jesus' healing of the impotent man on the Sabbath. The Jews also accused our Lord of blasphemy when He claimed to be equal with God.

The attributes of God were displayed when Jesus healed the impotent man. Why he was chosen from among the various invalids at the pool of Bethesda shows that salvation is of the Lord only. Scripture tells us that the Lord loves whom He loves and saves those whom He wills.

The nature and character of God are again revealed in this passage. Christ's omnipotence is seen in His ability to save lives. He has the power over death and judgement. He can grant newness of life to those dead in their trespasses and sins [Ephesians 2:1]. Furthermore, Christ can also raise the dead from their graves, believers to resurrection of life and unbelievers to resurrection of damnation.

We must heed the warning in Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." How prepared are you to meet Jesus the divine Judge? If you are already a child of God, make sure that your lifestyle is pleasing to our Lord Jesus. If you are not, come to Jesus now for His salvation so rich and free.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 4**  
**JOHN 5:17–30**

**PRAYER****Thank You, Lord, for new life in You.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 5:31–47***LESSON****Witnesses to Christ's  
deity****VERSE 39**

*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*

Jesus mentioned five witnesses to prove His Sonship and equality with His Father. The calling of witnesses was crucial because, according to the Law of Moses, there had to be at least two or three witnesses to prove any case [Deuteronomy 19:15]. No one could bear witness for himself because it would not be valid. Jesus would provide more proof of His claim.

There was the witness of another [v. 32], a reference to the Holy Spirit. The Jews were also fully aware of John the Baptist's witness of Christ. He bore witness to the truth that Christ is the Son of God [John 1:26–27, 29–34]. John received this testimony from God the Father. Jesus said that He “received not testimony from man” but told them that to believe in Him is to be saved [v. 34]. Jesus claimed oneness with the Father in His evangelistic and miraculous works. His works were the Father's works, which proved that the Father sent Him.

Verse 37 is the fourth witness. God was pleased to bear witness of His beloved Son Himself by a voice from heaven at His baptism [Matthew 3:17]. The heavenly declaration was proof of Jesus' claim of His deity. The Spirit descended upon Christ like a dove.

Lastly, there is a witness of Scripture [v. 39]. Scripture proclaims the message of eternal life. The Jews diligently searched the Scriptures (Old Testament) for eternal life but did not recognise the Lord Jesus Whom the infallible and inerrant word testified. By faith, let us believe those who testified of Christ's deity and rejoice.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
DEUTERONOMY 5  
JOHN 5:31–47**

**PRAYER**

**Lord Jesus, Son of God, I worship You  
unreservedly and praise Your holy Name.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 6:1–30***LESSON****Jesus the Bread of Life****VERSE 6**

*And this he said to prove  
him: for he himself knew  
what he would do.*

Jesus Christ is the Source and Bread of Life. He demonstrated this blessed truth, and He preached and taught it. Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee, went up the mountain and sat with His disciples [v. 3]. His miracles had drawn many to Him. Jesus' loving compassion was kindled at the sight of the crowd. They were hungry and tired. They had to be fed. Jesus used the occasion to meet the bodily needs of the people as well as to test and strengthen His disciples by teaching them a lesson on faith.

Andrew brought a lad with five barley loaves and two small fishes to Jesus. He Himself demonstrated to His disciples the kind of strong faith they should have in God. In referring to Himself as the Bread of Life, Jesus was reminding His followers that they could rely completely on their heavenly Father for all their needs.

When the children of Israel were hungry in the desert, God had provided them with manna. It taught them to rely solely on God. His true place is in the midst of man's needs and problems. God always provides abundantly for His children [Philippians 4:19]. Many would proclaim Him to be Lord and Saviour, the Bread of Life Who alone can fill and satisfy the desperate needs of men.

What happens when physical life comes to an end? Be assured that the same Lord Jesus Christ will be there waiting to welcome His children on the other side and meet the needs of eternal life.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 6**  
**JOHN 6:1–30**

**THOUGHT**

**The Lord knows and provides for our needs even before we ask of Him.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 6:31–71***LESSON****Are you walking with  
Jesus?****VERSE 67***Then said Jesus unto the  
twelve, Will ye also go  
away?*

In Chapter 6, Jesus delivered His “bread of life” message. Jesus demanded total allegiance and complete self-denial. His sermon was so controversial that, at its conclusion, many of His disciples went away and stopped following Him [v. 66], as the cost seemed too high. Yet, His 12 faithful disciples remained. He directed a plaintive but permissive question to the twelve, “Will ye also go away?”

Simon Peter wisely responded, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” [v. 68- 69]. The disciples were resolved to cleave to Him, while others forsook Him. They did not fully understand Christ’s discourse but they were satisfied that He had the words of eternal life.

The same challenging question is still being put to His followers. Though many Christians today may be pouring out their lives and working for the Lord, they may not be really walking with Him. Having been cleansed through sanctification, we should discipline our lives faithfully and spiritually to maintain an intimate oneness with God. Christ wants us to live in absolute dependence and complete devotion to Him.

His doctrine is the Word of eternal life; therefore we must live by it. If we forsake Christ, we forsake our own means to mercy. Are we going to forsake our Redeemer? He alone can give salvation, forgiveness of sin, confidence, comfort and joy.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 7**  
**JOHN 6:31–71**

**PRAYER**

**Lord, You have given me life and I will follow You wholeheartedly.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 7:1–13***LESSON****Not man's time but God's****VERSE 6**

*Then Jesus said unto them,  
My time is not yet come:  
but your time is always  
ready.*

Jesus knew that the Pharisees were plotting to kill Him. For this reason, He spent most of His time in Galilee. But as the Feast of Tabernacles neared, His brethren (His relatives and kinsmen) who did not believe in Him [v. 5] challenged Jesus to go to Jerusalem. He did not carry out His ministry as act of bravado. Jesus rejected their suggestions and said to them, “My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready” [v. 6]. Jesus would do as He was bidden at the time appointed. His aim was not to prove a point but to reveal His Father by being faithful and obedient.

Jesus drew a contrast between His brothers and Himself, saying they were part of the world and alienated from God [v. 6–8]. Jesus was in the world but not of the world. He waited until His brothers had left. He did things not in man's time but in God's. Jesus went to the feast not publicly but in secret, so as not to attract attention. The people were complaining and had mixed opinions about Him.

Our Lord Jesus is the example of perfect obedience. He would not run ahead of God, but neither would He lag behind. When it was not time for Him to reveal Himself publicly, He did not act brashly and throw caution to the wind.

When it was time to show Himself publicly, our Lord did not hide in fear or act cowardly. He did what He did at the command and the appointed time of the Father.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 8**  
**JOHN 7:1–13**

**PRAYER**

**Father, when it is not time to act, give me patience to wait. When it is time to act, give me courage to do as You have commanded.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 7:14–36***LESSON****Know the truth by doing  
it****VERSE 17***If any man will do his  
will, he shall know of the  
doctrine, whether it be of  
God, or whether I speak of  
myself.*

**M**any Jews went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. Some of the religious ones sought Jesus to entrap and discredit Him for curing the man with infirmity on the Sabbath [John 5:16], whereas most wanted to find Him so that they could hear His teachings and see His miracles. The Jewish crowds are to be commended for having sought Jesus for He is to be sought. Every man should seek Christ until He is found.

Jesus finally went up to Jerusalem secretly and taught publicly in the temple. The Jews were surprised because He was not educated like the rabbis and Pharisees. Jesus affirmed that the truth He taught was not conceived in His own mind but received from God [v. 15–16]. He was the true messenger of God. He sought the glory of God. He was willing to have His doctrine enquired into. This was evidence that He was true and there was no unrighteousness in Him.

Jesus and the religious leaders had clashed on several occasions regarding the observance of the Sabbath. It was then an open secret that the Sabbath had been broken by the Jews themselves. Jesus appealed to the people to judge rightly, by facts and not by appearance. Jesus also foretold His death and resurrection.

How can a person know if Jesus' claim is true? He can know by living, doing and obeying God's will. Live holy lives [1 Peter 1:15–16] and believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 9**  
**JOHN 7:14–36**

**THOUGHT**

**The veracity of God's truth is proven by our obedience.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 7:37–53***LESSON****Thirst****VERSE 53***And every man went unto  
his own house.*

These words of our Lord ring in the ears of all His people: “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” What a precious promise! What a comforting assurance! Yet not everyone grasped how wonderful this blessing is.

The people who heard these words had different opinions on Who Jesus really was. Some said He was a prophet, others said He was indeed the Christ. Yet there were still some who were somewhat convinced but were stumbled by the question, “Shall Christ come out of Galilee?” This doubt hung in the air for the rest of the chapter, dividing the people. And it ended as abruptly as it started (“every man went unto his own house”), with the issue unresolved and difference not reconciled.

The old saying, “Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet”, is clearly false. Jonah, Hosea and perhaps Nahum were prophets who came from Galilee, yet these people were stumbled by their traditions, so much so that they could not acknowledge the very Christ Who was standing right in front of them. Every man went home either falsely convicted or sadly stumbled. A pity indeed!

However, the good news is that Christ’s invitation is still opened to us. Do you have a thirst for God’s Word? Do you yearn for the quenching of your innate curiosity in understanding God’s nature and His plan? Do you hope to be more and more Christ-like?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 10**  
**JOHN 7:37–53**

**MEDITATION**

**But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. – John 4:14**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 8:1–30***LESSON****Pleasing God****VERSE 29**

*And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

A woman caught in adultery was brought to Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees. They sought to put Him in the difficult position of being caught between having compassion for a sinner and abiding by the commandment of God. Well aware of their intent, Christ handled the case calmly. Apparently no one in the crowd was sinless and fit to cast the first stone at her. She was spared and, more importantly, forgiven by God.

Jesus had these parting words for this woman: “Go, and sin no more.” A woman who could not save herself from her own passions was delivered from a mob of self-righteous people. She was lonely, guilty and fearful. Yet she was given a chance to start her life anew.

Jesus continued to reveal more of Himself to us. To this woman, He is definitely the Light [v. 12]. We are not sure what happened to the woman after this. She might have repented or she might have continued in her old lifestyle. Either way, the second chance was given to her.

Perhaps she was around when Jesus told the crowd about Himself, and these words might have impressed her: “The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” She was asked to “go, and sin no more” but though she went away, she knew that God would always be with her if she, who had been forgiven, lived a life pleasing to God.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 11**  
**JOHN 8:1–30**

**MEDITATION**

**And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. – Ephesians 3:19**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 8:31–59***LESSON****Freedom****VERSE 36**

*If the Son therefore shall  
make you free, ye shall be  
free indeed.*

For centuries, the human race has been arguing about freedom and liberty, trying to give clear definitions to these words. In these verses, Jesus tells us what true freedom is. First, it is the freedom from sin. A person who commits sin is the servant of sin [v. 34]. If we are led by our own passions and lusts, we will sink into the abyss of sin. Some sins are pleasurable but subtly harmful. Some are obviously undesirable yet we cannot get away from them. Most are gradually baleful, leading one deeper and deeper into darkness. But Jesus saves us from the horrible pit and frees us from the reins of hell.

Second, it is the freedom from rituals. Unlike the Old Testament fathers, we can approach the Father directly through His Son. We still abide by the Law but are not saved by our own ability to do so. Those who are God's children love God [v. 42] and follow His way, rather than be stumbled by ritualistic traditions.

Third, it is the freedom from death. Man naturally fears death for it brings them into the unknown. However, Jesus assures us, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." By that, He meant spiritual death. A Christian is not afraid of physical death because he knows there is everlasting life waiting for him after that.

Surely, if we continue in God's Word, we will know the truth, and the truth shall set us free.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 12**  
**JOHN 8:31–59**

**MEDITATION**

**As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of  
maliciousness, but as the servants of God. – 1  
Peter 2:16**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 9***LESSON****God's providence****VERSE 3**

*Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

This whole chapter is devoted to the account of a man who was once blind but was healed by Jesus. However, the lessons to be learnt extend beyond the event itself so “that the works of God should be made manifest in him” [v. 3].

The same verse tells us that God has a purpose for everything. For this man who was born blind, it was definitely neither his nor his parents' fault. This is an important point that we have to keep in mind. When things in our lives don't turn out as we have planned, it doesn't necessarily mean it is God's chastisement or punishment.

God's purpose was for the blind man to be a living testimony to his neighbours [v. 8], the Pharisees [v. 13] and the Jews (v. 18). Many arguments arose after the incident and Jesus addressed them either through His actions or words. What stands out in this whole episode is the contrast between physical blindness and spiritual blindness. It was simple for Jesus to heal a person who is physically blind, yet it is so difficult to convince one who is spiritually blind. The people kept asking the same questions until the man lost patience in answering them [v. 27].

Indeed, there are many in this world who can see but are spiritually blind. Worse still, they may not be aware of their condition. The blindness of their hearts had limited their spiritual understanding.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 13**  
**JOHN 9**

**MEDITATION****Read Ephesians 1:18.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 10:1–18***LESSON****The Door and the Shepherd****VERSE 2**

*But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.*

These verses are often summarised under the heading, “Christ is the good Shepherd”. However, if we read carefully, Jesus not only says that He is the Shepherd, He also says that He is the Door. There is no contradiction in maintaining both because the Shepherd stands guard at the Door, and is thus both the Door and the Shepherd.

He is the Door. We read in verse 9 that any man who enters in through Him will be saved and shall go in and out, and find pasture. Those who enter not through Him are likened to thieves and robbers [v. 1].

He is the Shepherd. His sheep respond to His call [v. 3–5] and He will give His life for them [v. 11]. He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him [v. 14]. He will bring other sheep into His fold [v. 16]. In revealing His passion and resurrection [v. 17–18], Jesus said that He would lay down His life for His sheep as a perfect sacrifice for the remission of our sins.

There are many precious promises in this short passage. If our Lord, the good Shepherd, is willing to die for us to save us, He is definitely willing to sustain and protect us. He is the Door of salvation that calls us out of sin and darkness into grace and light. He is the Shepherd Who calls us and knows us by our names, bringing us into His fold and guiding us in our going in and coming out.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 14**  
**JOHN 10:1–18**

**MEDITATION****Read and ponder on Mark 6:34.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 10:19–42***LESSON****Jesus – lunatic or Son of God?****VERSE 38**

*But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

It seems strange that our Lord, Who came to bring peace between man and God, should be the cause of contention. We read that there was a division among the Jews over His sayings [v. 19]. Jesus' teachings were quite different from what the Jews were practising. For example, their idea of the Messiah was a military Saviour Who would liberate them from the Romans. They never expected their Messiah to come as a suffering Servant, a Prince of Peace Who would lay down His life for the sins of the world. Rather than stoning an adulterous woman to death, Jesus forgave her.

Jesus further outraged the Jews when He said, "I and my Father are one." They wanted to stone Him for blasphemy because He claimed equality with God. They were deeply distressed by His claims and wanted to stone Him because "that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" [v. 33].

Indeed, some even accused Him of being mad and an emissary of the devil. However, the more discerning ones considered the many miracles, signs and wonders performed by Jesus [v. 21]. The Jews were divided over who Jesus was and were puzzled. They kept confronting Jesus with the same question: "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly" [v. 24].

This confusion was of their own doing—and not Jesus'—because even though they had seen so many miracles performed before their very eyes, their hearts still would not believe that Jesus is the Christ.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 15**  
**JOHN 10:19–42**

**THOUGHT**

**Truly, our Lord rose from the dead and He is Who He said He is. There is no other explanation except that He is God and we should humbly bow before Him.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 11:1–16***LESSON****Alive again****VERSE 15**

*And I am glad for your  
sakes that I was not there,  
to the intent ye may believe;  
nevertheless let us go unto  
him.*

**N**ews was sent to Jesus that Lazarus was very sick. But our Lord Jesus remained where He was for another two days instead of rushing to see him. After that, our Lord told His disciples that He was going back to Judaea, surprising and confusing them. Judaea was the very place where the Jews had tried to stone Jesus. To return there was to put Himself in danger. The cautious and timid disciples saw no necessity in making that journey and asked, “Goest thou thither again?” [v. 8]

Is not discretion the better part of valour? Yes, there are times when Christians would do well not to put themselves in harm’s way. But our ways ought to be dictated by obedience to God and not expedience for self.

In this chapter, there was a separate but related incident. Our Lord made a brief stop at the house of Martha and Mary, whose brother had died. Our Lord told His disciples, “I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him” [v. 15].

There is a purpose for everything that Jesus did. His return to Jerusalem to face the enemies and His return to Bethany to raise Lazarus has a lesson: Christ would go where God the Father leads. “If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him” [v. 9b–10].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 16**  
**JOHN 11:1–16**

**THOUGHT**

**Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. – Matthew 16:24**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 11:17–44***LESSON****The compassion of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh****VERSE 35***Jesus wept.*

Although the sickness of Lazarus “is not unto death, but for the glory of God that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” [v. 4], the miracle of raising him from the dead was carried out by our Lord with great mental emotion. Jesus did not treat each miracle He performed in a cold and detached manner, as if it were a magic show. He was able to feel as He was able to save.

In His humanity, Jesus needed nourishment for His body, water when He was thirsty, and rest when He was fatigued. Though without sin, like any man, Jesus displayed emotions of joy and anger. He also wept. We read of angels rejoicing in the presence of God but have never read of angels weeping. Tears are peculiar only to flesh and blood.

Indeed, the Bible declares, “For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” When we turn to Jesus in the hour of trouble and pour our hearts before Him, He knows exactly what we are going through. He empathises with us. He is One Who can say to us sincerely, “I know what you are going through.”

Though He now sits at the right hand of God in heaven, His heart is still the same as when He was on earth. When He was on earth, He wept for us. Now He is our Advocate, Who confesses us before God the Father.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 17**  
**JOHN 11:17–44**

**THOUGHT**

**Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. – John 11:25**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 11:45–57***LESSON****Expediency versus justice****VERSE 45**

*Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.*

When the ordinary people saw the miracles of our Lord, they began to realise that what He said about Himself was true, and His claims to being the Son of God was without any doubt. More and more came to believe in Him and His popularity increased.

The Jewish religious and civic leaders grew jealous of Jesus. They were afraid that their positions would be taken away from them [v. 48]. The Romans, on the other hand, had no interest in the religious leaders as long as they did not threaten their power. As such, Pontius Pilate found no necessity to convict Jesus [John 18:38]. Furthermore, Jesus had proclaimed that His kingdom is not of this world [John 18:36]. There was not a shred of evidence that He had any plans to liberate the Jews from Roman rule. Rather, He distinctly taught them to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's.

Why then did the Jews hate Jesus? The plain truth was that they hated Jesus' doctrines. Jesus exposed their hypocritical system of religious worship and practices. He undermined their authority. They felt that their position was in danger and they charged that He would endanger the whole nation.

From that day onwards, they sought to kill Jesus, regardless of whether He was innocent or guilty. Caiaphas prophetically uttered that Christ was not only to die for the Jewish nation but also for those who would come to believe in Him [v. 52].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 18**  
**JOHN 11:45-57**

**THOUGHT**

**It is a common thing for wicked people to assign false reasons for their conduct in a bid to conceal their true motives.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 12:1–36***LESSON****Doing charity and worshipping God****VERSE 8***For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.*

One of the greatest wishes of the world is to eliminate poverty. Yet, no matter how hard the world tries, there are always poor people. The reason: this is a sinful world and everyone is born in sin. There will always be disparity in income because some are diligent and some are lazy; some are strong and healthy, yet there are others who are weak; some are wise, others are foolish.

Poverty and disparity in income is a perpetual problem of human society. Poverty has been and will continue to be an issue used and abused by politicians and religious organisations to advance their own interests and promote their own agenda.

When Mary anointed our Lord Jesus with the costly spikenard, Judas Iscariot used the same reasoning. He commented on Mary's action: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" [v. 5]. But Judas' concern was not for the poor, or how the money could be used to help them. Judas' real concern was for the missed opportunity to pocket a portion of the money that was used to purchase the spikenard.

Our Lord Jesus, aware of the thoughts of Judas, said, "For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always" (John 12:8). Jesus did not say that Christians are to ignore the poor. Neither did He say that feeding the hungry was not necessary. It is a question of priority and primacy—priority in preaching the Gospel and primacy of the Gospel even when other church ministries are being carried out.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 19**  
**JOHN 12:1–36**

**THOUGHT**

**Christ allows His money to be taken from Him, but never His sheep.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 12:37–50***LESSON****Finding Jesus****VERSE 46**

*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.*

**H**ave you ever been in a dark place? At one time or another in our lives, we have been in dark places and could not see anything until our eyes adjusted to it. Maybe you had woken up in the middle of the night and had tried to make your way to the bathroom, only to find yourself stumbling because of the darkness.

Have you ever heard of the saying, “It’s as clear as mud”? It simply means, you don’t understand. Maybe the way forward in your life seems muddy and unclear—like in a job or in a relationship.

We live in a world full of shadows and dark places. However, light casts out darkness. Light leads us away from darkness. Jesus is our light! Move towards Him and leave the darkness behind. Jesus is the Light of the world, so whenever we make any decision or plan for the future together with Him, things will become clearer to us. It doesn’t mean choices will always be easy but you will be amazed how you can spot the dark areas that can so easily drag us down and confuse us.

All of us have decisions to make in our lives. When we have Jesus as our Light, our paths ahead are no longer covered in mud. The biggest decision you can ever make is about eternity and where you are going to spend it. Get that right and you are on the road to making all the right decisions.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 20**  
**JOHN 12:37-50**

**THOUGHT****To reject Jesus Christ is to reject God Himself.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 13:1–17***LESSON****Crucify self****VERSE 16**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you,  
The servant is not greater  
than his lord; neither he  
that is sent greater than he  
that sent him.*

**P**ride is a sin that all of us struggle with. No one is free from the temptation to be proud. In the world, pride may be a virtue but to God, it is a sin. The Scriptures have nothing good to say about pride. Pride shows a lack of humility before God. It is a destructive sin that should be avoided. When the Bible talks about pride, it is often connected to making an idol—a god—out of things we are proud of, thinking so highly of ourselves that God has no place in our lives.

Spiritual conceit has no place in the Christian walk. Conceit means empty glory. A conceited person lives for applause. An ovation from men becomes more important than the approval of God. This is a person who appropriates for himself what is due only to God.

Paul writes, “That no flesh should glory in His presence ... as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” [1 Corinthians 1:29, 31]. There is a tendency in all of us to measure our relationship with God on the basis of our own merits, and forgetting God Who has created us and Christ Who has redeemed us.

At all times we are to remember that we are servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our lives are never about ourselves. We are called to love Him with all our heart, soul and mind; to follow Him; to live for Him; to glorify Him; and we do this by dying to self—by crucifying self.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 21**  
**JOHN 13:1–17**

**THOUGHT****More self more sin, less self more Him.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 13:18–38***LESSON****Can we pass the test?****VERSE 35***By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

**H**ave you ever noticed your inability to remain spiritual when you indulge in certain activities? We can be spiritual at a prayer meeting but what about when we are driving our car home from that very same meeting? We can be spiritual in a Christian fellowship but what about when we are with our group of unbelieving friends? It is easy to maintain a Christian attitude in the church and among Christian friends but we easily fall victim to spiritual inefficiency outside these circles.

Is spiritual inefficiency overshadowing your life? How are you allowing God to operate through every aspect of your life? I wonder how we would score if there were a test that could clearly reveal just how faithful a Christian we are, a test that would really measure the level of our spirituality?

On the surface, we may feel that things are going well and we are doing a good job as a Christian. Are you walking in the footsteps of Jesus? Is your life one that brings glory to God? Is your life one that is filled with love for the family of God? Is your life one of unswerving loyalty to Jesus? Do you find joy in serving Him and others? Are you one of those who show kindness to the least of your brethren?

Today's reading is long on questions and short on exposition. The reason is that to love one another is not a new commandment. There is nothing deep or abstract in this command. We just need to do it.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 22**  
**JOHN 13:18-38**

**THOUGHT**

**There is a great difference between proclaiming loyalty and practising it.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 14***LESSON****Standing in faith and in hope****VERSE 1***Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

When life gets difficult, these words are a great comfort. “Troubled” means to agitate or to disturb the mind with fear or doubt. Life could fit into this category because every day can be disturbing and troubling. Jesus was telling the disciples not to be afraid, terrified and doubtful. Jesus was giving His disciples the cure for troubled hearts.

What does it mean to trust? Trust is found in our belief that God will fulfil His perfect will in our lives. Jesus was calling His disciples to trust God in every circumstance of life. He was then about to be crucified, and they would be scattered and hunted by the Jewish leaders. Jesus told them to trust Him in the worst of times because God is trustworthy.

When asked, most of us would have said we trust God but there are times when trusting is not easy. Trusting God means we believe in One Whom we cannot see, and Whose influence in our lives we may not understand. Trusting God means yielding control of our lives to Him Who is infinitely wise and eternally loving towards us.

Jesus tells us that the things we go through in life are temporal. As we go through life’s situations, Jesus is always there to wrap His arms around us and assure us that He has prepared a place for us for eternity. Place your trust in Jesus, the One Who was and is and is to come. He is worthy of your trust!

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 23**  
**JOHN 14**

**THOUGHT****Can there really be a cure for a troubled heart?**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 15***LESSON****Christ's friendship****VERSE 15**

*Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

A true friend is someone whom we enjoy mutual affection and interests, one we respect and love. True friends are those who are helpers in times of trouble. A true friend is one who reaches for your hands and touches your heart.

“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” [Proverbs 17:17]. Perhaps the greatest need most people have today is for a true friend. Studies have shown that the main reason why churches grow is that members bring their friends to worship with them. Friendship provides the relationships that bring people into the family of God. Friendship evangelism works on a platform where people are able to feel the genuine affection of a loving Christian even as they are presented with the hard truths of the Gospel. However, few seem to be willing to first extend friendship to people before they impress the truths of the Gospel on them.

The deepest desire in the heart of Jesus is to call you His friend. Jesus wants you to connect with Him today. Christ's friendship gives us everlasting love, direction and revelation of His will for us. The Lord befriended many as a way of demonstrating the love that gives even when others ignore, misunderstand or even criticise the giver.

May the Lord help us to be kind and friendly, and willing to serve those around us so that through us, they may come to know Jesus, too.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 24**  
**JOHN 15**

**THOUGHT**

**What a friend we have in Jesus! He walks in when others walk out on you.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 16:1–15***LESSON****The coming ministry of  
the Holy Spirit****VERSE 13**

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit  
of truth, is come, he will  
guide you into all truth:  
for he shall not speak of  
himself; but whatsoever  
he shall hear, that shall he  
speak: and he will shew you  
things to come.*

Jesus warned His disciples of troubles to come. They would be cast out of the synagogue and might even die for their faith. “And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me” [v. 3]. Their persecutors were the religious leaders who did not know the one true God.

When Jesus revealed that He would be leaving them soon, His disciples felt even more lost and sorry for themselves. Though every step brought Jesus closer to Gethsemane and the Cross, His priority was not Himself but His disciples—loving them, talking to them, calming their broken hearts and frightened souls.

Jesus explained that it was to their advantage for Him to go away to be with the Father. On earth, even in His glorified body, He would be localised only to one place at one time. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, indwells every believer on the face of this earth, all at the same time. Moreover, the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, bringing righteousness and judgement through the preaching of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit would also guide the believers into the truth concerning Christ.

We should never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Though the world may persecute and hate us, Christ is always with and for us. Let us remember to pray for the missionaries who are preaching the Kingdom of God in heathen places.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
DEUTERONOMY 25  
JOHN 16:1–15**

**THOUGHT**

**Spiritual blessings in heavenly things are given by the Father to the Son for us, and the Son entrusts the Spirit to convey them to us.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 16:16–33***LESSON****Jesus comforts His disciples****VERSE 33**

*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

It was now only a matter of hours before Jesus' arrest, trial and crucifixion. Jesus told His disciples that in a little while they would not see Him. But He assured them that they would see Him again—in His resurrection.

Jesus knew that sorrow would fill His disciples' hearts when He was crucified and He assured them that their sorrow would only be temporal. They would experience joy when Jesus returned to them alive. The Jewish leaders, on the other hand, would rejoice at Jesus' execution, for they thought they would have removed the One Who had exposed their pride, hypocrisy and sin. Three days later, Jesus would return from the dead to prove that He was the one true God. Their happiness was only temporary [v. 20–22].

Jesus told His disciples that they could go straight to the Father in His Name “because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God” [v. 27].

Since Jesus Himself has told us that we have direct access to the Father, believers don't need to pray to saints or any other intermediaries. Not only do we have direct access to the Father in prayer, we also have the assurance of definite answers from the Father [v. 22–23]. This is not a blank cheque. “In the name of Jesus” means that the request is in line with what He would want and what He would approve.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 26**  
**JOHN 16:16–33**

**THOUGHT**

**Christ has overcome the world. We, too, must not surrender, compromise and have fellowship with the world.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 17***LESSON****The high priestly prayer  
of Christ****VERSE 3**

*And this is life eternal, that  
they might know thee the  
only true God, and Jesus  
Christ, whom thou hast  
sent.*

**J**ohn 17 contains the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. This high priestly prayer was made just hours before His crucifixion. In His greatest hour of need and agony, our Lord turned to God the Father in prayer, and prayed not just for Himself but for us. This prayer can be divided into three main parts:

First, Jesus prayed for Himself [v. 1–5], asking that both God the Father and God the Son be glorified in the work that He would finish. This is all the work that the Father had given Him, that is, His public ministry on earth and His sacrifice on the Cross to take away the sins of the world. Jesus accomplished them all.

Then, Jesus prayed and rejoiced in the salvation of His disciples and in their growth as believers [v. 6–19]. He prayed that they might be united as one, just like the Father and the Son are, to do the work of glorifying God in the salvation of men. He also prayed for them to be kept separate from the world through sanctification in the Word of God.

Finally, Jesus prayed for all Christians, present and future [v. 20–26], that they might be one in Christ—perfect, glorified and loving—so that they would bear the testimony for the world to see. We are to be the salt and the light in this world, and not allow our salt to lose its saltiness nor our light to become hidden.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
DEUTERONOMY 27  
JOHN 17**

**THOUGHT**

**We belong to God. We are God's personal possessions. We are loved by Him and we are special and precious to Him [v. 9–10]. What a privilege, what a joy!**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 18:1–27***LESSON****Christ's arrest and pre-trial****VERSE 4**

*Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?*

The hour Jesus spoke about had come and He knew exactly what was going to take place: His betrayal, His arrest and His death by crucifixion. The Lord could have moved away from the place where Judas and the soldiers would find Him, but He did not. He voluntarily delivered Himself into the hands of His foes in meek submission to the will of God.

Even during His arrest, Jesus' first thought was not for Himself but for the safety of His disciples, saying, "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way" [v. 8b]. The Shepherd was protecting His sheep. How often in times of personal crises have we thought of only ourselves, such as "my problems" and "my needs". If we think of others at all, it is often to shift the blame to them or to demand something from them.

In the pre-trial hearings before the high priests, Annas could find nothing subversive in Jesus' teaching. As for Caiaphas, he had motioned for Jesus to be crucified even before the trial [v. 14], with the political intent of finding favour with the Romans.

We need to guard ourselves against such religious leaders. If you are a leader, don't let your lifestyle stumble other believers. And if you look up to certain spiritual leaders, don't be stumbled by their sinful follies. Look to no man but the Lamb of God, our best example.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 28**  
**JOHN 18:1–27**

**THOUGHT**

**Why did Jesus voluntarily surrender and give up His life? It was for sinners like us! Read Mark 10:45.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 18:28–40***LESSON****Christ before Pilate****VERSE 32**

*That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.*

Though the Jewish authority had condemned Jesus to death, they did not have the right to carry out the death penalty. Therefore, they led Jesus to Pilate so that the Roman governor might deliver the sentence. They falsely accused Jesus of being a malefactor—one actively engaged in evil—and that His Messianic claims were a threat to Rome.

The Jewish leaders would not go into the judgement hall because they did not want to be ceremonially defiled. They wanted to remain ceremonially clean so that they could partake of the Passover Feast. We see here the hypocrisy and inward evil of these religious leaders. They were plotting to murder the Lord and yet they were acting holy and did not want to be defiled by entering a “Gentile” place. Remember, our Lord looks not at our outward appearance but into our hearts [1 Samuel 16:7].

At the end of Pilate’s detailed cross-examination of Jesus, he concluded, “I find in him no fault at all.” So what did Pilate do? Following the demands of the people, he released Barabbas, a robber and convicted murderer. Why did Pilate make such a decision? It was for his selfish purposes, which was to gain popularity among the Jews and to please his Roman superiors by keeping peace in Jerusalem. To Pilate, justice did not matter as much as his own status and well-being.

Are you making life’s decisions like Pilate and hurting the cause of Christ?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 29**  
**JOHN 18:28–40**

**THOUGHT**

**If the Jews had executed Jesus, they could have done so by stoning and not by crucifixion. The death of Jesus was predetermined and ensured by God, so that what was recorded in the Scriptures might be fulfilled.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 19:1–15***LESSON****Behold the Man!****VERSE 5**

*Then came Jesus forth,  
wearing the crown of  
thorns, and the purple robe.  
And Pilate saith unto them,  
Behold the man!*

Our Lord Jesus was taken in the middle of the night. Before the next sunrise, He was already falsely accused before the high priest [Matthew 26:59]. The Jewish leaders, without the authority to execute judgement, brought Jesus before Pontius Pilate. The Jews wanted to know if Jesus was the Christ [Matthew 26:63]. Pilate wanted to know if He was the King of the Jews [Matthew 27:11]. An affirmative answer to one would make Jesus a blasphemer while the same answer to the other would make Him a rebel in the eyes of Rome.

Pilate pronounced that he found no fault in Jesus on three separate occasions [John 18:38; 19:4, 6]. However, under the relentless rage of the Jews against Jesus, Pilate gave in to them.

Pilate introduced Jesus to the mob with these words, “Behold the man!” To prove that Jesus neither had the credibility to be Christ nor the power to be king, Pilate had Jesus scourged and humiliated. In sarcasm, he reintroduced the humiliated Jesus to the Jews, “Behold the man!” If Jesus had any semblance of royalty, it was only because Pilate had crowned Him with thorns and donned Him with a purple robe.

Was Pilate compassionate? Perhaps. It has been pointed out that Pilate was trying to influence the Jews to have mercy on Jesus. Did Pilate make wrong judgement? Most definitely. Many today still make the same error by looking upon Jesus only as a man. “What think you of Christ?” is a question that all of us need to prayerfully consider.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 30**  
**JOHN 19:1–15**

**THOUGHT**

**How do you regard Christ? Not behold the man, but “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” [John 1:29].**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 19:16–42***LESSON****Finished****VERSE 30**

*When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

John's gospel gives us the most details concerning the last days of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord was crucified on Friday at nine in the morning. Then the midday sky turned dark at noon and He died at three in the afternoon. While He was on the cross, He made several statements. "It is finished" was His second last. In Greek, it is just one word: *tetelestai*, which means "to complete" or "to bring to perfection".

"It is finished" can mean several things: the fulfilment of the messianic prophecies; the end of the sufferings of our Saviour and the defeat of Satan; an end of the animal sacrifices. Above all, it refers to the accomplishment of the work of redemption. Salvation is purchased and Jesus paid it all. "It is finished" is not a cry of defeat or surrender. It is a shout of victory.

What does "It is finished" mean? First, it means the work of Christ on the Cross is singular. As Christ was alone on the Cross, so was He alone in the work of salvation. Second, the work of Christ is perfect. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Christ, the perfect High Priest, offered His own life—the perfect sacrifice—for our sins. "... by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" [Hebrews 9:12]. Third, our Lord's cry also means that His work is completed forever.

God, Who began the work of salvation in us, "will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" [Philippians 1:6].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 31**  
**JOHN 19:16–42**

**THOUGHT**

**As much as the death of our Lord Jesus on the cross was an end—a perfect end—it was also a new beginning. The life that I now live in the flesh is a new life.**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 20:1–18***LESSON****Whom seekest thou?****VERSE 15**

*Jesus saith unto her,  
Woman, why weepest thou?  
Whom seekest thou? She,  
supposing him to be the  
gardener, saith unto him,  
Sir, if thou have borne him  
hence, tell me where thou  
hast laid him, and I will  
take him away.*

The resurrection of Christ is the central doctrine of the Christian faith. Without the resurrection, there is no Christianity, because there can be no living faith with a dead Saviour.

On resurrection morning, our Lord's disciples went to His grave in despair. Mary Magdalene was the first to reach the sepulchre. When she saw that the stone rolled away, she immediately informed Jesus' disciples. John reached the grave first but he stopped at the entrance to look in while Peter ran straight into the grave and "seeth the linen clothes". Peter examined the evidence but neither understood the significance of this event.

Meanwhile, Mary was inconsolable. Not only did her Master die a cruel death, he had to suffer the indignity of not having a proper burial. It was then that Jesus appeared and asked, "Woman, why weepest thou?" The intent of this question was to tell Mary that the disappearance of the body was a matter for rejoicing and not sorrow.

Jesus asked again, "Whom seekest thou?" Our Lord was assuring Mary that all was not lost; the One Whom she was seeking had risen. It was then that Mary knew that she was speaking with Jesus. She thought that she was seeking Him. In fact, He was waiting for her. Jesus said to Mary, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" [John 20:17b]. What an amazing condescension! The Saviour, Who came to Mary in her moment of weakness and assured her of God's love, is seeking you, too.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**DEUTERONOMY 32**  
**JOHN 20:1–18**

**THOUGHT**

**And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. – Jeremiah 29:13**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 20:19–31***LESSON****Believing to see****VERSE 29**

*Jesus saith unto him,  
Thomas, because thou hast  
seen me, thou hast believed:  
blessed are they that have  
not seen, and yet have  
believed.*

Thomas was absent the first time the risen Lord appeared to His disciples. Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he saw the nail prints in Jesus' hands and the wound on His side. Since then, he has come to be known as "Doubting Thomas". To Thomas, faith was bound by senses; it must come by way of touch and sight.

Jesus appeared to him later and said, "Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" [John 20:27]. Then He added, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" [John 20:29]. This was not a put-down on Thomas. Our Lord Jesus approved of Thomas' faith. But Jesus spoke more favourably of the faith of those who did not see and yet believed.

Faith is not irrational or a suspension of reason. Faith is taking God at His Word. Rahab had faith in Jehovah when she told the two Jewish spies, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land ... For we have heard ..." [Joshua 2:9–10]. Rahab knew because she had heard.

Faith is the result of having empirical facts and of an experiential relationship in which you take as truth that God has revealed. This is the same kind of faith commended by our Lord Jesus. Blessed is the man who believes. One commentator wrote, "All faith is of things not seen; and God blesses those most who most implicitly rely on His Word."

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**DEUTERONOMY 33**  
**JOHN 20:19–31**

**THOUGHT**

**I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the  
goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. –  
Psalm 27:13**

**BIBLE LESSON***John 21***LESSON****What is that to thee?****VERSE 22**

*Jesus saith unto him, If  
I will that he tarry till I  
come, what is that to thee?  
follow thou me.*

In John's gospel, the last encounter between Jesus and His disciples took place on the shore of Galilee. They had just returned from their fishing without any catch. But at Jesus' command, they cast their nets again and had a great catch. Together, the Master and His disciples were united for the third time [John 21:14].

But our Lord Jesus' attention was focused on Simon Peter. He had vowed that he would never be offended by Jesus but Peter denied our Lord three times. Now, the time had come for Peter to reaffirm his love for his Master. Three times, Jesus asked him the same question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" [John 21:15–17]. Peter's answer was the same all three times: "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." But each answer was given with increasing anguish. Jesus condescended to Peter, knowing that he could never love his Lord the same degree that our Lord loved him. Nevertheless, our Lord Jesus told Peter, "Feed my sheep."

Our Lord also told Peter of the manner of his death. Peter would die as Christ died, not a natural but a violent death. And our Lord added, "Follow me!" But Peter turned and saw John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and asked, "What shall John do?" Our Lord Jesus' reply was simple: "What is that to thee?"

Our business and commitment is to follow our Lord. Every believer has to run his own race and fight his own battle of faith. Our commitment to and our service for God should not be determined by what someone else does.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
DEUTERONOMY 34  
JOHN 21**

**THOUGHT**

**Neither look to the left nor right. Look only unto Jesus.**





