

A Short Thought from God's Word

Year 1

Short, concise daily devotions from God's Word

By David Dennis

Copyright © 2026 by David Dennis

All rights reserved. Permission to download and distribute this work is granted for personal use only. For more information, contact: photoguydave@msn.com

Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.®

1/1 - A Mystery Revealed

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

The knowledge that comes to us so freely was a compelling mystery to the prophets of long ago. The means by which God has purchased our salvation, and the rewards that He will give to the faithful are truly marvelous.

1/2 - A Special Secret

1 Peter 1:12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

The glorious riches of God are a fascination even to angels. Why, then, do so many Christians take them for granted?

1/3 - Non-conformance

1 Peter 1:13-14 Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

Because of the greatness of what God has done for us, we should make a decision that we are going to be God's obedient children, and not to allow ourselves to be molded by our evil desires.

1/4 - A Holy Life

1 Peter 1:15-16 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

We should make every attempt to live a sinless life, because it is the desire of our sinless God.

1/5 - Living Like a Stranger

1 Peter 1:17 Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

If God is going to judge our work, we need to carefully think through every thing we do. How will this action stand on judgment day?

1/6 - An Expensive Price

1 Peter 1:18-19 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

The price of our redemption was the very blood of Christ. If that is the case, how much more should we live righteous and holy lives in love and reverence for Him.

1/7 - Chosen Before Creation

1 Peter 1:20-21: He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

It is not in Christ alone that we hope, but also in Almighty God. God chose Christ before the world began, and proved it by raising him from the dead.

1/8 - Deeply From the Heart

1 Peter 1:22-23 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

This verse says "now that you ... have love ... love one another deeply, from the heart." The Bible states over and over again how important it is to love, and this exaggerates it by implying that you always need to have more.

1/9 - Dead Grass and Living Word

1 Peter 1:24-26: For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

If our days are as temporary as grass or flowers, then we should make the best of them by loving each other from the heart.

1/10 - Spiritual Milk

1 Peter 2:1-3 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

We should be nourished by spiritually wholesome things, and not by anything tainted by sin.

1/11 - Living Stones

1 Peter 2:4-5: As you come to him, the living Stone--rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him-- you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

We are both: the temple of the Lord, and priests of the most high God. The spiritual sacrifices we make are all the things that we do with a pure motive for Him.

1/12 - A Most Valuable Find

1 Peter 2:6-8 For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for.

Christ, who is rejected by most of the world, is the most valuable find in all of creation.

1/13 - A Drastic Change

1 Peter 2:9-10: But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

God has a specific purpose for the ones who know Him: that we become a people of love to show light to a dark world.

1/14 - Recognition from the Pagan

1 Peter 2:11-12 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Sometimes Christians tend to live in compromise with sinful desires, choosing entertainment, friends or thoughts that allow for sinful desires to fester. We need to realize that these things are warring against our souls, and if we want victory, they must be banished from our lives.

1/15 - Submission to Authority

1 Peter 2:13-15 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

We need to be submissive to parents, teachers, police, and anyone in authority over us. We also need to submit to civil laws, because in doing so, we bring glory to God by the life we live.

1/16 - Submission for God

1 Peter 2:18-20 Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.

If slaves are instructed to submit to harsh slave masters, how much more should we submit to parents,

teachers, employers, or anyone in authority over us, even if they are not reasonable.

1/17 - An example for the Abused

1 Peter 2:21-23 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

We were called to be kind, even when abused by those in authority over us. We were called to follow the example of Christ. We can always rest assured that God will take care that justice is done.

1 - - Returning to the Shepherd

1 Peter 2:24-25: He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Jesus bought us with His blood, and the life He gave. Now we belong to Him.

1/19 - Submissive Wives

1 Peter 3:1-2: Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

All who are commanded to be in submission to others, (slaves, and in the same way, wives) are told to submit fully so that those in authority can be won to the Lord by the godly behavior of the submissive believer. Students, here is a way to win your teachers for Christ as well.

1/20 - Beauty Secrets from God's Word

1 Peter 3:3-4 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

All believers should be have the beauty of a heart that knows how to love.

1/21 - Easy and Seldom Obeyed

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

This command is so easy to understand, and yet so seldom obeyed. This is the relationship that we are commanded to have with all believers.

1/22 - Inheriting a Blessing

1 Peter 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were

called so that you may inherit a blessing.

God does not want His children cursed. So He doesn't want you to curse them, nor for you to live under the curse that comes from treating others with evil or insult. If you bless, you will be blessed.

1/23 - Watch Your Mouth

1 Peter 3:10-11: Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

Again, we are taught the importance of watching what we say. What's in our hearts comes out our mouths. We should actively pursue a controlled tongue.

1/24 - Which Side Are You On?

1 Peter 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

We have a clear choice. We can choose to live in righteousness and have God on our side, or we can do evil and face His anger.

1/25 - Suffering for Doing Good

1 Peter 3:13-15: Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.

If we are doing good, it is unlikely that we would be harmed for it, but if we are, we are promised special blessings from God. So what hinders us from doing good?

1/26/18– Be Prepared

1 Peter 3:15-16: Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

We should always be ready to witness, but we should do it with gentleness.

1/27 - Unfair but Christlike

1 Peter 3:17-18: It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

If Christ suffered for doing good, why should we cry out that it is unfair that we do so? Instead, we should do good and face what comes.

1/28 - Put to Death, Made Alive

1 Peter 3:18: He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

His death means the death of our sins, His life means that we can live also.

1/29 - Prepared to Suffer

1 Peter 4:1-2: Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

A person who is being persecuted for Christ is far less easily entangled in sin than the one who is not. Persecution has a purifying effect. So we should not shrink from it.

1/30 - Enough Time Wasted

1 Peter 4:3-5: For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

It is time to live differently from those who do not believe. If the unbeliever must give account of what he does before God, we should not be quick to join in. We are challenged to live in purity.

1/31 - Clear Minded to the End

1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

The day of judgment comes quickly. There is much that can be accomplished in the time that remains. So we must think clearly to make the most of the time we have.

2/1 - Above All Else

1 Peter 4:8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

The number one command to the believer, which is repeated over and over throughout the New Testament, is that we need to love each other. Here Peter says that it is to be done "above all." Nothing we do is as important as showing love.

2/2 - Hospitality Without Grumbling

1 Peter 4:9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

A clear act of love is to be willingly generous, and so we are commanded to hospitality. What have you done for others lately?

2/3 - The Gifted Using Their Gifts

1 Peter 4:10-11: Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the

very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever.

Everyone is given gifts so that they can help to accomplish God's work. No one should be sitting and watching. We should be using our gifts whole heartedly.

2/4 - A Painful Trial

1 Peter 4:12-13: Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

We are destined to suffer (1 Thes. 3:3), so we should expect it. If we can learn to rejoice, our joy will be great and our reward will be greater.

2/5 - The Blessing of Insults

1 Peter 4:14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

It is a mark of discipleship if we are treated the same way that Jesus was treated.

2/6 - No Shame for Suffering

1 Peter 4:15-16: If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

There is no glory in suffering for wrong doing, though even that, if it brings about repentance should bring rejoicing. But if we suffer for being good, there is no shame in being persecuted for being like Christ.

2/7 - Called to Account

1 Peter 4:17-18 For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

If believers are to be called to account for everything they have done, how much more so will unbelievers be called to account for the things they have done.

2/8 - God as our Defender

1 Peter 4:19 So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Don't ever let fear of persecution sway you from doing good. Just commit yourself to God to be your defender and then keep on going.

2/9 - Servants to God's People

1 Peter 5:1-3: To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

All leaders need to remember that if we want to lead in the kingdom of God, we need to be servants.

2/10 - From Servant to Glory

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Being a servant/leader now, in this world, means that when Christ returns we will be greatly honored and rewarded.

2/11 - Examples of Humility

1 Peter 5:5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

If the leaders are to be humble servants, how much more should the rest adopt that attitude. In fact, if we are proud we set ourselves in opposition to God. Do you want to oppose God?

2/12 - Humbled and Lifted Up

1 Peter 5:6: Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

There is a time to be humble and a time to be honored. What a wonderful thing it will be if, instead of praising ourselves today, we wait and let God honor us for eternity.

2/13 - Dumping Your Worries

1 Peter 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Only the proud person thinks he can handle all his problems. If we are humble, we will leave worrying about the future to God, for it shows we humbly trust Him to look out for us.

2/14 - A Roaring Lion

1 Peter 5:8-9: Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Peter says this in the context of talking about pride and humility. It is very difficult for the proud man to

be alert. We should replace pride with humility, self-control, and obedient resistance to the devil.

2/15 - Restored and Strong

1 Peter 5:10-11 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

This is the main thought of the whole book, which is summarized in Psalm 30:5: "Weeping may remain for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." Also, 1 Corinthians 4:17 says "our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

2/16 – Mourning in Sackcloth

Joel 1:13-15: Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God; for the grain offerings and drink offerings are withheld from the house of your God. Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord. Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

The verses before this tell of terrible destruction on a disobedient people. God's advise to them: Humble yourselves and cry out to God for forgiveness.

2/17 – It's not too late

Joel 2:12-14: "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing- grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.

The prophet speaks as if the judgment of God on wickedness is already taking place. But even now, it's not too late to repent and seek mercy from God, for He abounds in love.

2 - - Payback is wonderful

Joel 2:25-27: I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm - my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.

Terrible thing have happened to the people, but when they repent and God rewards His people, He will compensate them for their losses.

2/19 – The Great and Dreadful Day

Joel 2:31-32: The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on

Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the survivors whom the Lord calls.

A dreadful day will come when God punishes the nations for their sin, but everyone who calls Him will be saved.

2/20 – A refuge in During Trouble

Joel 3:15-17: The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. and the stars no longer shine. The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel. Then you will know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill.

When trouble comes, the Lord will be a refuge and a safe haven to His people. And this will be proof that He is God.

2/21 - Rebellious Children

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.

Anyone who has ever loved someone that does not love them back needs to realize that God can sympathize.

2/22 - Deaf to Your Prayers

Isaiah 1:15-17 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

We should not expect God to answer our prayers when there is sin in our laps, unless they are prayers of repentance.

2/23 - Reasoning With God

Isaiah 1:18-20: "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord . "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the Lord has spoken

In this passage, God reasons with His people, but today it applies to all. No matter what our load of sins, God can forgive. We will “eat the best from the land” for all eternity. A very reasonable proposition.

2/24 - The Redeemed and the Broken

Isaiah 1:27-28 Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness. But rebels and sinners will both be broken, and those who forsake the Lord will perish.

Zion (Jerusalem) was a city doomed to destruction by the will of God because of the sinfulness of the people. Those who repented in the city were told the good news of their redemption and righteousness.

2/25- A Day for the Proud

Isaiah 2:12 The Lord Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted (and they will be humbled).

Take comfort in knowing that the wicked in our world have a day set aside in which they will face God's justice.

2/26 - A No Account Man

Isaiah 2:22 Stop trusting in man, who has but a breath in his nostrils. Of what account is he?

Ultimately, all our dependence should be on God. When we trust in people we trust in someone with a sinful nature who is only a breath away from death. When we trust in God, we trust in the all powerful eternal God.

2/27 - Enjoyment or Disaster

Isaiah 3:10-11 Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them! They will be paid back for what their hands have done.

No matter how bad things go in this world, it will still go well for the righteous in heaven.

2/28 - A Serious Lack of Understanding

Isaiah 5:12-13 They have harps and lyres at their banquets, tambourines and flutes and wine, but they have no regard for the deeds of the Lord, no respect for the work of his hands. Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding; their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst.

This was the current state of events for Israel at that time, and it is the current state of events for us today. All the knowledge and art in the world will not make of for a lack of understanding concerning the things of God.

3/1 - Bitter for Sweet and Sweet for Bitter

Isaiah 5:20-21 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.

This is a world where those who do wrong are our heroes, and those who do right are persecuted. It may seem this way now, but it is temporary, and will only last until the day that God steps forward and intervenes.

3/2 - Who Will Go?

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

The nation was to be defeated and carried away into captivity. God planned this because the people were so wicked. But he wanted someone to warn them, and Isaiah stepped forward. Now, today, the world is lost. But who will go?

3/3 - Firmly Standing in Faith

Isaiah 7:9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

The nation of Judah was in great fear of their enemy from Samaria. Samaria was led by a man. What is there to fear from a man if you are led by God. But you must stand firm in your belief.

3/4 - The Lord Gives a Sign

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah had told King Ahaz that God would protect him from armies that threatened to invade. He then told King Ahaz to ask for a sign that God's Word would come true. Ahaz refused to ask, so the Lord gave the sign of the ultimate victory of God's people: the virgin birth of the Messiah.

3/5 - Devising a Strategy

Isaiah 8:9-10: Raise the war cry, you nations, and be shattered! Listen, all you distant lands. Prepare for battle, and be shattered! Prepare for battle, and be shattered! Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

No amount of strategy or planning could result in a victory in opposition to God's plan.

3/6 - The One to Regard

Isaiah 8:13-14: The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread, and he will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. And for the people of Jerusalem he will be a trap and a snare.

We have no need to be afraid of world leaders, foreign powers, or anyone else. We need to fear God first, for he is all powerful, and He is the only way to eternal life.

3/7 - Proof that God is Real

Isaiah 9:1-2: Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan. The people walking in darkness have

seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

This is a prophecy concerning the life of Christ and His ministry in Galilee. It is one of the proofs of the reality of God's Word that it was predicted hundreds of years before.

3/8 - Unto Us a Child is Born

Isaiah 9:6-7: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

God's plan from eternity past was for Jesus Christ to rule over God's people forever. Let us rejoice in the thought of that wonderful kingdom.

3/9 - What Will You Do When He Comes for You?

Isaiah 10:1-3: Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless. What will you do on the day of reckoning, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your riches?

The wicked will face a very certain day of judgment.

3/10 - A Beautiful Stump

Isaiah 11:1-3: A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord - and he will delight in the fear of the Lord .

Again we have a marvelous prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came and will come again in wisdom, understanding and power.

3/11 - Anger Turned Away

Isaiah 12:1 In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O Lord . Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me.

The mercy of the Lord is an amazing thing. Though he may turn his wrath on the wicked, he will relent and forgive the repentant.

3/12 - The Wells of Salvation

Isaiah 12:2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord the Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

God is truly the source of all salvation. Praise Him for the everlasting depth of the wells of salvation.

3/13 - Thwarting God

Isaiah 14:27 For the Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

All of the nations are in God's hand. He can raise up or bring down according to His divine wisdom. No one, no matter how powerful they may seem, can thwart God's plan.

3/14 - A Perfect Judge

Isaiah 16:4-5: The oppressor will come to an end, and destruction will cease; the aggressor will vanish from the land. In love a throne will be established; in faithfulness a man will sit on it--one from the house of David--one who in judging seeks justice and speeds the cause of righteousness.

This prophecy tells us of a time in the future when Christ will reign as King, and oppression, destruction and aggression will no longer exist. His kingdom will be established by love.

3/15 - The Death of Death

Isaiah 25:7-8: On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.

These promises are repeated in the New Testament. What a promise to know that we, as believers, will live in such a word. The words, "The Lord has spoken" remind us that this promise is guaranteed to us by the Word of God.

3/16 - Kept in Perfect Peace

Isaiah 26:3-4: You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.

There is joy and peace in knowing that God's promise is sure and our ultimate destination is to be with him in a new world with no crying or pain.

3/17 - Yearning for our God

Isaiah 26:9 My soul yearns for you in the night; in the morning my spirit longs for you. When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.

We should yearn to spend time with Christ in this world, and we should also yearn for his coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.

3 - - Giving Birth to the Dead

Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 says that we do not need “to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.” The passage goes on to say that the dead in Christ will rise, and then those who remain alive, and we will be with the Lord forever.

3/19 Hiding in Your Room

Isaiah 26:20-21 Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by. See, the Lord is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer.

The day is coming when God’s people can rest safe in His arms while God finally brings about justice in all the world.

3/20 - A Covenant With Death

Isaiah 28:18 Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with the grave will not stand.

Some of the evil people had decided that they would do whatever evil they wanted, and when they died they would be safe from any punishment. They called this the covenant of death. God tells them that even death will not be a refuge for them when he judges all of mankind.

3/21 - Vanished Intelligence

Isaiah 29:14 Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish.

When the Lord returns, all of sinful man’s wisdom and knowledge will be shown to be futile compared to the power of God.

3/22 - Trusting or Fleeing

Isaiah 30:15-16: This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. You said, 'No, we will flee on horses.' Therefore you will flee! You said, 'We will ride off on swift horses.' Therefore your pursuers will be swift!

The people of Israel were terrified of the Assyrians. God promised that if they would just trust Him and rest in His promise, they would be safe. Instead many chose to take matters in their own hands and flee to Egypt. The result is that they will be overtaken. When we trust ourselves rather than God, the results are always tragic.

3/23 - A Longing God

Isaiah 30:18 Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

The people were sinful and disobedient, and therefore they were suffering the consequences of their sin. But this was not what God desired. He longed for them to turn from sin and accept His grace.

3/24 - Relying on Egypt

Isaiah 31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord.

The Israelites looked to Egypt for help, when they should have looked to God. Are we guilty of the same thing? Do we search for answers and help everywhere but from the Lord?

3/25 - The Fruit of Righteousness

Isaiah 32:17-18: The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.

In the day when God rewards the righteous, there will be peace, quietness, confidence, and undisturbed rest forever. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

3/26 - The Key to Treasure

Isaiah 33:5-6: The Lord is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.

Again, wonderful rewards are promised to those who fear the Lord.

3/27 - A Day of Impossibles

Isaiah 35:4-6: Say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert

On the day of the Lord (the day Jesus Christ Comes Back), God will turn nature upside down for the benefit of his people. God is the Lord, even over the laws of nature.

3/28 A Test for God's People

Isaiah 36:13-15: Then the commander stood and called out in Hebrew, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! This is what the king says: Do not let Hezekiah deceive you. He cannot deliver you! Do not let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in the Lord when he says, 'The Lord will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'

The mighty Assyrian army was attacking Jerusalem. They had conquered every city that they had ever attacked. Hezekiah was a righteous King who encouraged the people to trust in God. The Assyrian commander stood outside the walls and shouted these words to the people. All of God's people were

put to a test of faith. How would you do in such a test.

3/29 God's Answer to the Assyrians

Isaiah 37:23-24: Who is it you have insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel! By your messengers you have heaped insults on the Lord. And you have said, 'With my many chariots I have ascended the heights of the mountains, the utmost heights of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars, the choicest of its pines. I have reached its remotest heights, the finest of its forests.

The Assyrians thought that their own abilities made them more powerful than God. But they didn't reckon with God defending Himself (as He will do against all the arrogant on the day he returns).

3/30 A Hook in the Nose

Isaiah 37:29: Because you rage against me and because your insolence has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you came.

God will show the Assyrians (as we will see tomorrow) how easy it was for Him to end their threat. God is in control in any situation.

3/31 - A Miscalculation

Isaiah 37:36-38: Then the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning-there were all the dead bodies! So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there. One day, while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer cut him down with the sword.

The King of Assyria miscalculated greatly when he thought he was more powerful than God. So do many people today, but God's day is coming.

4/1 - Withered Grass

Isaiah 40:7-8: The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.

We have all seen spring flowers that have eventually died away with the change of seasons. This is the way God sees the lives of men. Compared to eternity, our lives are very short, but God's Word will last forever.

4/2 - A Gentle Shepherd

Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

God is a gentle shepherd to those He loves. His concern is so great that he carries us close to His heart. Psalm 56:8 teaches that He keeps record of all our tears. Our response should be to love Him back.

4/3 - Incomparable

Isaiah 40:25-26: "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

How can anyone or anything compare with our God? Why then would we choose anyone or anything over Him?

4/4 - Unfathomable

Isaiah 40:27-28: Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord ; my cause is disregarded by my God"? Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

When people think God is absent, or that they are not important to Him, we are reassured that this is not the case. He will never grow tired. We may not understand why things are the way they are, but God's understanding is much greater than ours, and He works for our best good.

4/5 - Renewed Strength

Isaiah 40:30-31: Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

This is a very clear promise that the believer will be renewed. The day will come when the believer who is blind will see, the one who is deaf will hear, the old will be renewed like a youth, and we will glorify Him together forever.

4/6 - Justice for All

Isaiah 42:1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.

This is a prophecy of Jesus, and the time when he will bring about absolute and complete justice for all the Earth.

4/7 - Captives Set Free

Isaiah 42:6-7 "I, the Lord , have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

Another Prophecy of Jesus Christ, predicting His work to set us free on the cross, and to call for Himself a people from among the Gentiles.

4/8 - A God Like No Other

Isaiah 42:8-9 "I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you."

The other nations served gods that were made of wood or stone that had eyes but couldn't see and ears but couldn't hear. Our God can do both, and proves Himself by accurately predicting things before they happen.

4/9 - Ultimate Security Services

Isaiah 43:1-2 But now, this is what the Lord says--he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

In God we have the ultimate of protection: A caring Father who will not let anything happen to His people unless it is for their own best good.

4/10 - Only One Way

Isaiah 43:10-11 "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord , "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no savior."

It is popular today to say all religions are valid and that there are many ways to God. That simply is not true. Apart from the saving work of Jesus Christ, there is no way for salvation.

4/11 - The Ultimate Ruler

Isaiah 43:12-13 You are my witnesses," declares the Lord , "that I am God. Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?"

There is no one like our God, and No One who can overrule Him. It would be wise, then, to please Him.

4/12 - No Bother

Isaiah 43:22 22 Yet you have not called upon me, O Jacob, you have not wearied yourselves for me, O Israel.

God is saying, you haven't even bothered yourself about me. You are too busy with your own lives to even think of me. Let us be careful that we are not guilty of the same thing.

4/13 - For God's Sake

Isaiah 43:25 25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

God forgives us for His own reasons and for His own sake.

4/14 - Utterly True

Isaiah 45:23 23 By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.

God has sworn that this is true. The day will come when every knee bow before Him.

4/15 - What is Best for You

Isaiah 48:17 This is what the Lord says--your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go."

Doing what God says to do will always be what's best for you.

4/16 - Too Small a Thing

Isaiah 49:6 It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.

This is a prophecy of Christ. He would not only bring Israel back to the Lord, but he would provide salvation to anyone who believes from any nation.

4/17 - Set Like Flint

Isaiah 50:7 Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

When we obey God, we know that we never need to be ashamed. So we should resolve to take our stand and not move from it.

4/18 - Where is My Accuser?

Isaiah 50:8-9 He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other! Who is my accuser? Let him confront me! It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who is he that will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.

Paul paraphrases and interprets this passage for us in Romans 8:33-34: Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

4/19 - The Saints Go Marching In

Isaiah 51:11 The ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

What a glorious day of singing and joy that will be, when we enter God's presence and leave our suffering behind.

4/20 - Men Who Are Grass

Isaiah 51:12-13 "I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass, that you forget the Lord your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, that you live in constant terror every day because of the wrath of the oppressor, who is bent on destruction? For where is the wrath of the oppressor?

Why do we live to please men who live such short lives, but forget the creator of the universe?

4/21 - Marred Beyond Human Likeness

Isaiah 52:13-15 See, my servant will act wisely ; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him - his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness--so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

This is a picture of Jesus Christ, marred by crucifixion, sprinkling His blood for the healing of the nations. God will exalt Him and then everyone will know Him for who He truly is.

4/22 - Rejected by Men

Isaiah 53:3: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

This is an ongoing prophecy of Jesus, and how He was rejected by His people, betrayed by one disciple and denied by another. He did not look like the conquering King that people expected, but we see here that His rejection was also predicted in prophecy.

4/23 - Pierced for our Transgressions

Isaiah 53:4-5 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

This is a prophecy that Jesus would be pierced (crucified) for our sins so that we could be saved.

4/24 - Laid on Him

Isaiah 53:6: We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

This is the gospel in a nutshell given by prophecy more than 600 years before. Everyone is a sinner, but God has laid the punishment for our sins on Jesus Christ so that we can be forgiven.

4/25 - Assigned a Grave with the Wicked

Isaiah 53:8-9 For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Jesus died the death of the wicked, so that the wicked could be justified like the righteous.

4/26 - God's Will to Crush

Isaiah 53:10-11 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

The crucifixion was not a tragedy above all else. God planned it to be the best thing that ever happened to mankind. It is only through Jesus' death and resurrection that anyone can ever be justified before God.

4/27 - A Portion for the Dead

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The resurrection of Jesus is predicted here, because he is promised a reward for pouring out His life unto death. He bore the sin of many, and so He can intercede for us.

4/28 - A Brief Moment

Isaiah 54:7-8 "For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you," says the Lord your Redeemer.

This is an interesting passage because it was spoken in prophecy. Isaiah had been predicting the wrath of God that was about to fall on Israel, but he was seeing beyond the wrath to the compassion afterward. This was God's plan all along. A loving parent who punishes a child may feel the same way. The punishment is necessary but the compassion is eternal.

4/29 - No Weapon Forged

Isaiah 54:17: No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me," declares the Lord.

And this is the promise the redeemed of the Lord will carry with them for all of eternity.

4/30 - Satisfaction

Isaiah 55:2: Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

People were designed by God to do more than eat and sleep. They were designed to worship and have fellowship with Him. That's why a person can gain the whole world and still lose His soul. Complete satisfaction can be found only in Him.

5/1 - Before its Too Late

Isaiah 55:6 Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Today, a person can make that decision, but the day is coming when it will be too late.

5/2 - A Simple Choice

Isaiah 55:7: Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord , and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

King Manasseh (2 Chronicles 33:1-13) was an incredible example of this. He did more evil than any other king of Judah. God punished him, and he repented and was restored. There is no sin too great for the work of Christ on the cross.

5/3 - Higher Thoughts

Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord . "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

A mere human cannot begin to understand the thoughts of the eternal, all powerful, all knowing God. We should trust Him even when we don't understand.

5/4 - Even the Foreigners

Isaiah 56:6-7: And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord , and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant--these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

God has always declared that the Gentile is welcome to worship the living God.

5/5 - To Be Spared from Evil

Isaiah 57:1-2 The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.

God want us to understand that the death of the righteous is not a bad thing. It is a relief from evil and an entrance into genuine rest. And it will be a glorious resurrection with our Savior.

5/6 - High and Low

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says- he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

The Greatest of Gods cares for the lowliest of the low. And He cares for you.

5/7 - No Peace for the Wicked

Isaiah 57:20-21 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Even in this world, the believer can know peace and joy, but the wicked cannot understand these things unless they repent.

5/8 - God's Chosen Fast

Isaiah 58:6-8 Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter--when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

Christians may fast in order to please God, but God would rather see deeds of love shown to the needy. If we truly want to please God, we should do both.

5/9 - A Well-Watered Garden

Isaiah 58:9-11 "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail

God would see us work for justice and on behalf of the poor. If we do so, He promises us very special care.

5/10 - Separated by Sin

Isaiah 59:1-2 Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

The people thought that God did not hear their prayers. It was not that he was unable to hear or unable

to help. It was the sin that lay between the people and God. Repentance was needed.

5/11 - Days of Sorrow End

Isaiah 60:19-21 The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end. Then will all your people be righteous and they will possess the land forever.

This prophecy is similar to the prophecies in the book of Revelation, and promises us that God will be with us, and we will never sorrow again. God, speed that day.

5/12 - Many Kindnesses

Isaiah 63:7 I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord , the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us--yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses.

Like Isaiah, we should be willing to testify to the wonderfuyul things that God has done for us.

5/13 - No Eye Has Seen

Isaiah 64:4: Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

There is no God like our God. 1 Cor 2:9 quotes this verse and indicates that it refers to the promises that such a God would make to His people.

5/14 - Wailing in Brokenness

Isaiah 65:11-14: "But as for you who forsake the Lord . . . this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of spirit.

On the day of the Lord, there is a great reward for the servant of God, but not for those who reject Him.

5/15 - A New Earth

Isaiah 65:17-19: "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.

All of our pain and suffering will be gone. God will be a delight to us, and we will be a delight to Him. God speed that day.

5/16 - Flourishing Like the Grass

Isaiah 66:14 When you see this, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass; the hand of the Lord will be made known to his servants, but his fury will be shown to his foes.

This is a further statement to encourage us with God's promise for our eternal future.

5/17 - All Mankind will Bow

Isaiah 66:22-23 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the Lord, "so will your name and descendants endure. From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the Lord.

We will live forever, and all mankind will bow down before the Lord. No exceptions.

5/18 - Everything We Need

2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

God's power, which is unlimited, is working for us to provide everything we need to live and serve Him.

5/19 - Great and Precious Promises

2 Peter 1:4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

God's power is at work in His promises. If we trust in the promises of God, then our human (and sinful) nature is replaced with the nature of God. Do you see how important it is to know what God's promises are?

5/20 - The Divine Nature

2 Peter 1:5-7: For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

Because we can participate in the nature of God, we should make every effort to live like Jesus Christ. This list describes His nature (the divine nature). The effort to add these qualities is something that we are commanded to make.

5/21 - Increasing Measure

2 Peter 1:8-9: For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Increasing measure means that we should be growing in each of these qualities (faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness and love). Are you getting stronger in these qualities?

5/22 - Make Your Calling Sure

2 Peter 1:10-11: Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Make sure that you are truly a believer and that you are living like one. Rich rewards await such people.

5/23 - Refreshing Your Memory

2 Peter 1:12-15: So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

If Peter thought it so important to keep reminding these people of how they ought to live, then we ought to follow in his example and remind one another.

5/24 - Eyewitnesses of Majesty

2 Peter 1:16-18: We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

At Jesus' baptism and again at the transfiguration, Peter heard the voice of God proclaim Jesus to be the son of God. So he knew that it was no myth or story, but something he had personally witnessed. And if men like Peter were willing to give their lives for what they believed, then we can trust that they spoke truthfully about the things they had seen.

5/25 - Word of the Prophets

2 Peter 1:19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

The words of the prophets had been proven true to the disciples, and so we are told that a message twice proven is worthy of our belief. The birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ were all factual historical events.

5/26 - The Breath of God

2 Peter 1:20-21: Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

The words of the Bible are not interpretations of events, but the very breath of God as men wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

5/27 - Deceivers Among Us

2 Peter 2:1-3: But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

There are always people willing to make up stories in order to gain power, popularity, or money. Therefore the words of anyone claiming to teach about God should be judged by the proven Word of God.

5/28 - An Experienced Rescuer

2 Peter 2:5-9: If [God] did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men... if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

God has a proven track record of punishing the wicked and rewarding the righteous. Since this is so, we have only to wait for the day of judgment.

5/29 - Loving the Wages of Wickedness

2 Peter 2:15-16: They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey--a beast without speech--who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

This verse refers to false teachers who live among the believers, but who continue to sin, love money and who prey on the unstable. Even a beast has more wisdom than one of these. Three warnings here: Don't become such a person, don't be fooled by such a person, and care for the unstable who might easily become their victims.

5/30 - Springs Without Water

2 Peter 2:17-19: These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity--for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

False teachers claim to introduce "freedom" into Christianity, when what they are really doing is

allowing themselves to be enslaved to sin.

5/31 - Hearing, Understanding and Rejecting

2 Peter 2:20-22 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

It is a dangerous thing to hear and understand God's word and then reject it.

6/1 - Stimulated to Wholesome Thinking

2 Peter 3:1-2: Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Peter talks about the importance of "reminders" to keep us on the right track. We all know that we are to love one another, but it is important to be reminded of that fact regularly. This is why daily Bible reading and study is important.

6/2 - Understand the Scoffers

2 Peter 3:3-4: First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

We should not be discouraged by the critics, since they are foretold in God's Word.

6/3 - Deliberately Forgotten

2 Peter 3:5-7: But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

The modern unbeliever goes to great lengths to try to scientifically explain how creation came about without God's hand. But creation proves the existence of God, and is evidence of His power to judge all men.

6/4 - A Day Like A Thousand Years

2 Peter 3:8-9 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

There is no need to get discouraged if events don't take place on our time schedule, because an infinite God knows what patience is. His delay is an act of love, as He waits for others to repent. 2 Peter 3:15 says to "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation."

6/5 - Everything Laid Bare

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

Thieves don't generally make appointments. The day of Christ's return to judge the world will take people by surprised if they have not heeded warnings like this one.

6/6 - Destruction of Everything

2 Peter 3:11-12: Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

If this world and everything in it will be destroyed, then we should spend our days pursuing things that will outlast it. Faith, hope and love should be our only pursuits.

6/7 - The Home of Righteousness

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

I once asked a group of children what they would do if they were God. Generally the answers they gave centered around making the world a place where everyone could be happy. This is exactly what God will do for His people.

6/8 - Motivation for Holy Living

2 Peter 3:14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

If we look ahead to Christ's coming, it should motivate us to holy living.

6/9 - Falling or Growing

2 Peter 3:17-18: Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

The remedy against falling into error is to continue to grow.

6/10 - No Beginning and No End

John 1:1-2: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He

was with God in the beginning.

Jesus Christ is eternal. He has always been and will always be. This should be a great comfort: to know that the one on whom we depend is an eternal being with no beginning or no end.

6/11 - The Light of Men

John 1:3-5: Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

All things were created through Jesus Christ. He is the source of all life. And yet humankind, His creation, cannot comprehend Him without help from God's Holy Spirit. It should be our prayer that God would help us day by day to know Him better.

6/12 - Light and Life

John 1:6-9: There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

Jesus is the light of the world. The word *light* here means more than just knowledge of God (as John was a bringer of knowledge). It means the way out of darkness and into eternal life.

6/13 - Adopted by God

John 1:10-13: He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Jesus had so much to give, but so few received it. Adoption as children of God is a gift beyond measure.

6/14 - The Word Made Flesh

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

What a testimony of love, that the one "who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross!" Phillipians 2:6-8.

6/15 - One Blessing After Another

John 1:16-18: From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God,

but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

All blessings (and all good things) have their source in Jesus Christ, including the greatest blessing ever: the grace that saves us. We should be inspired by such thoughts to praise and worship Him even more.

6/16 - Looking at the Lamb of God

John 1:29-31: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

Jesus was like the Passover lamb. That lamb was sacrificed so that the angel of death would pass over homes of those who made the sacrifice. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice that conquers death.

6/17 - Testimony of the Son of God

John 1:32-34: Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Many people today try to say that Jesus was just a prophet or a good teacher. John was a prophet, but John tells us that Jesus was more than a prophet. He is the Son of God.

6/18 - The Enthusiasm of Andrew

John 1:40-42: Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

Andrew's enthusiasm in sharing his discovery concerning Jesus is admirable. The result was that Peter became a believer. We should imitate Andrew's enthusiasm and willingness.

6/19 - The Best for Last

John 2:7-10: Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

We should remember that anything God does will be far better than anything we can do.

6/20 - Righteous Anger

John 2:14-16: In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at

tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

We should never trivialize the worship of God, nor think of it as a common thing. Our God deserves our whole hearted love, honor and adoration.

6/21 - Ashamed of Belief

John 3:1-2: Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Nicodemus knew that Jesus came from God, but he came to Jesus secretly at night because he was ashamed of this belief. Today, there are many similar believers who believe in the reality and power of Christ, but are too ashamed to personally identify with him.

6/22 - A Second Time in the Womb

John 3:3-5: In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

A specific work of God is needed in a person's life before he can enter the kingdom of God. No amount of religion, piety, or good deeds can change this.

6/23 - Lifting up the Son

John 3:14-15: Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

Jesus was lifted up on the cross to die in our place so that we could be forgiven of our sins. Being forgiven means that we do not have to pay the punishment of our sin.

6/24 - A Generous Gift

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

This verse, which is so often memorized, summarizes well the work of God on our behalf so that we could have eternal life. I would like to emphasize the word "gave" in this verse. God generously gave his son for us.

6/25 - Already Condemned

John 3:17-18: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world

through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Jesus' coming was not to condemn, but to save. The world, and everyone in it, are already condemned, and his coming and his work are the only remedy to that condemnation.

6/26 - Hating the Light

John 3:19-21: This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Here is a good test of our faithfulness to God. Would we welcome it if suddenly someone could see into all of the deeds of our lives, or would we be ashamed? There would be no fear to those who truly live their lives by the truth.

6/27 - The Joy of a Friend of the Groom

John 3:27-30: To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less."

John's example of humility should be imitated by all of Christ's people. Let Him be exalted in us and by us.

6/28 - The One From Above

John 3:31-32: The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

The one from above is Jesus Christ, King above all kings and Lord above all Lords. He came from heaven, but was not believed by God's chosen race, nor is He believed by most people today. In spite of this, He is still the Lord, and His words are true. There is not more than one truth, and truth is not relative. There is only truth in Him.

6/29 - Everything in the Hands of One

John 3:35-36: The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

Once again we have clear Scriptural testimony that eternal life comes only through God's Son. There is no other way. Rejecting Christ is rejecting life.

6/30 - If You Only Knew

John 4:9-10: The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

If only people new Jesus well, they would know how much more He is willing to give than we can even comprehend. Our task should be to learn to know Him better, and to tell others what we've learned.

7/1 - To Never be Thirsty Again

John 4:13-14: Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

We spend our lives looking for things that satisfy only for awhile, and only in this world. Jesus gives that which satisfies more fully here in this world, and lasts for eternity.

7/2 - True Worshipers

John 4:23-24: A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

It would be good to reflect on whether we worship God spiritually and in truth. This passage teaches us that God desires such worshipers.

7/3 - The Food of Jesus

John 4:34: "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

Jesus implied that His nourishment came from His obedience to the Father. This is true of us also. If we obey, then we will have everything that we need from Him.

7/4 - Ripe for Harvest

John 4:35-36: Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

We are daily coming near to harvest's end, when no man can work. Until that time, let us work diligently and in unity with each other to complete God's work.

7/5 - Having the Desire

John 5:5-9: One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I

am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

This man had the desire, but needed the help of Christ. Others are offered the help (like the Pharisees in Jesus' day) but have no desire. But when both are present great things happen. Do you have the desire to have Christ work in you? Do you seek His help?

7/6 - Something Worse May Happen

John 5:14-15: Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."

The grace of God requires a response in us. We should love Him because He first loved us. This man needed to stop His sinning in response to the work that Christ had done in Him.

7/7 - Someone You Better Honor

John 5:21-23: For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

To dishonor Christ is to dishonor God. Christ Himself will be our Judge, so there is no way into heaven around Him, but only through Him.

7/8 - Crossing from Death to Life

John 5:24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Here is the heart of the gospel. Death is already at work in us. Faith in Christ allows us to cross from death to life. Nothing else can achieve that.

7/9 - The Dead Will Hear

John 5:25-27: I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

Jesus is above all others, for He will judge all on that day. He was without sin, and yet walked as a man. Therefore He is the only one from all history who is worthy to be the judge of all mankind.

7/10 - Coming Out of the Grave

John 5:28-29: "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

The day is coming when everyone will be forced to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Messiah and the Son of God, for He will stand to judge all mankind. No one can avoid that appointment with destiny.

7/11 - A Boy With a Lunch

John 6:5-8: When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

It has often been a matter of speculation that maybe Andrew spoke up because of faith that Christ could do something with the boy's offering. We know in looking back that Christ could, and did. We should learn from this that we should never count our gifts, abilities and offerings to be small and of no worth. The one who could use five loaves and two fish to feed thousands could also use our small gifts in significant ways.

7/12 - A Walk to the Boat

John 6:16-21: When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

Jesus is Lord of all creation, even the laws of nature. This should be of great comfort to us as we ponder "his incomparably great power for us who believe." (Ephesians 1:19)

7/13 - The Right Kind of Food

John 6:25-27: When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.

They were not looking for Him because He was Christ, they were looking for Him because of what He could do for them. They were willing to follow Him because He gave them stuff, not because of who He was. How does that compare to us today?

7/14 - Working for Honor

John 7:16-18: Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him."

Do we work for the honor of our Lord?

7/15 - Not Yet Time

John 7:30 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come.

God's plan would be fulfilled, no matter what people might try to do. God's plan for us is the same. We need not fear people or circumstances. God is in control.

7/16 - Don't Be the First

John 8:3-8: The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

The hypocrite is one who condemns sin in others while sinning himself. It should be noticed that such a person, by their condemnation of other is asserting that they know right from wrong, even though they continue to sin. It is always wiser not to condemn others.

7/17 - The One With the Right

John 8:9-11: At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Christ is the only One who has the right to condemn the sinner, and He is willing to forgive the repentant. Let us be careful that we do not stand among the accusers.

7/18 - The Light of Life

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

The "light of life," according to John chapter 1, is Christ Himself. If He lives in us, His presence will change our very being.

7/19 - Nothing On His Own

John 8:27-28: Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me."

The mission of Jesus was so very selfless that it testifies to His love for mankind, and His obedience to His Father.

7/20 - To be a Real Disciple

John 8:31-32: To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

You are not a disciple of Jesus unless you hold to His teaching. If you become a disciple, then you will know truth and it will set you free.

7/21 - A Slave to Sin

John 8:34-36: Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Continuing in willful sin shows that we are enslaved to it. If we would be a child of God, we should be done with intentional sinning.

7/22 - Your Father, the Devil

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

We must never forget that since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been a master in the use of the lie. If we lie, we are doing His work.

7/23 - Past and Present Meet

John 8:58: "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

Jesus was present and instrumental in the creation of the world. He has always existed, and will do so always. From eternity past to eternity future, Jesus Christ is Lord.

7/24 - To Display the Work of God

John 9:1-5: As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Sometimes bad things happen to bring about good results in the long run, and not because of any sin or punishment.

7/25 - Those Who Can See Become Blind

John 9:39-41: Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

Those who have been given much are responsible for what they have been given. The Pharisees knew God's law, and therefore were more guilty of rejecting God's son.

7/26 - A Thief and a Robber

John 10:1 "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber."

There is no other way into the kingdom God except through Christ. Those who would suggest that there is will mislead and even prohibit others from entering. We must be diligent in proclaiming that Christ is the only way.

7/27 - The Shepherd of the Sheep.

John 10:2-5: The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

Jesus does not drive people, he leads them. He does not force them, he calls them. Those who recognize Him follow Him. Who better that we should follow in love than the One who suffered and died for us.

7/28 - The Gate and the Thief

John 10:7 Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Do not forget that we have an enemy: the thief who is mentioned here. His mission is to steal, kill and destroy. Let us stay close to our Shepherd and so be safe from our enemy's attacks.

7/29 - A Wolf Attack

John 10:11-13: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

There is nothing that Jesus would not do for us, if it was for our best benefit. He proved that by His passion on the cross. Having been shown such proof, we should be willing to trust Him in all our

decisions.

7/30 - Authority to Die

John 10:17-18: The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Jesus willingly gave Himself for us. He deserves our love also.

7/31 - A Mad Man or the Son of God

John 10:19-21: At these words the Jews were again divided. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?"

But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Jesus was not just some great teacher. His teaching was profound. Either He is the son of God, or He was a mad man. His miracles testify to the truth of His words. His disciples' willingness to give their lives for Him testifies to the reality of the miracles.

8/1 - Complete Safety

John 10: 27-29: My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

With God the Father and God the Son watching over us, we know that we are safe.

8/2 - God's Plan for Glory

John 11:1-4: Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

Something bad was happening to Lazarus, but it was God's plan that it should be so. God intended to use it to bring himself great glory. We should remember these things when bad things happen to us.

8/3 - A Painful Delay

John 11:5-6: Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.

Jesus knew that his delay would cause pain for Mary and Martha. For at least four days they had to mourn His death without knowing that Jesus would resurrect him. Jesus intentionally delayed, knowing the pain it would cause, but did so for God's greater glory.

8/4 - Trusting in Tough Times

John 11:20-23: When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha had incredible faith that Jesus could have healed Lazarus, and even by saying "even now God will give you whatever you ask," she shows faith in Christ to be able to raise the dead. But her statement (and Mary's matching statement later) "if only you had been here," indicates that she cannot see into the complete purpose of God. For us we should see that it is always better simply to trust God that He knows what He is doing, rather than question His love or abilities.

8/5 - Believe and Never Die

John 11:24-27: Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Jesus could have comforted Martha simply by asserting that Lazarus would be called from His grave right now. But instead He chose to comfort her in a way that brings comfort to many who are grieving. He pointed to the temporary nature of the death of the believer, and to the sure promise of eternal life found in Him.

8/6 - Stunning Concern

John 11:32-35: When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

It is extraordinary that Jesus wept for the pain of Mary and Martha, even though he knew that shortly their pain would turn to joy. It shows His concern for all our temporary sorrows.

8/7 - Stand Amazed

John 11:38-43: Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here,

that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

Stand amazed at the awesome power of God.

8/8 - A Pint of Nard

John 12:3-8: Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. " He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

"Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

No amount of good deeds can compare with the value of simply loving God with all our hearts. This can be seen also in the story of Mary and Martha found in Luke 10:40.

8/9 - A Dead Kernel

John 12:23-26: Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

Jesus compared His own sacrifice to the sacrifice of His followers. If we want to follow Him, we should be prepared to give as He gave.

8/10 - A Troubled Heart

John 12:27-28: "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

It is significant to notice that even Jesus was troubled by the knowledge of what He must soon suffer. He was troubled, but He was still willing to do the Father's will. Let us honor and love Him for it, and be willing to follow His example.

8/11 - Drawing All Men

John 12:31-33: Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Christ's sacrifice was the ultimate victory over evil. His death and resurrection bring the only hope for

all of mankind.

8/12 - Walking in the Light

John 12:35 Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light."

We have the light of God's Word, and we should not neglect to respond to it while it is present. Otherwise it will be like the seed sown on the path in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:19): "the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart."

8/13 - Inability to Believe

John 12:37-38: Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

The natural sinful self cannot believe, even when there are clear proofs. We must depend on the power of the Word of God to work in hearts.

8/14 - Peer Pressure

John 12:42-43: Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

This was the first (but not the last) time that peer pressure caused people to reject Jesus Christ. Let us pray that we are never overtaken in this way.

8/15 - The Full Extent of His love

John 13:1 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The full extent of His love included His evening of communion with them, His arrest, His crucifixion and His resurrection. What a demonstration of love.

8/16 - Astonishing Demonstration

John 13:3-5: Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

It is remarkable that on the night before His death, Jesus should continue to serve in this way. He wanted it very clear that He loved His disciples and that loving means serving.

8/17 - Dirty Feet

John 13:12-15: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Let us follow our Lord's example and lead by serving.

8/18 - A Tough Command

John 13:34-35: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

God's people had already been commanded to "Love your neighbor as yourself." This command goes farther and is much more specific. We are to love other believers as much as Christ loves us. This is a high calling indeed. We should make intentional efforts to fulfill it.

8/19 - Before the Rooster Crows

John 13:36-38: Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!"

Like Peter, all of us think we have what it takes. But we have not had the trial that Peter had to go through. Instead, we must be humble in our love, and cling with all of our hearts to our risen Lord.

8/20 - A Place Prepared

John 14:1-3: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Through all the trials the disciples were about to face, Jesus wanted them to remember the promise. Let us cling to this promise in our trials also.

8/21 - Wanting to Know the Way

John 14:5-6: Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Knowing Christ is the key to knowing the Father, and to being with Him. There is no other way.

8/22 - Proof of Love for Christ

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

A very simple and straightforward comment that we should not ignore.

8/23 - A Counselor Assigned

John 14:16-17: And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

The Holy Spirit lives in us to comfort, lead and advise. Let us look to obey and walk in the Spirit.

8/24 - Because He Lives

John 14:18-20: Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

His death means the sacrifice for our sins has been paid. His resurrection means that death is conquered and we can live forever.

8/25 - The Fruit of Love

John 14:23-24: Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

If we say we love God but don't obey Him, we demonstrate our lack of love. Obedience is the fruit of love for God.

8/26 – A Special Teacher

John 14:26: But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

We have been promised a very special teacher, if we take the time to listen to Him.

8/27 - A Gift of Peace

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Peace from God has many aspects. We have peace with God because He no longer condemns us for our sin. We will have peace with our brothers and sisters because of the love and forgiveness we have for them. And we will have peace in our hearts because an all powerful loving God sets us free from worry.

8/28 - A Diligent Gardener

John 15:1-2: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

God desires and works for fruit in the lives of His people.

8/29 - Remaining in Christ

John 15:5-6: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Only by living and walking in Him can we accomplish anything that has real significance. If we do not abide in Him, we cannot accomplish anything. We are of no more use than a branch that bears no fruit.

8/30 - An Astonishing Command

John 15:9-13: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

In this incredible passage, Jesus tell us that he loves us as much as God loves Him, and then commands us to love each other that much also. Do we love each other as much as God loves Jesus? Do we love each other as much as Jesus loves us?

8/31 - Equal Treatment

John 15:18-20: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

We should not be surprised if people mock or persecute us for our faith. They treated Christ that way also. We should remember that we are only temporary residents of this world, and that our eternal home will be much better.

9/1 - A Counselor to Come

John 16:5-7: "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

This is one of many examples that could be mentioned proving that God allows us to suffer or grieve for a greater good. Jesus knew that the work of the Counselor (Holy Spirit) in the lives of the disciples would bring far more good than Christ's physical presence.

9/2 - The Spirit of Truth

John 16:13-14: When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

The Holy Spirit should be working in a dynamic way in our lives. If He is not, we should examine and see whether we are quenching the Spirit.

9/3 - Weeping turned to Joy

John 16:20-22: I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

The life of a believer may be full of weeping, but the promise of joy in the new life should bring us great joy in all our sorrow.

9/4 - Scattered

John 16:31-32: "You believe at last!" Jesus answered. "But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

The disciples were firm believers, and would have sworn to stand by Christ's side. But in an unexpected trial, they all failed Him. Let us beware, and never let down our guard.

9/5 - For you to have peace

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus warned us that sorrows would come, and failures on our part. He did this so that we could rest in peace when such things came, knowing that our Lord predicted them and understood them. We can take comfort in the fact that Jesus has conquered all such failings on our behalf.

9/6 - Knowing God

John 16:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

To know God and Christ is to have eternal life. And for all eternity we will have sweet communion with Him.

9/7 - A Prayer for Unity

John 17:9-11: I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they

are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one.

Here we see clearly that Jesus is praying, not only for his disciples, but also for us (see verse 20). His prayer is that you and I have the same kind of unity that the Son and the Father have. We fall far short of that, and should make it our goal.

9/8 - A Prayer for Protection

John 17:14-15: I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

Jesus' loving prayer shows that He knows that it would be better for us to go through our trials than to be removed from them. In His love, He prays for our protection.

9/9 - Proof of God

John 17:20-21: "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Jesus prays that we would have unity so that the world would believe. Is our unity convincing proof of the reality of God to outsiders? If it isn't, then that is an area we should work on.

9/10 - To Be With Him

John 17:24: "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Jesus' desire is that we be with Him in His glory. It is wonderful to think that our Lord has that desire for us.

9/11 - Love In Us

John 17:25-26: "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

As God is made known to us, His Son and His love live in us in increasing measure.

9/12 - Willing to Suffer

John 18:4-6: Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, "I

am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

Jesus bravely stood up to those who came to arrest Him because He knew that it was God's will for Him to suffer. We should be as ready to suffer for Him.

9/13 - Drinking the Father's Cup

John 18:10-11: Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Jesus knew that there was no profit in fighting against God's plan, even if that plan meant suffering. He showed his love for his enemies by healing Malchus' ear.

9/14 - Easy to Fail

John 18:25-27: As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?"

He denied it, saying, "I am not."

One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

We all know the story of Peter's three denials, two of which are recorded here. This was the same man who swore earlier that he would never deny Christ. Two lessons from this: First, we must be careful not to think more highly of ourselves than we should. Second, we should be aware of how easy it is to fail, and watch our lives and doctrine well.

9/15 - On the Side of Truth

John 18:33-37: Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" . . .

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

"You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Truth is not a matter of ambiguity or personal preference. Jesus came into the world to testify to the truth so that we could hear and be saved. To embrace truth is to embrace Christ.

9/16 - Substitute for a Guilty Man

John 18:38-40: "What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him. But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

Barabbas, who was guilty, was released, and Jesus, who was innocent, was executed. This is picture of Christ dying in place of all of us who are guilty.

9/17 - Behold the Man!

John 19:1-5: Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face.

Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

Let us stand in awe and behold our king. He was tortured this way because of His love for us.

9 /18 - The Ultimate Authority

John 19:8-11: When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

Pilate had real authority, but the real source of that authority was God. It was God's will that Jesus be crucified.

9/19 - The Ultimate Sacrifice

John 19:16-18: Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others--one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

Here was the final and ultimate sacrifice, the Lamb of God is sacrificed in our place so that our sins could be overlooked by God.

9/20 - The Foot of the Cross

John 19:25-27: Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

The foot of the cross is a place of suffering, and not of joy. But Jesus was still concerned with those he loved who were there. In our love for Him, we should find our place at the foot of the cross.

9/21 - Human and Divine

John 19:28-30: Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled,

Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

We see in this the humanity and the deity of Christ. His humanity is seen through his suffering. But we see that He is God because no one could take His life from Him. He gave it up Himself.

9/22 - Coming Out for Christ

John 19:38-39: Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

These two "secret" disciples of Christ were willing to stand up and be counted with Him in His humiliation. The twelve disciples, on the other hand, had all deserted, denied or betrayed Him. We must be careful of arrogance, or of comparing ourselves with others.

9/23 - Faith to Follow but Not to Believe

John 20:1-2: Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

These had the faith to follow Jesus, but not the faith to believe Him when He said He would rise from the dead. Do we have the faith to believe as well as to follow?

9/24 - Powerful Words of Peace

John 20:19-20: On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Every one of the disciples had denied Jesus or deserted him. So his greeting of peace is very significant. He began with the assurance that there was no hostility. All was forgiven. The disciples were joyous because Christ was alive, but also joyous that their guilt was washed away.

9/25 - Unless I See for Myself

John 20:24-25: Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

Thomas thought that he could not believe without proof. But God desires faith from us. Jesus had told the disciples that He would rise from the dead. The other disciples told Thomas that they had seen Him alive. That should have been enough. It is easy to pick on Thomas, but how does our faith compare to

his?

9/26 - Seeing Is Believing

John 20:26-29: A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

A better blessing is pronounced on those of us who believe without having seen. Let us rejoice in our faith and in our hope to see face to face one day.

9/27 - So That You May Believe

John 20:30-31: Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The purpose this book is given here: that we would believe, and that we would have life. It should be our desire to share this message with others to produce this result in them.

9/28 - Forget the Fish

John 21:4-7: Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"

"No," they answered.

He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.

Peter forgot about the great catch of fish completely. His only desire was to be with the Lord. Our first concern should be the same every day.

9/29 - Loving Through Obedience

John 21:15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Jesus commanded Peter to show his love by his obedience.

9/30 - Testimony of a Witness

John 21:24 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

We have the testimony of the disciples as proof of the resurrection of Jesus. And the proof of their sincerity in that testimony is seen in the fact that all of them gave their lives for the risen Lord.

10/1 - From the Beginning of Time

1 John 1:1-2: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

The truth of Jesus Christ has existed from the beginning of time, but attested to by eye witnesses who were willing to die for their faith. In this way we have a sure testimony of who Christ is.

10/2 - What we Saw and Heard

1 John 1:3-4 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.

John's reasons for proclaiming what he had seen should be the same as ours: that we can bring others into the joy and fellowship of Jesus Christ.

10/3 - Purified by Blood

1 John 1:5-7 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

John said in previous verses that he was testifying about Christ so that others could have fellowship and joy in Him. Now John explains that those who walk in the light have this fellowship and joy, but also that they are purified by the blood of Christ. So now let us examine by this criteria whether we are in the light.

10/4 - Gospel in a Nutshell

1 John 1:8-10 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

Here is the whole gospel in a nutshell. We are all sinners, but if we confess our sin, God will purify and forgive. How could it be more simple?

10/5 - The Remedy to Sin

1 John 2:1-2: My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Much of 1 John seems to suggest that a true Christian believer ought to be sinless. Even here John is saying that the purpose of his letter is so that you will decide not to sin. Still, John understands that believers will sometimes sin, and that there is a remedy in Jesus Christ. Perfection should be our goal, but when we fall, God forgives.

10/6 - The Man Who Lies

1 John 2:3-4 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

Obedience is the mark of the believer.

10/7 - Walk Like a Messiah

1 John 2:5-6 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Obedience to God makes us like Christ. "What Would Jesus Do?" should be more than a witty saying. It should be our lifestyle.

10/8 - An Old Command that's New

1 John 2:7-8: Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

The command to love one another was given at the beginning of Christianity. But if we obey the command, there is a new aspect of it in us, as the light of God is born in us.

10/9 - How to Live in the Light

1 John 2:9-11: Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

Love is the test of the believer. Do you still hate your brother? Then you are in darkness. Love is the motivation to do right in all areas.

10/10 - A Letter to All Believers

1 John 2:12-14: I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you,

young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

All of the words of the book of 1 John are written to the believer in whom God is working. If that is the case, we should not take them lightly.

10/11 - Loving the World

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

The love of the world has a source that is opposite of the Spirit of God. We cannot have two masters. We must choose between love of God and love of the things of the world.

10/12 - Last Hour Antichrists

1 John 2:18-19: Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

Beware of those who claim to be believers, but are really distorting the Word of God and encouraging disobedience.

10/13 - An Anointing from the Holy One

1 John 2:20-21 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.

Once again we see that it is believers to whom this book is written (not unbelievers). And the message of the book to believers is that we need to continue to grow in our love for each other.

10/14 - Denying the Son of God

1 John 2:22-23: Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist--he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

This verse demonstrates the importance of understanding who Jesus is. John's statements here prove that we cannot come to the Father except through the Son.

10/15 - Clinging to What You Have Heard

1 John 2:24-25: See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also

will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us--even eternal life.

We are warned to persevere in our beliefs.

10/16 - Leading You Astray

1 John 2:26-27: I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him.

These believers already have the knowledge they need to believe, but the reminder that John gives them is also important: They are to remain in Christ.

10/17 - Unashamed at His Coming

1 John 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

If you were to stand before Jesus today, would you be ashamed of how you've been living?

10/18 - Love Lavished on Us

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

God is a stranger to those who live in darkness. For the same reason, they cannot comprehend those of us who are called by His name.

10/19 - Being Like Him

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

If we hope for His return, then it drives us to purity, because we know we must be ready.

10/20 - The Reason Jesus Appeared

1 John 3:7-8 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Jesus came to destroy the devil's work. If this is true, why should we think it strange that He commands His people to stop doing the devil's work.

10/21 - Replacing Sin with Love

1 John 3:9-10: No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he

cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

The main point John is trying to make in this book is that, in our lives, we should replace sin with love.

10/22 - Message from the Beginning

1 John 3:11-12: This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.

Sinful deeds inspire more sinful deeds. Believers should live in love.

10/23 - No Surprises

1 John 3:13-15: Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

The proof of our regeneration and rebirth is in our love for our brothers.

10/24 - How to Know True Love

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

In talking about love, we are not discussing warm fuzzy feelings. We are talking about our willingness to lay down our lives for our brothers.

10/25 - In Actions and in Truth

1 John 3:17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

We shouldn't just say we love ... we should demonstrate our love with our actions.

10/26 - Two Main Commands

1 John 3:21-23: Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

The command of Jesus is boiled down to two main points: believe in the name of the Son, and to love one another. If it boils down to that, then we should exercise both in our lives, and be careful not to exclude either.

10/27 - To Live is to Obey

1 John 3:24 Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

To live in Christ is to obey Christ.

10/28 - No Fear of Evil

1 John 4:4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them [spirits that are not from God], because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

We need never fear evil if we trust in Christ, for He is far greater. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." (Psalm 23:4)

10/29 - Recognizing Truth

1 John 4:6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

If we walk in the truth, we know and recognize the voice of Christ. (See John 10:1-14)

10/30 - Love One Another

1 John 4:7-8: Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

How could I add any comment to these verses except to repeat that we need to be active in loving one another.

10/31 - God Showing His Love

1 John 4:9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

If God has already given us His son, can you imagine Him holding back any gift that would be for our good?

11/1 - This Is Love

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

The very essence of pure love is shown in sacrificing one's life. If Jesus did this for us, shouldn't we be willing to give up our lives for each other.

11/2 - Proof of God

1 John 4:11-12: Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has

ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

We can't prove God by seeing Him, but we can prove God by having Him live in us.

11/3 - A Recipe for Christian Living

1 John 4:16 God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Here is a recipe for Christian living. If God is love, then we must live a life of love to have God live in us.

11/4 - Love Made Complete

1 John 4:17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.

If we are loving in this world, then we are like Him, and we will need have no fear of standing before God to be judged.

11/5 - The Beginning but Not the End

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Fear is the beginning of wisdom, but it is not the end. We approach God in fear at first, for we are sinners who deserve punishment. But if we obey Him, then we need have no fear of Him. Children should only need to fear a parent if they have been disobedient.

11/6 - Why We Love

1 John 4:19-21: We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Two reasons that we cannot love God and hate our brothers. First it is easier to love what we can see than what we can't. Second, we must love others in order to be lovingly obedient to God.

11/7 - How to Know

1 John 5:2-4: This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

If you have ever asked, "how do I love God?" or "how do I show love to God?" here is the answer.

11/8 - Overcoming the World

1 John 5:4-5: This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Faith is the only thing that saves us. Faith is the only thing that can overcome our trials. Faith boils down to simply trusting God.

11/9 - Three Witnesses

1 John 5:6-9: This is the one who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.

God Himself has given witness to the truth of Jesus Christ in three ways: First, the voice from heaven at the baptism of Jesus. Next was the death and resurrection of Jesus. And Finally, there is the testimony of the Spirit of God in our hearts.

11/10 - Calling God a Liar

1 John 5:10 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.

Since God has proclaimed Christ to be the Son of God at baptism, death, and in our hearts, the man who does not believe this must call God a liar.

11/11 - He Who Has Life

1 John 5:11-12: And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

The testimony of the identity of Christ is given for one purpose: that we might have eternal life. That is why it is so important that we believe that Jesus is the son of God.

11/12 - So You May Know

1 John 5:13: I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

The words written in the book of First John are written, not to unbelievers, but to believers so that they can have assurance of eternal life. It is important that we continue to read and study God's Word so that our faith can be reinforced and made strong.

11/13 - Continuing to Sin

1 John 5:18: We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

The true believer might accidentally fall into sin through temptation (like David with Bathsheba, or Peter denying Christ), but he will not intentionally continue to walk in such sin.

11/14 - A Polarized World

1 John 5:19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

There is a battle and the sides are polarized. If the world crucified Christ, we should not wonder if it persecutes His followers.

11/15 - Living In Him

1 John 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true--even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Living in Christ is more than just knowing Him, it is actually being in Him. Jesus said that "if a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." (John 15:5-6)

11/16 - Where is Your Heart?

1 John 5:21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

Our society produces many idols. Anything from money to television or video games becomes an idol when we crave such things more than God. Where is your heart? What do you love?

11/17 - Let the Wise Listen

Proverbs 1:1-6: The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young--let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance--for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise.

Solomon lists for us the reasons why we should pay attention to his wisdom.

11/18 - The Beginning of Knowledge

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

There is no wisdom which does not first start with a healthy fear of the Lord. Anything else is foolishness. If we fear God, we are much more likely to make wise choices.

11/19 - A Garland and a Chain

Proverbs 1:8 Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.

Listening to the teachings of Godly parents (or to the book of Proverbs) is to give oneself a bonus in life, which will be helpful in every step of our lives.

11/20 - Enticing Sinners

Proverbs 1:10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.

A strong warning against bowing to peer pressure. Just because others want you to follow them into sin, there is no reason that you have to follow.

11/21 - Set A Trap for Yourself

Proverbs 1:17-19: How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds! These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

To pursue dishonest gain is to set up a trap for oneself. You may gain riches, but you will lose your very life.

11/22 - Wisdom Calling

Proverbs 1:20-23: Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares . . . "How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you.

The voice of wisdom is also the voice of God. He pleads with people who refuse to respond to his message. But we must always remember that there is never a time when obeying God is not what's best for us.

11/23 - Wisdom Laughs

Proverbs 1:24-27: But since you rejected me [wisdom] when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you-- when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

We will reap what we sow, and if we live foolishly, disaster awaits.

11/24 - Too Late Now

Proverbs 1:28-31: "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me. Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD, since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

There is a day when it will be too late to respond to God's pleas.

11/25 - Without Fear of Harm

Proverbs 1:33 Whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.

We can always be persecuted in this world, but for eternity we will have safety and ease.

11/26 - The Pursuit of Wisdom

Proverbs 2:1-5: My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

Wisdom does not just come to a person, it must be pursued. The Bible, as guaranteed truth, is the best place to start.

11/27 - The Source of Wisdom

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

There is no wisdom apart from God. True wisdom has its source in God.

11/28 - A Shield for the Blameless

Proverbs 2:7-8 He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, He guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

If God does all these things for the faithful, it is the obvious course of wisdom to choose to be faithful.

11/29 - Gifts for the Faithful

Proverbs 2:9-11: Then you will understand what is right and just and fair--every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.

Being faithful to the Lord is what is being referred to here. If we are faithful, then we will obtain wisdom.

11/30 - Avoiding Traps

Proverbs 2:12-15: Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.

The path of the wicked is sometimes disguised or seductive. True wisdom will prevent falling into such traps.

12/1 - Shining Like the Sun

Proverbs 2:21-22: For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the unfaithful will be torn from it.

This verse refers to the land of the living, or the eternal dwelling. The day is coming when the righteous will shine like the sun but the wicked will not be found.

12/2 - Long Life and Prosperity

Proverbs 3:1-2: My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

Long life (eternal life) and prosperity (the riches of heaven) are the inheritance of all who follow the path of wisdom, even if our days on Earth are short.

12/3 - Double Rewards

Proverbs 3:3-4: Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

Love and faithfulness have their rewards in both, the present age, and in the age to come.

12/4 - Logic and Error

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

If we depend on our understanding, we fall into error, as did the people in the town of Nazareth who reasoned that Jesus couldn't be anything special because he had grown up among them. It is better to put our whole trust in God.

12/5 - In Every Way

Proverbs 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

In every decision we make, we should recognize God as our King, and be obedient. If we do so, then our choices will be wise.

12/6 - Fear the Lord and Shun Evil

Proverbs 3:7-8: Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Our own wisdom falls so short of God's, that it will only bring us to ruin. If we want to live in wisdom, we must fear the Lord.

12/7 - Freely Give, Freely Receive

Proverbs 3:9-10: Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

If we give freely to the Lord, He will give freely to us.

12/8 - A Loving Father

Proverbs 3:11-12: My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

Hebrews 12:7 quotes this verse, and then advises us to "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons." Not all hardship is discipline, but all hardship will help us to grow in Christ.

12/9- Better than Rubies

Proverbs 3:13-15: Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

The wise man will find eternal life, so there is nothing of value in this world to compare with wisdom (i.e. making right choices).

12/10 - Live Long and Prosper

Proverbs 3:16-18: Long life is in [Wisdom's] right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

Those who embrace wisdom will find more reward than can be imagined. When we consider our choices in struggles against temptation, we ought to remember this.

12/11 - Wisdom in Creation

Proverbs 3:19-20: By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place; by his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

We should notice two things from these verses. First is that the wisdom, understanding and knowledge of God are so much deeper than our own that God can do great things through them. Second, we should note how important these three characteristics are, that even God should need to employ them in creation. We are advised then to pursue them in our own lives.

12/12 - Sweet Peaceful Sleep

Proverbs 3:21-24: My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble; when you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Sound judgment and discernment make up the ability to make wise choices. If we live our lives by these, then we will never need to be afraid.

12/13 - Free From Fear

Proverbs 3:25-26: Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

Even though disaster sometimes hits believers, knowing that our eternity in the Lord will be secure means that there is nothing that we need to fear.

12/14 - Withholding Good

Proverbs 3:27-28: Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back later; I'll give it tomorrow"--when you now have it with you.

One can sin by what one fails to do, and not just by the things we do. When we see others in need, we should act.

12/15 - Envy the Wicked

Proverbs 3:29-32: Do not plot harm against your neighbor, who lives trustfully near you. Do not accuse a man for no reason-- when he has done you no harm. Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways, for the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence.

It is easy to envy the wicked, for they seem to prosper in their wickedness. But we must remember that we have not seen their final punishment on the day of judgment.

12/16 - A Curse or a Blessing

Proverbs 3:33 The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.

We can choose to live under a curse or under a blessing. Is the choice really so hard?

12/17 - - Grace to the Humble

Proverbs 3:34 He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.

This verse is quoted in James 4:6 as a promise of grace and help to the believer. We are then told in verse 10 to "humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

12/18 - Honor and Shame

Proverbs 3:35 The wise inherit honor, but fools he holds up to shame.

Right choices will always result eventually in honor, and wrong choices will always bring shame. The day is coming when all our deeds will be shouted from the rooftop, so let us be careful in every choice we make.

12/19 – Pay Attention

Proverbs 4:1-2: Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding. I give you sound learning, so do not forsake my teaching.

It is always in our best interest to list to one who is willing to instruct us with wisdom.

12/20 - A Star in the East

Matthew 2:9-11 The star they had seen in the east went ahead of [the Magi] until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Our desire should be that we can encounter Christ, and that He can bring us joy. And our response should also be a desire to give to Him.

12/21 - No Room in the Inn

Luke 2:4-7: So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

If such hard circumstances fell on baby Jesus and His family, we have no right to be angry with God if they come upon us.

12/22 - Good News of Great Joy

Luke 2:8-12 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

It is amazing, but typical, that the response of these shepherds to God was to be terrified, when the message of the angels was one of joy. Like the shepherds, we sinners should be terrified of the Living God, but He means only to show us His love.

12/23 - Peace On Earth Good Will to Man

Luke 2:13-14: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

That night in Bethelhem, God did something to bring glory to His name that would also mean salvation for men.

12/24 - Let's Go See

Luke 2:15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

The response of the shepherds to the message of the angels was belief and action. What is our response?

12/25 - Spreading the Word

Luke 2:16-20: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

When the shepherd found that the angels had spoken the truth, they spread the word. It should be our job also to let people know about God's faithfulness to us.

12/26 - From the Mouth of Father

Proverbs 4:3-4: When I was a boy in my father's house, still tender, and an only child of my mother, he taught me and said, "Lay hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands and you will live.

Though this is told here in order to warn us to listen to wisdom, it is important to note that wisdom can often be found in the mouths of parents--especially if those parents are godly.

12/27 - Don't Swerve

Proverbs 4:5-6: Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you.

Ultimate safety is found in God's wisdom, therefore it is of ultimate importance.

12/28 - Supreme Value

Proverbs 4:7-9: Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor."

Because wisdom leads to eternal life, there is nothing more important. If our lives are filled with right choices, we will shine like the sun on the day of judgment.

12/29 - Running Without Stumbling

Proverbs 4:10 Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble.

Following the course of wisdom will keep us from falling into other snares. This is another good reason that we should seek wisdom with all of our hearts.

12/30 - Making Someone Fall

Proverbs 4:14-16: Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way. For they cannot sleep till they do evil; they are robbed of slumber till they make someone fall.

This is a warning against peer pressure, and against envying the ways of the wicked. Their road leads to death, but that death is sometimes not so easy to foresee. We should not even think of compromise in this area, for to compromise is to turn away from the path of wisdom.

12/31 - The First Gleam of Dawn

Proverbs 4:18-19: The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

The more we walk in the light, the clearer our path will be. Those who compromise their wisdom will have trouble knowing where to go next, or why they fall.