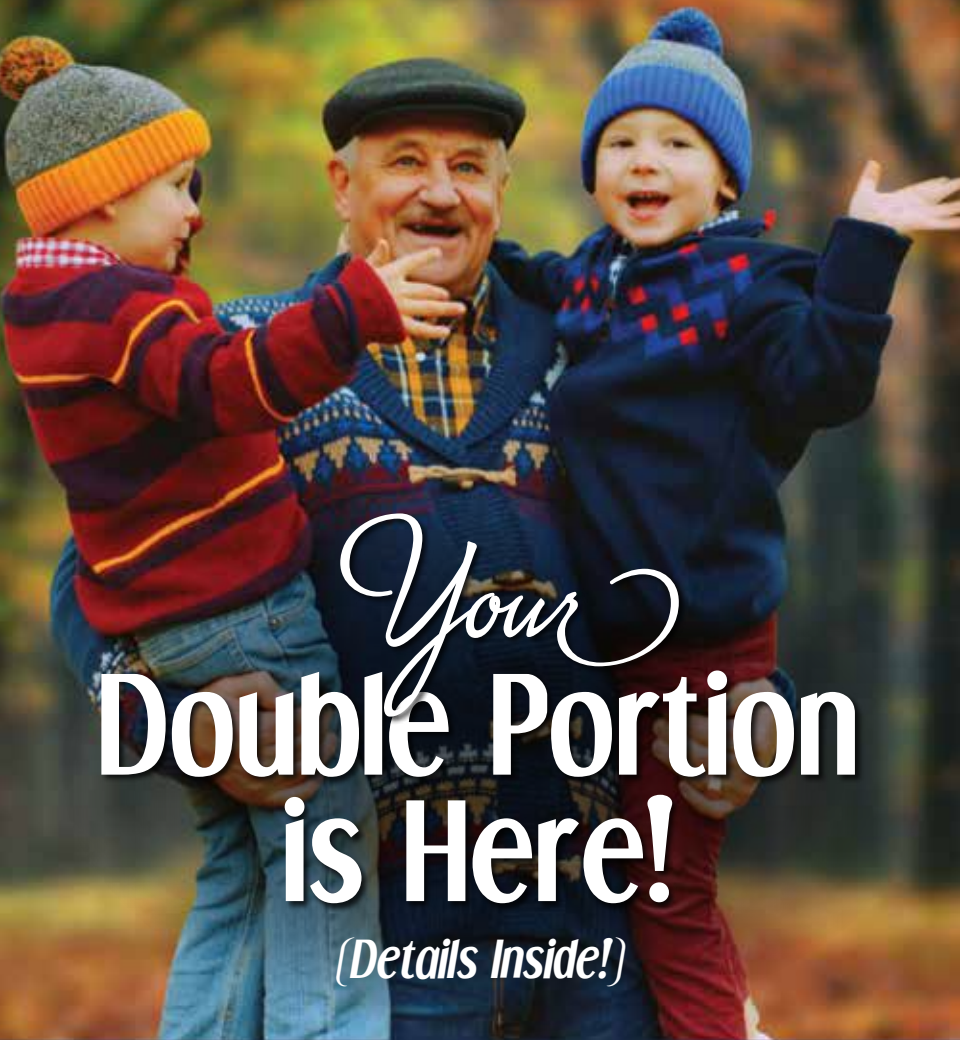


INSPIRATION

Blessed to Be a Blessing

OCTOBER 2019



Your Double Portion is Here!

(Details Inside!)

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THAN YOUR NOW

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CHANGING
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This Month's Theme Is



Your Double Portion Faith!

Your Father wants so much to pour out a blessing on you today! David Cerullo's article on **page 5** shares how to step out in faith and receive your double-portion blessing, no matter what your circumstances look like. And don't miss how you can receive David's life-changing book, *2X: Keys to a Double-Portion Life*, on **page 32**.

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Need a Word of Encouragement?

STRENGTHEN *your walk* with David Cerullo



Whether your faith seems to be running dry or you're struggling to find victory in some area of your life, David Cerullo's daily video teachings are for you! Learn how to walk in the favor of God. Discover the keys to receiving breakthroughs in your health, finances, or relationships. Find out how to start your new beginning with the Lord.



New zest for God's Word!

"David's way of preaching is so simple that it can be understood by everyone. By giving simple examples from the Bible, he helps us have new zest for God's Word. The videos helped me overcome my difficult situation." – Vinod

God's guidance every day!

"As a father, I want my family to receive God's guidance every day. David's video teachings are one of the ways we learn from God in our daily circumstances, and they help me a lot. I feel blessed every day." – Ramil



Great practical applications!

"David's videos help me in my daily devotions. They take only a few minutes to watch but are so educational, and I am blessed every time I watch them. They come with great practical applications." – Elsa

To watch David's video teachings TODAY, visit our social media pages and click "Like," or go to StrengthenYourWalk.org and subscribe to receive the free daily videos with a link in your inbox every day.



Step into Your Double Portion *Faith*



STRENGTHEN
your walk
with David Cerullo

Have you ever had an overwhelming expectancy of God's favor in your life? Like you were getting ready to experience His blessing and power in a whole new way?

I get that feeling quite often, especially at this anointed time of year. I believe there are clear signs in the heavenlies God wants to pour out His favor on His children and bless us beyond our imaginations. Because of Jesus, we have the ability to receive His supernatural harvest of blessings...

But to claim His promises, we must step into our Double Portion Faith!

This month is a special season on God's calendar – starting with the High Holy Days and climaxing with the Feast of Tabernacles. It's a season of double-portion blessings, reminding us that God will take care of us if we're obedient to His commandments and faithful in our tithes and special offerings.

Today I challenge you to take a journey beyond superficial faith and into a dimension of faith where the *impossible* becomes *possible*. There's an open window of Heaven that is

hovering above your life even now, but you must take advantage of the opportunity if you want to reap God's best today.

In faith, take this special time to allow your Father to reenergize your spiritual life and transform your health, finances, and relationships. Seek His face and Sow Seeds of faith, expectancy, and obedience for His Harvest of favor in your life.

Remember: God has given you the ability to believe Him for transformational things...so go ahead and believe for your blessing! Resolve to trust His Word... obey His instructions...and enter into His promises today!

HIS BLESSINGS...ARE YOURS!

In Exodus 23, God promises specific blessings to you if you will obey Him, celebrate His three appointed feasts (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles), and come before Him with a special offering. He will send an angel before you to guard you...be an enemy to your enemies...bless you with provision...remove sickness from you...prevent barrenness and miscarriages...give you a long life...and make you fruitful. And that is just the *beginning*.

Joel 2 lists seven *additional* double portion blessings the Lord wants to provide for His people during the Feast of Tabernacles.

- 1. A double portion.** *“He will cause the rain to come down for you – the **former** rain, **AND** the **latter** rain in the first month”* (v. 23). Although the periods of the former and latter rains were usually separated by many months, God wants to give you a **double** blessing during the Feast of Tabernacles, so you can immediately receive *both* of these outpourings of provision.
- 2. Financial prosperity.** *“The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil”* (v. 24).
- 3. Restoration.** *“I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten”* (v. 25).
- 4. Special miracles.** *“You shall... praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you”* (v. 26). *“I will show wonders”* (v. 30).
- 5. God's presence and favor.** *“You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel...My people shall never be put to shame”* (v. 27).
- 6. Blessings for your children.** *“Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...your young men shall see visions”* (v. 28).
- 7. Deliverance from harm or oppression.** *“Whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be delivered”* (v. 32).

What a fantastic list of promises!

With every PROMISE from God, there is the PROVISION to bring it to pass. Hallelujah.

But notice that the Lord does not require any more of you than a willingness to follow His instructions and obey His Word. His desire is for you to honor Him by recognizing what Jesus did for you on the cross and thanking Him for the sacrifice He paid for your salvation. If you'll take a step of faith by bringing Him a special offering to signify your *covenant* relationship... He will activate His *covenant* promises in your life!

THE KEY IS IN YOUR HAND

Remember how God provided for His people in the wilderness after they left Egypt? That's the very picture of how He provides for us today and how He continues to lead us to our Promised Land, a place *"flowing with milk and honey"* (Exodus 13:5).

Think of it as a powerful symbol of God's everlasting covenant. From slavery to freedom, from poverty to prosperity, from the lands of Never Enough and Barely Enough to the land of More Than Enough. Just as God brought His people into His supernatural abundance, He wants to do the same for YOU as well.

Just as God's appointed times were meant to be *"an everlasting ordinance"* (Exodus 12:14); His

Tabernacle promises have no expiration date! Whatever turnaround you need in your life – healing, deliverance, protection, a financial breakthrough, or a restored family relationship – the Feast of Tabernacles can spark your season of breakthroughs.

Remember...

You already have the KEY in your hand through faith and obedience! Don't stop short of the abundant life your Heavenly Father has planned for you. You don't have to remain in Egypt. Nor must you endlessly sojourn in the wilderness. When you take actions of faith and obedience, you can trust God to unlock an amazing season of miracles and blessings!

TIME FOR YOUR HARVEST

As a partner with this ministry, you can have full confidence that we're praying for God's favor for you and your family. We believe in the power of prayer, and we've seen the Lord give breakthroughs to countless partners who have aligned themselves with the vision of this ministry.

But we've also seen another spiritual principle at work in the pages of Scripture and in our own lives:

Our step of faith and obedience is critical if we want a release of God's extraordinary favor!

God wants you to have your double-portion blessing, but He's waiting for you to fulfill certain conditions first. Deuteronomy 16:16 says, "None shall appear before the LORD empty-handed." At these appointed times each year, the Israelites were to present their sacrifices and special offerings to the Lord from the seeds they had sown and the harvest He had given them.

Do you want God's BEST in your life? Do you want to see Him work miracles in your circumstances like never before? Then exercise your God-given faith and sow special offerings to the Lord during His appointed times. Begin now to prepare your heart and your special double-portion offering to the Lord.

I'm convinced that if you'll grab hold of faith and obey His Word, He can unleash a DOUBLE-PORTION breakthrough in your body... your relationship with the Lord... your marriage... your children... your emotions... and your finances.

Please know that I'm praying for you today, believing God to give you amazing breakthroughs during this very special season of blessing. But don't delay or procrastinate! Step out in faith and experience the Lord's tremendous favor. Claim your promises from His Word like never before, and remember: His blessings are meant for YOU!



God bless you!

David

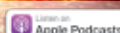
P.S. Don't forget to request your copy of my life-changing book on receiving your double-portion blessings from God (see **page 32** and the enclosed response form). This can be your month to receive extraordinary breakthroughs!

Don't miss my powerful, daily video series starting **October 7...**

TAKE IT BACK!

STRENGTHEN
your walk
with David Cerullo

strengthenyourwalk.org



Laying up Treasure in Heaven



Almost 90 years old, Marlyn discovered great joy and financial peace in providing for her loved ones while helping to fulfill the Great Commission.

Inspiration Ministries can help you and your family develop a plan for your financial future, just as we helped Marlyn, a thankful Inspiration Partner from South Dakota:

God has been so good to me and my family, and I wanted to do something special for Him. I decided there was no better way to give back some of God's money than to create a Charitable Gift Annuity with Inspiration Ministries. Even as I provide for my financial future and my family, I can continue to send out the Gospel worldwide.

I know I've been blessed to be a blessing, and I'm so glad I followed God's instructions on this. By planting this Charitable Gift Annuity Seed, I feel like I'm laying up treasures in Heaven!

Through a Charitable Gift Annuity, Inspiration Ministries can help you receive peace of mind and amazing benefits...

- Guaranteed payments that are partially tax-free
- Higher rates than most CDs
- Charitable income tax deductions
- Capital gains tax savings

Don't delay. Our financial planning specialists are waiting for your toll-free call, ready to help you discover what is best for you and your family. This comes without obligation from you!

1 (855) 702-7042
plannedgiving.inspiration.org

Continue winning souls even after you go home to be with the Lord!



Your Next
is better than
Your Now!

Did you know your NEXT is better than your NOW? The promise of your future overshadows the dead-end days of the present.

God is giving you the opportunity to water your own harvest – to nourish the seeds that will provide for your own miracle.

He's just waiting on you to pick up your heavy jug and run to the well.

Remember the story of Abraham's son Isaac and his wife Rebekah? What a great love story. In Genesis 24, we read how Abraham sent his most trusted servant back to his country to find

a wife for Isaac. The servant took ten camels with him packed with gold, jewels, and spices.

After reaching his destination, he made his camels kneel down outside the city by the well in the evening when the women came to draw water. He prayed to God that the woman who was right for Isaac would tell him *"drink and I will give your camels a drink also"* (v. 14) when he asked her to draw water for him. The miraculous was about to happen.

Before he was even done praying, Rebekah came to the well. Can you picture this scene? Here's this beautiful peasant girl. She had her

pitcher on her shoulder carrying the water. Her body wasn't adorned with jewels. Her dress was plain. Her hands were calloused. Her back hurt, and her arms were tired because of the menial, everyday task of drawing water from the well and watering the livestock.

This girl hated to see a new day come because she knew she had the same thing to look forward to day in, day out. But, you see, this day was going to be different. This was a day of breakthrough!

The servant saw this beautiful woman down by the well with a jug full of water. He stopped her and said "Could I have a drink of water?" And the Bible says she took the jug down off of her shoulder and began to pour some water into his hands to drink.

She then said something that he was waiting to hear. She said "Let me water your camels also."

She didn't have to pray or fast about it. She didn't have to say I'll think about it. She was given an opportunity to obtain a blessing by ministering to someone else's needs...and she seized it. In fact, she literally had to run back and forth from the well over and over to water those camels. She was on a mission and nothing was getting in the way of her receiving her blessing.

As soon as Rebekah poured out that last drop of water, the man of God took some gold earrings

from a pack on one of his camels and put them on her; he put gold bracelets on her arms. He put a gold ring in her nose.

The man of God adorned her from head to foot – and it changed her. This peasant girl, who worked so hard day after day, began to look different. She began to feel differently. She began to act differently. She was thrust into the transformation process that would lead to her becoming Isaac's bride...and the change was real.

Rebekah did what God asked her to do, and in the process, she watered her own harvest. Hallelujah!

This story is a great example of when God begins to bless His children – when He begins to bring us out of poverty and into prosperity...out of sin into salvation...out of bondage into freedom.

**We are completely transformed,
and just like Rebekah, our
NEXT is better than our NOW.**



James Payne is the founder and president of James Payne Ministries in Nashville, TN. Watch James on Inspiration TV

October 12 & 21 at 12 p.m. EST.

Meet this Month's



Blessings Are Streaming In!

Darlene experienced incredible blessings after she sowed a seed of faith into God's Kingdom.

Darlene had never thought much about the principle of Seedtime and Harvest until she happened to watch Inspiration Campmeeting one day. Even though she was experiencing a time of financial hardship, she felt moved by the Lord to Sow several Seeds to win Souls through Inspiration Ministries.

She was stunned by how quickly her life turned around.

"After I Sowed these Seeds, our breakthroughs started coming," Darlene says. "My sister lived through a serious infection from a hip replacement, and miracles are *still* happening for her. Then

people began to express new interest in financing my husband's project."

And the blessings continued...

"Next, I got a call back on a job I had inquired about," Darlene reports. "I *knew* when they called me I had the job, and they ended up paying me even more than I had requested. I knew this was a GOD thing happening in my life. I did not get *myself* this job – He did!"

Darlene praises the Lord for the Harvest of blessings triggered by the Seeds she Sowed during Campmeeting. "Our blessings are streaming in," she says, "and I feel like I am getting my life back!"

To take a step of faith and sow a Seed for Souls, use the enclosed response form or visit inspiration.org/souls.

Featured Partners

Everything Has Changed!

After she Sowed an Uncommon Financial Seed, Angela received an amazing breakthrough of God's favor.



After watching a TV special about God's Uncommon Harvests, Angela felt compelled by the Lord to Sow a financial Seed into the Good Ground of Inspiration Ministries. This was quite a step of faith amid her difficult financial situation:

Although \$100 was all the money I had left in the world, I sent it as my Seed. I desperately needed a supernatural breakthrough from God since I had no job, no income, no savings – no other hope left.

However, just a short time later, Angela sent Inspiration Ministries a wonderful testimony of God's favor in her life: **"Because I obediently planted a Seed, God blessed me greatly!"** She had received a new job, much-needed restoration among her family relationships, and the salvation of several unsaved loved ones!

"Everything in my life has changed," Angela wrote. **"God has given me favor I've never had before!"**

**What God has done for Darlene and Angela, He will do for YOU.
Our prayer ministers would love to agree with you in
prayer for the breakthrough you need.**

inspiration.org/prayer

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WHEN GOLIATH BECOMES YOUR GATEWAY



When that giant in your way seems too big to defeat...don't give up! He may be the gateway to your greatest triumph!

Remember the story in 1 Samuel 17:20–27 when Goliath taunted Israel's army? This belligerent giant turned out to be the gateway to David's victory and future success.

We are all in transition, moving from one level of grace to another level of grace. Change is a constant. And when you see a giant in your path, it's a sign you're about to move into another dimension. God is about to do something *amazing* in your life!

THE MENIAL AND THE MIGHTY

David's story is also a reminder to never overlook the menial duties of life, because God uses the

menial to lead us to the *mighty*.

David was sent to deliver food to his brothers on the battlefield, but this menial task was the process that led to his breakthrough.

Many of us want to bypass the *process* while we seek our *purpose*. But in order to arrive at your *promise*, you must go through the *process*. Going through the process gets you *prepared* for what God has gotten ready for you!

I meet many people who want to move into their destiny, not realizing that they must *develop* into their destiny. There usually are numerous things, menial things, that ultimately lead to “The Thing” God has purposed for us to do.

But if you don't commit to the process, you'll end up forfeiting the purpose.

David's brothers seemed to have a much more glorious position, for they were the ones on the battlefield to do the fighting. Yet David's willingness to humble himself and do the menial duties illustrates God's ability to take the *least likely* to do the *most mighty*.

FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS

If you're tempted to get impatient while attending to menial duties, remember that the Lord may be using your belittling circumstance to perfect your gifts, develop your talent, and refine your character. After a while, He is going to make all things work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

The Scriptures teach that if you stay faithful with the little things, God will make you ruler over much (Luke 16:10). But let's be honest: The transition process often is painful. And if we're not careful, we'll begin to murmur, complain, and grumble.

When you're standing at the gateway of your destiny, you need to remember the key prescribed by the psalmist in Psalm 100:4, "*Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,*

and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name." You see, thanksgiving and praise are the twin keys to your breakthrough, opening up the door to God's presence and your destiny.

Even if you're doing a job today that seems to lead to *nowhere*, remember that God is in the process of leading you to *somewhere*. Your present job may seem to define you as a *nobody*, but God is secretly using it to define you as a *somebody* who can be great in His Kingdom.

David didn't go to the battlefield to seek an opportunity or pursue fame and fortune. He went to the battlefield to obey his father and show himself faithful in service. What a great lesson for us. The task that seems so insignificant can be mightily used by God – not as a *tombstone*, but as a *stepping stone* to take us to another level of impact and fruitfulness.



Paul Adefarasin is a pastor, author, and broadcaster on Inspiration TV. Watch *House on the Rock* Sundays at 5 p.m. and

Thursdays at 9:30 p.m. EST.

Visit ini.tv for more information.

HOPE

Restored!



After watching Inspiration TV one evening, Niyi decided to boldly take a step of faith. Now, his whole life has changed...and he's never looked back!

Niyi watches Inspiration TV in Scotland, but was born and raised in Nigeria. He didn't have any family in Scotland, and he felt incredibly alone when he first moved there.

"I spent most of my spare time on the phone to my family and friends in Nigeria," Niyi says. "I especially missed my mother and girlfriend, and it was very difficult to be away from them."

As time passed, his mother become sick with leukemia and died, and Niyi was devastated. Around that same time, his six-year relationship with his girlfriend hit the rocks, causing him to feel even more alone.

"This was the most terrible time in my life, and I felt quite hopeless," Niyi recalls. "But thankfully I came across Inspiration TV about that same time, and the uplifting broadcasts helped to keep me going. Your programs brought me timely messages for what I was going through."

"The uplifting broadcasts helped to keep me going."

One night, Niyi heard how Sowing a financial Seed into God's Kingdom could be a key to releasing His supernatural breakthroughs. The speaker encouraged viewers that within 90 days of

Sowing their Seed, God could turn their situation around.

This was a new concept to Niyi, but he stepped out in faith and called Inspiration Ministries to pledge a \$1,000 seed. He also made a list of prayer requests assigned to his Seed, specifically asking God to lead him to a new job and a wife.

“One of your prayer ministers prayed with me for these requests when I made my pledge,” he says. “Before that, I had been searching for a new job for several months without success.”

The Lord intervened with amazing speed. “Just *two days* after I pledged my Seed, I received calls for two job interviews!” Niyi reports. “Within 90 days, I was hired for a great job, and the monthly salary was a \$1,000 more than my previous job.

But the best breakthrough was still to come...

“Soon after making my pledge,

I called a good friend in Nigeria one day to congratulate her on her upcoming marriage. She put her younger sister Folusho on the phone, and when I spoke with Folusho for the first time, something leapt in my spirit. The Lord had led me to this wonderful Nigerian woman who is now my wife!”

“Within 90 days of us both Sowing Seeds into God’s Kingdom, He miraculously brought us together.”

Niyi eventually learned that just *three days* before he made that phone call, Folusho had *also* Sown a financial Seed to the Lord, asking Him to provide a husband! He exclaims, “Within 90 days of us both Sowing Seeds into God’s Kingdom, He miraculously brought us together. Now we’re happily married and thrilled to partner with Inspiration Ministries in its powerful, worldwide ministry!”

Visit inspiration.org/hope-restored to watch a video of Niyi and Folusho’s inspiring story!

Do you need YOUR hope restored?

Then take a step of faith, like Niyi and Folusho did – contact our prayer ministers and pray the Prayer of Agreement with them for the breakthroughs you need!

inspiration.org/prayer

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Let Go of the Cookies!

As difficult as forgiveness can be, it's absolutely essential if you want a fresh start in your walk with the Lord.

David prayed, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any **hurtful way** in me” (Psalm 139:23-24). Make no mistake about it: Unforgiveness is a “*hurtful way*” that will imprison you with torment unless you deal with it.

Don't just *assume* you've forgiven people who have hurt you. You may need to spend some time asking God to search your heart. If you're still *talking about* the offense months or even years after it occurred, it's likely that you still have some forgiving to do. Friend, take time today to allow the Lord to search your heart and remove any “*hurtful way*” or unforgiveness

that is keeping you imprisoned to your past.

If you're still struggling with letting go, perhaps this story will help...

A mother baked some chocolate chip cookies for her young son. “Tommy,” she told him, “I'm putting the cookies in the cookie jar. You're not allowed to eat any now, but you can have some after dinner.”

Of course, Tommy couldn't wait for this special treat. While his mom was in the other room, Tommy opened the cookie jar and reached in to grab a few big cookies. However, when he tried to remove his hand, he discovered that it was stuck.

Tommy began to cry and then screamed to his mom, “HELP! I’M TRAPPED!”

When Tommy’s mom ran into the room, she saw that his hand was stuck, and he was sobbing hysterically. She decided the only option was to break open the cookie jar, so he could get his hand out.

When she broke the jar, Tommy’s mom was shocked to discover he was still clutching three cookies in his little hand. “Tommy, why didn’t you *let go* of the cookies?!” she asked in amazement.

“But I *wanted* them!” Tommy replied as he broke into tears again.

If you find yourself stuck and in some kind of bondage to the enemy today, you may need to let go of some “cookies” you’ve held on to. God wants to set you free from anything that hinders you from fulfilling His highest purposes – but you need to *let go*.

Like Tommy, you may be tempted to protest that the cookies you’re grasping are something desirable and *good* – not something negative. But remember that *anything* is negative if it keeps us from God’s *best* for our life. Paul says, “*Whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ*” (Philippians 3:7).

Today God offers you a fresh start, but you must let go of

anything holding you back from your spiritual freedom in Jesus Christ. Once your surrender is complete, you’ll be amazed by how quickly your new beginning comes into view and God gives you long-awaited breakthroughs with prayer.

So go ahead and thank God for His plan to set you free. Since He has so graciously forgiven you, you are now able to forgive those who have caused you pain. Take time to go through the list of those who have hurt you and forgive them one by one. As you do, repent of any anger, bitterness, or desire for revenge that may still be in your heart.

Today and in the days ahead, when the enemy tries to remind you of these past hurts, remind *him* that you have chosen to forgive these people as God has forgiven you. With His amazing peace in your heart, you’ll be able to stand in complete victory in Jesus’ name!



Jim Buchan is the Director of Partner Communications at Inspiration Ministries.



Ready to GO DEEPER?

You probably know the story. Some fishermen had a dismal night and “*caught nothing*” until they heeded Jesus’ instruction, “*Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch*” (Luke 5:4-5). Everything changed when they obeyed Jesus’ instruction to GO DEEPER!

When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking (v. 6).

Thanks to YOUR faithful Seeds for Souls, Inspiration Ministries is experiencing a miracle catch like this story in Luke 5. Every...

- 1** **DAY...** more than 43,000 people are presented with the Gospel through our outreaches.
- MONTH...** more than 150,000 people make a decision for Christ through our evangelistic outreaches.
- YEAR...** already more than 2 MILLION people have declared Jesus as their Savior through our outreaches this year. A few years ago, we believed God to fill large stadiums with the number of people getting saved, but this year our prayer is to reach the equivalent of a large city!

By becoming an ***Inspiration Ministries Monthly Partner***, you become a “*fisher of men*” (v. 10), winning souls to Christ each month.

**This fruit is credited to YOUR
account in Heaven!**

Call one of the numbers below or visit inspiration.org/mmp to find out more about this convenient way to help fulfill the Great Commission by *automatically* partnering with Inspiration Ministries on a monthly basis.

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The people aboard the ship had every reason to be afraid. They were being battered by furious winds, and dangerous waves bashed against the boat. The desperate conditions continued day after day with no end in sight.

Struggling to survive, many became discouraged and were ready to give up, even Paul's traveling companion Luke. It seemed there was no hope that they would be saved.

In the midst of this crisis, Paul remained calm. He urged the passengers to "take heart," promising that "there will be no loss of life" (v. 22). He was so confident because an angel had appeared to him and told him not to be afraid, and "God has granted you all those who sail with you" (v. 24).

Paul absolutely believed this promise and trusted in God to deliver them. He declared his belief that "it will be just as it was told me" (v. 25). They heeded Paul's directions and were saved.

We may go through many types of storms in our lives. Like the men on that ship, we can be tempted to give up or give in to fear. These are moments to remember God's promises, to renew our faith in Him, to call on Him to express our concerns and fears, and to be confident in Him, whatever the circumstances.

Right now, no matter what you are going through, have faith in God! Trust Him!

A tempestuous head wind arose... when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

Acts 27:14, 20 NKJV

PRAYER:

Father, give me peace in the midst of every situation I face. I seek Your help and protection. I trust in You. In Jesus' name, amen.

The heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes.

Acts 28:27 NASB

As Paul spoke to leading Jews in Rome, some were persuaded by his message. But “*others would not believe*” (v. 24). In his comments, Paul gave them a parting word, quoting from the prophet Isaiah. These were important insights that apply to anyone who fails to grasp God’s message.

Isaiah provided a vivid description of people who had an *opportunity* to receive but *refused* to listen. Isaiah said that their heart “*has become dull*” (v. 27). The Greek word here means to be thick or fat. It was a word of symbolic importance. These hearts were *burdened* and *preoccupied* with other things.

Isaiah also said that this people “*scarcely hear.*” The Bible uses a Greek word that means heavy or with difficulty. In truth, *heavy* ears cannot hear, and *closed* eyes cannot see. And *burdened* hearts cannot receive.

All of us, even mature believers, can find it difficult to hear from God when many things are on our minds and when our thoughts are *cluttered* with the things of the world. How easily habits are formed that block the flow of God’s Spirit in our lives.

Remember, if you want to receive from God, you need to have *open* eyes that are ready to see and ears that are ready to *hear*. Don’t allow worldly cares to weigh you down. Ask God to help you eliminate things that keep you from having an intimate relationship with Him.

PRAYER:

Father, help me have eyes that are ready to see what You want me to see. Help me to be sensitive to Your Spirit. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Nothing but a Slave

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 1

How did Paul define himself? He had never been to Rome and did not know most of these people. When writing to believers in Rome, he had a perfect opportunity, so he chose to define himself as a *slave* of Jesus Christ.

In Greek, this letter opens with two words: *Paulos doulos*. Simply, “Paul, a bondservant.” Or, more accurately, “Paul, a slave.” He used words that defined who he was and that were an important key to the Gospel.

These concepts were familiar to everyone in Rome, for this city and society were *dominated* by slaves. As Roman rule expanded, the number of slaves increased.

Paul was stating in unmistakable terms that he was subject to Jesus and had submitted his personal will to Him! This attitude defined his life and his ministry.

These opening words of the letter set an important tone for who Paul was. Through his example, he was underscoring an attitude that all believers should seek to adopt.

Jesus also taught this principle, telling His disciples that people in the world seek to enhance their reputation and “*exercise authority*.” But greatness in the kingdom of God requires the attitude of a servant. Those who wish to be first must seek to serve others (Matthew 20:25-27).

Paul’s words are powerful reminders that all of us are called to be servants. Throughout our lives, we should seek to serve God and others and be committed to follow His call.

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.

Romans 1:1 NKJV

PRAYER:

Father, I declare that Jesus is my Lord. I submit my life to You. Help me to serve You and please You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

The Power of God

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 1

I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, open the eyes of those who are spiritually blind. Bring revival. Pour out Your Spirit on my life and people in my country. In Jesus' name, amen.

A “renegade from the faith...very obnoxious...spiritually...dangerous” are words James B. Finley used to describe himself as a young man. He was born to godly parents in 1781 in North Carolina, where his father was a missionary. But in his youth, he questioned his faith and “entered fully and freely into all parties of pleasure.”

When he was twenty, he was curious and attended the camp meeting in Cane Ridge, Kentucky. Although amazed to see thousands of people worshiping God, he stayed aloof, feeling it was just “religious enthusiasm.”

With a “proud and hard” heart, he fled to a nearby tavern, but found no escape. Still struggling, he returned to the camp meeting.

The next morning he left for home, feeling like “a ruined man.” He and a companion traveled silently. When they reached a nearby town, “like long-pent-up waters...the fountains of my soul were broken up.” His eyes streamed with “bitter tears.” He and his friend spent the night weeping.

Still crying the next morning, a stranger knelt beside him. Together they prayed and sang until Finley felt the guilt of sin lift. It was like “heaven shone full upon my soul.” His life was changed forever.

Today, the world is full of skeptics and people who doubt God and resist the work of the Spirit. Pray that His power will change them and that their eyes will be opened. Be ready to share the Gospel with all who are seeking truth.

Sins of our Daily Lives

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 1

Paul warned the Romans about the tragic consequences of sexual immorality. He wrote about “*vile passions*” and things that were “*not fitting*,” “*shameful*” actions that resulted in “*a debased mind*” (vs. 26-28). These are serious sins that are offensive to God and demonstrate that people have abandoned His laws.

It is important to read this passage in context. This kind of serious immorality clearly is evil, but there are other, less dramatic sins that are just as bad in God’s sight.

These sins include “*greed, hate, envy... quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip*,” being “*proud and boastful*,” disobedience, failing to keep promises, heartlessness, and acting without mercy (vs. 29-31 NLT).

These are the kinds of attitudes and actions we see all around us in our daily lives that may not seem so bad. Even Christians can find themselves engaging in these kinds of activities without realizing their consequences or how much they can tarnish our testimony.

Today be on guard against these kinds of *practical* sins. People all around you may engage in deceit or gossip. You may be tempted to be boastful, become envious, or withhold forgiveness or mercy. But make sure to take Paul’s warning seriously. In God’s sight, sin is sin.

Ask God for His forgiveness for *any* kind of sin. Seek His help to live purely and cleanly, so others can see how Christ has changed your life.

God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.

Romans 1:28 NKJV

PRAYER:

Father, examine my heart. Show me any attitudes that are displeasing to You. Forgive me and make me clean in Your sight. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Freedom From Guilt

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 4

God, Who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, Who... was raised to secure our justification (our acquittal), [making our account balance and absolving us from all guilt before God].

Romans 4:24-25 AMPC

PRAYER:

Father, I confess these sins: _____. I accept Your forgiveness. Thank You that I am free and no longer must carry the burden of guilt. In Jesus' name, amen.

After Adam and Eve sinned, they realized that their relationship with God had changed. They were no longer living in harmony with Him. When He approached, they did not welcome His presence. Instead, they *"hid themselves"* (Genesis 3:8). There was a painful separation, a kind of wall between them and God.

This was the first human experience of guilt. Since that day, guilt has become a common condition for all of us.

Many factors can trigger guilt. We might have disobeyed God or said or done things that violated His Word. This kind of guilt can haunt our minds and hearts. Even Christians can find it difficult to overcome guilt.

God provided a way for us to overcome these guilty feelings. Paul wrote that Jesus *"was betrayed and put to death because of our misdeeds"* (Romans 4:25 AMPC). So because of His death and resurrection, we can be forgiven and escape the hold guilt has on our hearts and minds.

The Bible promises, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9 NKJV). If we acknowledge our sins, we can be free and forgiven!

Are you carrying any guilt or other burdens resulting from sin in your life? Confess any sins to God, and then accept His forgiveness. Jesus died and rose again, so you could be free and live in harmony with God.

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 5

What does it mean to be “helpless”? Paul used a Greek word that means not having any strength or abilities, feeling totally *overwhelmed*, powerless, and weak. This was our condition when Jesus came into this world. But He came to save *helpless* people who cannot save themselves.

Throughout our lives, we *remain* helpless. How easily we can trust in our own resources and abilities. But the experiences of life help us remember that conditions can change in the blink of an eye.

The Bible reminds us that we are strongest when we *completely* depend upon God. As Paul wrote, “*When I am weak, then I am strong*” (2 Corinthians 12:10). When we realize that we are helpless in ourselves, when we trust in Him for everything, and when we draw on His power and unlimited resources, then are we made strong.

How can we begin to understand a love like this? It is completely contrary to human nature. For God reached out to us even when we did not deserve His help.

Today, remember that “*by grace you have been saved through faith*”; this is God’s free gift (Ephesians 2:8). His “*grace is sufficient*” for His “*power is perfected in weakness*” (2 Corinthians 12:9 NASB). You “*can do all things through Him who strengthens [you]*” (Philippians 4:13).

Trust in Him. Have faith. Declare His promises to be true in your life. Depend on Him, and draw on His strength.

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Romans 5:6 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, thank You for being faithful and providing for all my needs. Thank You for Your abundance and blessings. I will trust in You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Clean and Pure

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: LEVITICUS 23

The day of atonement...shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls...it is a day...to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God.

Leviticus 23:27-28 NASB

Clean. Spotless. Pure. These are more than just words for high priests. Once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the sacred duty of the Jewish High Priest was to enter the Holy of Holies – the presence of Almighty God – all alone.

This is part of one of three “*appointed times*” instituted by God Himself (v. 2, 4). On these days, there were to be holy convocations. Special offerings were to be made. Specifically, the Day of Atonement was to be set aside for prayer, soul searching, confession, and repentance. It was so serious that no one could work or eat.

After the high priest made a sacrifice to atone for himself and other priests, he sacrificed a goat as a sin offering for the people. Then another goat was sent into the wilderness, symbolically taking with it the sins of the people.

Through this symbolism, we are reminded of all that Jesus has done for us. He sacrificed Himself that we might be forgiven. Jesus also became our high priest. Like the scapegoat, He took our sins away “*as far as the east is from the west*” (Psalm 103:12).

The Day of Atonement, celebrated beginning at sundown today, still has special meaning. Remember, this is one of “*the Lord’s appointed times*.” Humble yourself before Him. Seek to be clean in His sight. Receive His forgiveness, freedom, and victory!

PRAYER:

Father, I humble myself before You. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for me. I confess my sins and accept Your forgiveness. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Questions

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 6

Paul began Romans 6 with a series of questions. This was no accident. In fact, his entire letter to the Romans is filled with questions. (In the NKJV, Romans has 75 questions!)

Paul knew the impact questions could have. Inserting a question changes the flow of the writing and makes the words come alive for us. Whenever we read a question, we should feel *challenged*. We are being encouraged to *stop* and *think*, to consider the issues and how we might respond.

We see the impact of questions throughout Paul's ministry. For example, questions were central to what he wrote about the Lord's Supper: "*Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this?*" (1 Corinthians 11:22). Each question provides an opportunity for readers to answer Paul for themselves and think about the issues he discusses.

Jesus frequently used questions. The Old Testament, too, is filled with questions, presenting opportunities for us to think about what has been said. Although not a question, the word "Selah" is used over 70 times in the book of Psalms, encouraging us to pause and reflect.

As you read the Bible, remember to *think* about the questions asked. How would you respond? What is the deeper meaning for you?

*What shall we say then?
Shall we continue in
sin that grace may
abound?...Do you not
know that as many of
us as were baptized into
Christ Jesus were bap-
tized into His death?*

Roman 6:1-3 NKJV

PRAYER:

Father, help me be sensitive to the questions You ask me. Teach me. Help me mature as a believer. In Jesus' name, amen.

The Old Self

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 6

We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Roman 6:6 ESV

PRAYER:

Father, I desire to walk in newness of life. Help me embrace the complete change that has taken place because of Jesus. In His name, amen.

What happens when we are born again? We don't just become better people. Paul explained the change this way: Our *"old self was crucified."* It was put to death. Through Jesus we have become new creatures.

This truth can be hard to understand. We still think in old ways sometimes. These are reasons Paul stressed the *analogy of death* for the transformation to be complete: *"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death."* This is necessary that we *"might walk in newness of life"* (v. 4). In fact, we are *new creatures* in Christ.

The Bible encourages us to approach life in new ways, to realize why God gave us the Holy Spirit, to help us think in new ways, and to have power we don't have in ourselves.

The *"old self"* thinks about the things of this world – our reputations and pleasures, our feelings and interests. But everything changes when we realize that *"as far as this world is concerned, you are already dead, and your true life is a hidden one in Christ"* (Colossians 3:3 Phillips).

Therefore we are to give our hearts *"to the heavenly things, not to the passing things of earth"* (Colossians 3:2 Phillips). We are to set our minds on things above.

Today, ask God to give you a deeper revelation of this new life. Truly walk in the Spirit, and don't be controlled by your old self.

Blessed Redeemer

FRIDAY

October

11

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: LUKE 23

Avis Burgeson avoided the limelight. Encouraged by her grandmother, she began writing poems when she was just ten. Born in Chicago on this day in 1895, she married Ernest Christiansen who later became a vice president of Moody Bible Institute. Avis kept writing throughout her lifetime. Before her death in 1985, she had written many hymns and published two books of poetry.

One day while listening to a sermon on the subject of Christ's atonement entitled "Blessed Redeemer," Harry Dixon Loes, a well-known hymn writer, was inspired to compose a tune that felt appropriate. But the tune needed words.

He turned to Avis, sending her the melody with the suggested title, asking her to write lyrics. She accepted the challenge, and the resulting hymn proved a great blessing. Worshipers have been moved by the hymn's heart-felt sincerity since then.

Avis described the scene as Jesus walked up Calvary. Ahead was the horror of the cross that He faced for sinners, "that He might save them from endless loss."

Amazingly, even as He was dying, Jesus prayed, "Father forgive them!" Avis sensed He was motivated by love. She could only respond, "Oh, how I love Him, Savior and Friend, how can my praises ever find end!"

For her this was personal. Jesus was her "Blessèd Redeemer! Precious Redeemer!" He wasn't just dying for sinners in general. He was "dying for me!"

Yes, He was dying for you, too!

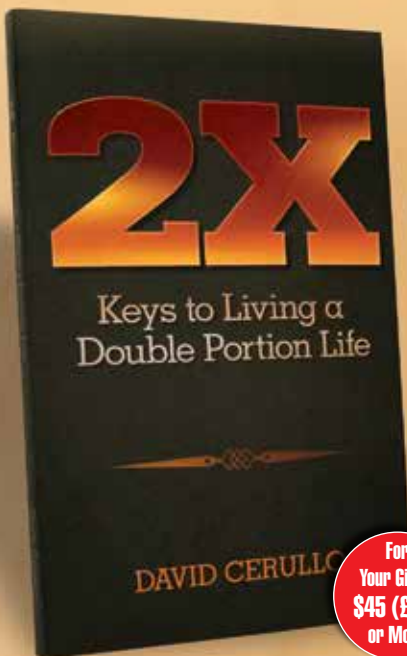
When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Luke 23:33 KJV

PRAYER:

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me. I am grateful for all that You have done. I praise You. I love You! In Your name, amen.

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Power of Suggestion

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 7

But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.

Romans 7:8 NKJV

The power of suggestion is an ingrained part of human nature. One recent study discovered how suggestions can influence what people do, what they remember, and even what products they prefer.

The Bible confirms this pattern, showing the powerful way our minds influence our actions. When we hear an idea, that thought can become fixed in our minds. This domination can distract us and prevent us from thinking about other things.

This is a reason so much attention is given to advertising and promotion, which seek to plant thoughts in our minds by encouraging us to think about specific products and attitudes.

As the Bible suggests, the Law has this kind of impact. In fact, the Law gives us ideas of what *not* to do. As a result, ideas become planted in our minds. When the Law says, “Do not covet,” we became aware of coveting, and begin thinking about it. When the Law says, “Do not lie,” we immediately started thinking about lying. And so forth.

Paul says we must appreciate how the Law makes us aware of our sinful nature. But rather than focusing on the things we are not to do, we now are to live by grace through the Spirit.

In your life, seek to move beyond anything that gives you an impulse to sin. Follow the leading of the Spirit. Live in accordance with God's Word.

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Rediscovering Tabernacles

SUNDAY

October

13

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: NEHEMIAH 8

During the time of Nehemiah, the Jews discovered they had not been observing the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths). They realized why it was an important celebration.

It was instituted by God as one of His “appointed times” (Leviticus 23:2), a yearly opportunity to *remember* what He had done for them. It was a reminder not to trust in earthly possessions, but to make it a priority to seek God and His kingdom.

During this feast they were to build temporary dwellings and live in them for seven days, followed by a solemn assembly. They also were to give to God from the harvest He had given to them! No one was to appear before Him empty handed. They were to bring offerings *beyond* their normal tithes and offerings. As they honored God with their gifts, He promised to bless them in *special* ways.

The Feast of Tabernacles celebration begins tonight at sundown. It presents powerful principles of God promising blessings to those who humble themselves before Him, remember all that He has done, and bring Him offerings from His bountiful blessings.

Don't let the Feast of Tabernacles pass you by. Stop and think about all that God has done for you! Renew your commitment to seek Him first. Depend on Him to meet your needs and solve your problems. And don't appear before Him empty handed. Make offerings from your time, talent, and treasure. Invest your resources in His Kingdom.

They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.

Nehemiah 8:14 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, thank You for all You have done for me. I seek first Your Kingdom and commit my life to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Reaching the Lost

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 9

I tell the truth...my conscience also bearing me witness...I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.

Romans 9:1-3 NKJV

Paul's feelings were so strong that he was not sure others would believe him. So he assured them that he was telling the truth, that he was not lying, that his conscience bore witness in the Spirit, and that he had "great sorrow and continual grief" in his heart. What was so important? The Jews' response to the Gospel.

He even was willing to exchange his salvation for theirs. If it were possible, he would sacrifice himself on behalf of the Jews and himself be cursed by God in their stead. That was the degree of his passion.

Yes, Paul cared deeply about the Jews, "his" people. But, in fact, he also was demonstrating his commitment to God and His kingdom. He knew that the Gospel message was true, and he realized the implications for those who rejected salvation. Paul had dedicated his life and everything he had to reach people with the Gospel.

Today, God looks for people with that same kind of dedication to and that same passion for the Gospel. He looks for people whose hearts break at the thought of others going to hell without Jesus, who are willing to sacrifice that others might be saved.

Right now, ask God to search your heart and give you a passion to reach the lost. Dedicate your resources to spread the Gospel. Make it your prayer to seek Him first.

PRAYER:

Father, these are people who need salvation: _____ . I commit them to You. Open their eyes. Use me to impact others. In Jesus' name, amen.

Filled with a Glad Heart

TUESDAY

October

15

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: PROVERBS 15

A recent study revealed that pessimists are much more likely to develop depression. One of the conclusions was that some people “react to distressing life events by experiencing emotions such as anger, anxiety, and sadness.” And people with a pessimistic view of life are more likely to be *discouraged* and be filled with dark emotions.

The Bible tells us that when we are depressed, everything can seem evil. But when our hearts are filled with joy and gladness, depression lifts. In fact, if we have glad hearts, all life can be “*a continual feast.*” This implies that we experience God’s presence in everything we do. There is no need for anxiety, fear, or doubt, but God can give us His joy in every situation.

Right now, do you feel pessimistic about the future? About challenges you face? Are you plagued with doubts? Remember that His Word promises that doubt can lead to a life filled with “*anxious thoughts and foreboding.*”

The Bible tells us that God wants to deliver you from doubt, anxiety, pessimism, and depression. If you trust Him your life can be a “*continual feast,*” and He can fill your heart with gladness.

Don’t let your heart be anxious. Trust in God. Let Him take away your fears and doubts and replace them with hope. Draw on the presence of His Spirit to give you His joy and peace.

All the days of the desponding and afflicted are made evil [by anxious thoughts and foreboding], but he who has a glad heart has a continual feast [regardless of circumstances].

Proverbs 15:15 AMPC

PRAYER:

Father, fill me with Your joy. Take away my fears and doubts. I trust in You for today’s challenges and for the future. In Jesus’ name, amen.

The Harvest Fields

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: JOHN 4

Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

John 4:35 NASB

Jews and Samaritans were not just hostile neighbors. They were outright enemies. On occasion, Samaritans were known to kidnap Jews traveling through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem, even selling some into slavery.

Jesus saw a harvest field instead of hostilities when looking at Samaritans. He was willing to talk with them, even a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. He found people hungry for the Gospel.

When the disciples returned from looking for food, they could not understand why He would talk with such people. But Jesus was not worried about how other people reacted. He focused on doing the will of the Father to reach people who needed salvation.

When the disciples questioned Him, Jesus told them to *open their eyes*. They needed to let God free them of their prejudices, so they could see the world in a new way. They needed to be filled with compassion instead of judgment.

Today, the fields still are white and ready for harvest. Where are these fields? They are all around us – people we know, circumstances in which we are comfortable, our homes, communities, and place of employment. But these fields also include people from different cultures, people with whom we have had differences, strangers, people we might even consider enemies.

Ask God to let His Spirit help you see the world in a new light. Let Him show you the people you can touch. Those people are *your* harvest fields.

PRAYER:

Father, open my eyes to see the world as You do. Give me compassion for the lost. Use me to reach them with the Gospel. In Jesus' name, amen.

Are You Disappointed?

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: MARK 14

In a pivotal moment of the American Revolutionary War, British forces surrendered to the colonial army in Saratoga, New York, on this day in 1777. In many ways, the hero of this battle was Benedict Arnold, an accomplished soldier in the war.

Arnold would later make some questionable decisions and developed many enemies. Feeling overlooked and taken for granted, he eventually decided to switch sides. Yet after he defected, he found himself an outcast among the British as well and never received the rewards he sought.

Arnold's actions remind us of Judas Iscariot. He earlier had left everything to follow Jesus and actually had become an important disciple as the man who kept the money.

Yet, like Arnold, Judas faced disappointment and concluded that his commitment to Jesus was futile. Feeling frustrated and taken for granted, he negotiated a deal with Jesus' enemies and betrayed Him for 30 pieces of silver.

But Judas, like Arnold, discovered that he did not get what he expected from his betrayal. By giving in to temptation, disappointment, and frustration, he lost everything.

You may experience discouragement and things you do not understand. You may feel overwhelmed or underappreciated. But don't allow Satan to tempt you with thoughts of giving up or giving in to your emotions. Instead, renew your commitment to God and His kingdom. Call on Jesus. Allow Him to fill you with hope and to give you purpose and meaning.

Judas Iscariot...went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them...he sought an opportunity to betray him.

Mark 14:10-11 ESV

PRAYER:

Father, I commit my life to You. Take away my discouragement and doubt and give me confidence in You. I trust in You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Impossible to Fail

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 9

It is not as though the word of God has failed.

Romans 9:6 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, forgive me for trusting in other people and things. Help me to trust in You. Thank You that Your Word always is true. In Jesus' name, amen.

The rejection of the Gospel by the Jews particularly bothered Paul. As a faithful Jew himself, he knew that his people had been given the covenants, the Law, and God's promises. God had sent prophets to warn and teach them. Yet they turned their back on Him and all that He had done for them.

But Paul wanted the Romans to know that God had not failed. Regardless of the actions of other people, His Word is *always* true. He is *always* completely faithful.

Paul cited numerous examples, showing how God's principles always have proven to be true. Over and over again, He always kept His Word and fulfilled His promises.

Paul also taught that all people are flawed, both Jews and Gentiles. Yet God always remains sovereign. We always can count on Him and His Word.

David was another man who realized that people may fail and not live up to our expectations. Even our closest friends may break their promises and disappoint us. Even those human beings we consider the *best* can fall short.

But David knew that God is different. His Word is *sure* and "*settled*" forever in heaven (Psalm 119:89). In fact, His law is "*perfect*" (Psalm 19:7).

Today, make sure that you place your hope and faith in God's Word. Teach it to your family. Meditate on it. Put it into practice. You can depend upon Him. Declare His promises to be true in your life.

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: JOHN 7

Many Judeans looked down at people from Galilee. They had felt a superiority since the time of Joshua, when areas of Galilee remained under the influence of native people.

Later, when the Jewish population went into exile, the influence of non-Jews intensified. At times, the Galilean area had a different political structure. Judeans even felt Galileans had an inferior accent.

Jesus faced these kinds of prejudices when He came to Jerusalem because He was from Galilee. Some received His message, concluding that He was “*the Prophet*” (v. 40). But others rejected Him because He came from Galilee.

When the chief priests and Pharisees asked their officers why they had not brought Jesus to them, they responded, “*Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks*” (v. 46).

But the religious leaders wondered if these officers had been “*led astray*” (v. 47). To them, Jesus could not possibly be the Messiah! Demonstrating prejudice, these leaders claimed that the crowd was “*accursed*” (v. 49) and could not possibly recognize God’s law.

It can be easy to criticize these leaders. But even in our time, it is possible to have these types of prejudices.

Search your heart and mind. Do you have biases and prejudices that prevent *you* from hearing from God? Are you open to the movement of His Spirit, or blinded by your assumptions?

Ask God to speak to you afresh and teach you new things.

Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?...You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.

John 7:41, 52 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I commit my life to You. Teach me deeper things. Open my heart to the work of Your Spirit. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Motivated by Love

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 13

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments... are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Romans 13:8-9 ESV

PRAYER:

Father, fill me anew with Your Spirit. May Your love flow through me. And may I be motivated by love for others. In Jesus' name, amen.

What is the motivation for our actions? The promise of entertainment or pleasure? Meeting our needs? Receiving rewards? Just doing what has been directed by an employer? Trying to avoid trouble? Pleasing others? Revenge? Anger? Fear?

These are examples of common motivations. But the Bible provides a motivation that is more powerful and effective than any others – love.

Individually, we can examine all the commandments in the Bible. We can know all the rules and principles. But the Bible tells us that every commandment can be summarized in this way: *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Why is this so powerful? The Bible tells us that love is completely *selfless*. Love is *"patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude...It is not irritable or resentful. It only "rejoices with the truth."* Instead of insisting on its own way, love *"endures all things"* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

If we do this consistently, we will be sure to fulfill every other commandment. We will not kill, steal, or lust. We will not take advantage of others. We will not gossip. We will not have any other gods besides our God.

Today, remember that love is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). It is a by-product of a life surrendered to God. Ask Him to fill your heart with His love. Make that your motivation in everything you do.

Total Commitment

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 14

MONDAY

October

21

It can be natural to think about ourselves first: our needs and interests, our feelings and pleasures. But everything changes when we surrender our lives to Jesus. He becomes our Lord. If He is Lord, we always are to serve and trust Him. We are not to think about ourselves first anymore; we need to think about others instead. We are not to worry about anything, but we are to allow Him to guide us and meet our needs.

If we continue to struggle, we can remember the simple guideline that Paul gave: We are to be completely committed to God's Kingdom in every part of our lives.

The Bible teaches that success comes to those who make this total commitment. Their life is the Lord's. They realize that "for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

This commitment can relieve us of many burdens. It frees us from cares and worries about our lives, our reputations, and how our needs will be met. When we are committed to Him, we simply serve Him all the time and are vessels for His Spirit. And we completely trust in Him for everything.

Today, surrender your life anew to God. Throughout the day, consider what this means. Take joy in serving Him, and don't seek credit for yourself. Trust in Him for everything! No matter what happens, you are His. Make a total commitment to Jesus!

Not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Romans 14:7-8 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I declare Jesus is my Lord. I commit the challenges I face to You. Thank You for meeting my needs and guiding me. In Jesus' name, amen.

TUESDAY

October

22

A Stumbling Block

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 14

Let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this – not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

Romans 14:13 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, keep me from being a stumbling block. Put a watch over my mouth. Help me to draw others to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

It can be easy to become a stumbling block for others, even if we have good intentions and feel we are doing the right thing. We might do or say things that make others feel discouraged or inspire doubt or frustration. We even might cause others to lose faith or to become weaker in their walk with the Lord.

In particular, Paul stressed how we become stumbling blocks through our words. He asked, "Why do you criticize your brother's actions?" If other believers commit obvious sins, we may feel responsible to help them. But *first* we need to search our own lives and be sure that we are being led by God to do so (Matthew 18:15-18).

Jesus taught these principles in the Sermon on the Mount. He said we should not "look at the speck that is in your brother's eye" but pay closer attention to "the log that is in your own eye." Instead of rushing to judge others, we *first* need to purify our own lives by confessing our own sins. Only then will we be able to gently point out the sins in others' lives (Matthew 7:2-5).

Today, seek to live in such a way that you are not a stumbling block to others. Remember that God is the judge. You will have to answer to Him and so will everyone else. Make sure that You are living for Him.

Dealing with Stress

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 14

Men and women are filled with stress; it's a common problem. They may complain but many will not make changes that might reduce this stress.

According to recent research, given the choice, only 8% would work fewer hours if this meant less stress. In contrast, 38% are willing to work more hours for more pay, even if this means more stress. Many simply have reached the conclusion that stress is a "price to pay" to be successful; it just "goes with the territory."

Christians are not immune from stress. We allow stress to infect our lives in many ways. Stress comes from worries about finances, conflicts in our relationships, uncertainty about our choices, fears about world conditions, and many other areas.

The Bible promises that God wants us to have victory over stress. Paul reminded the Romans that Christians are not to focus on "eating and drinking." Rather, we are to focus on God's kingdom. This means focusing on "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit."

This focus gives us balance and proper priorities. We can concentrate on doing what is right. We can be filled with peace because we trust completely in God. We can have joy because we serve Him and draw on the joy of His Spirit.

Are you filled with stress? Burdened by worries? Focus on God and His kingdom. Trust Him. Commit your needs to Him. Let Him give you His peace.

*For the kingdom of
God is not eating
and drinking, but
righteousness and
peace and joy in
the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 14:17 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, help me to live in obedience to Your Word. Fill me with your Spirit, and give me your peace and joy. In Jesus' name, amen.

Fully Preached

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: ROMANS 15

From Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ...I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Romans 15:19, 29 NKJV

PRAYER:

Father, I hunger for a deeper revelation of Your truth. Open my eyes. May the power of Your Spirit come alive in me. In Jesus' name, amen.

Paul was concerned that believers in Rome might not have received all the spiritual resources they needed. He assured them that he had "fully preached" the Gospel message everywhere he had traveled. He also told them he was coming with "the fullness" of blessings.

Clearly Paul was indicating that it was possible to preach part of the message. What, then, is a "fully preached" Gospel? What makes it complete?

Paul used related Greek words that suggest a message that is *finished*. It's carried out to the *maximum*, like a container that is completely full.

The message here is that there was something more, something unique that distinguished this full Gospel. This Gospel is vast and far-reaching. It impacts everything about life, and it is without limits.

This full Gospel is not concerned about making us more popular, or helping us impress people, but making us sanctified by the Holy Spirit. It gives us a life that has been *transformed*, is pure, consecrated, and dedicated to God. It's a life focused on God and designed to make us sensitive to His Spirit – a life filled with faith.

Don't be satisfied with a partial Gospel in your life. Don't stop at thoughts that are imitations and superficial messages. Don't settle for second-hand beliefs or just part of His blessings. May your heart *hunger* for the "fully preached Gospel," for *all* that God has prepared for you. Don't be satisfied with anything less.

Even though he grew up in a Christian home, James Finley rejected the Gospel as a young man. Yet in 1801 when he was 20 years old, he was intrigued by what he heard about the revival that was taking place in Cane Ridge, Kentucky.

Many had reacted to this camp meeting with skepticism. As Finley recalled, some pastors preached sermons describing this meeting as “the wildest fanaticism.” Christians were urged “not to go near these places,” for fear they might be “sympathetically affected.”

But Finley, like others, wanted to see for himself. When he arrived, he witnessed a “vast crowd” of about 25,000 people. The noise was “like the roar of Niagara.” Ministry was everywhere – preaching, singing, worship, prayer. Overcome by “a strange supernatural power,” he became so weak he had to sit down.

There was no doubt that God was present doing powerful things. Finley later wrote, “My hair rose up on my head, my whole frame trembled.” That meeting changed his life.

Many people throughout time have refused to believe that powerful moves of God can take place and that He still can perform miracles. Many are reluctant and skeptical. But others come with an open heart, ready to believe.

The Bible assures us that God still is at work and miracles still take place. Don't give in to doubt. Seek His presence. Worship Him. Believe that all things are possible.

What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

Acts 4:16 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I hunger for Your presence. I pray for a powerful move of Your Spirit. Change lives. Bring a powerful revival. In Jesus' name, amen.

To the End of the Age

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: MATTHEW 28

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:18-20 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I dedicate my time, talents, and treasures to You. Show me how I can reach souls for Christ. Use me to impact lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

Robert Finley was born in Pennsylvania to Christian parents who had come to the New World from Scotland. Attending Princeton College, he prepared for a career as a teacher of languages. But as his son James later wrote, "there were great and pressing calls for ministerial labor in the new settlements of the Carolinas and Georgia." Robert responded.

This was a bold decision. The "country was in an unsettled state" with "the gloomy clouds of war" hanging over the land. Tensions were high between the colonies and the English government. There also were strong divisions within Americans. Some advocated independence while others remained loyal to England. Eventually these divisions exploded in a violent revolution.

Going to the mission field meant leaving behind friends and family for life in a rugged, often untamed region, without *any* financial support. There, they faced constant peril and violence. All of his wife's brothers were killed, and Robert himself was wounded.

But as James wrote, Robert trusted "in God for help and direction." In the face of dangers and unknowns, he refused to back down and continued preaching the Gospel.

Today, Finley is hardly a footnote in history. But he was a hero of the faith. He was more concerned with serving his Master than the world's rewards. He was willing to leave everything behind to fulfill the Great Commission.

This still is our command until the end of the age.

Believing Prayer

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: MARK 11

SUNDAY

October

27

“Why do I see so little fruit from my ministry?” “Why are members of my church so little helped by my ministry?” These were some of the questions pastors asked Reuben Archer Torrey. His answer? “Neglect of prayer.” He reminded them, “*You do not have because you do not ask*” (James 4:2).

Often working in close harmony with Dwight L. Moody, Torrey had seen many miracles and conversions. Born in 1856, he held many crusades around the world before being called to lead what is now Moody Bible Institute.

Torrey observed that many Christians “do not believe in prayer as bringing anything to pass that would not have come to pass even if they had not prayed.” Yes, they pray, but deep down, they don’t *really* believe that prayer changes things or that their prayers can move mountains.

The same patterns still are true. Many Christians pray at least on a semi-regular basis, but how many *really* believe that anything is possible if they pray in faith? How many really believe that they can speak to a mountain, and it will “*be taken up and cast into a sea?*”

How about you? Do you really believe God’s Word? Are you willing to humble yourself and seek His face? Do you really seek first His Kingdom? Do you really believe that prayer matters?

Commit yourself to prayer. Seek God for yourself, for your family, for your country, and for the world.

Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, “Be taken up and cast into the sea,” and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.

Mark 11:23 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I commit these issues to You: _____.
Thank You for the answers! I believe that anything is possible with You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Pray with Authority

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: 1 KINGS 17

*Elijah...said to Ahab,
"As the LORD, the God of
Israel lives, before whom
I stand, surely there
shall be neither dew nor
rain these years, except
by my word."*

1 Kings 17:1-2 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I commit these needs to You: _____. Thank You for the answers! I believe that all things are possible. In Jesus' name, amen.

Elijah stood all alone before King Ahab. He was not backed by armies or thrones of people. In the flesh, this could have been a moment to panic, hesitate, or back down.

Faced with similar circumstances, others might have felt afraid and helpless. They might assume that the real power was with armies and kings, the wealthy and powerful, or even the forces of darkness.

But Elijah was *fearless* and *confident*. He *knew* that God was sovereign and had given him *real* authority. He was bold enough to *believe* Him and step out in faith.

In his writings about prayer, R.A. Torrey taught that many Christians simply did not understand or believe in the real power of prayer and that few prayed with authority.

Writing more than a hundred years ago, he reminded readers about Elijah and how "astounding things" were "brought to pass by his prayers." At his word, the heavens were closed. Only at his word were they opened again.

The Bible reminds us that Elijah did not have superhuman powers. His nature was just like ours (James 5:17). If his prayer had such power, so can ours!

Today, are you willing to pray with authority? Don't allow doubt and disbelief to dominate your heart and mind. Trust God's Word. Exercise the *authority* He *already* has given you. Believe that prayer changes things. Don't limit your prayers or feel intimidated. Believe God for "astounding things."

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: LUKE 11

A man came from Ireland to observe the London meetings of Reuben Archer Torrey. His assignment: to report to his grandfather whether this was “a real work of God.”

Years earlier, the grandfather had been part of a commission sent to America to study revivals sweeping America. They concluded that these revivals were *real* moves of God.

Encouraged, many Irish people, including four men from Kells, started praying every Saturday for years for revival in their country. The grandfather was one of those men. But nothing *seemed* to happen.

After the grandson reported that Torrey's crusade was of God, the men decided to preach in an effort to bring about revival. But “their attempt was a failure, so they went back and kept on praying.” Finally, “the fire of God fell.” God had “rewarded their persistence.”

Lives were changed dramatically. “Courts adjourned because there were no cases to try; jails were closed because there were no prisoners.” Many “notorious and hardened and hopeless sinners” were “converted.” People were so consumed by the things of God that they had no time to attend even to “ordinary” matters.

These men learned the power of *persistent* prayer – to keep praying even if they didn't immediately see results. Their continual prayers eventually produced fruit.

That same principle still is true. Do *you* believe in the power of prayer? Pray. Pray earnestly. Pray without ceasing.

Because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Luke 11:8-9 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, I humble myself and commit these needs to You: _____. I believe You for miracles! Bring revival. Change lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your Impact

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 12

Now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

1 Corinthians 12:18 NASB

In a world populated by seven billion people, does one person really matter that much? Many, even Christians, feel they cannot make a difference. In the US for example, an estimated over 40% of Christian adults *did not even vote* in the recent presidential elections. Obviously, many don't think their vote matters.

But history is filled with examples of how one person can change the course of nations. In 1868, one vote in the US Senate saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.

In 1916, if presidential hopeful Charles E. Hughes had received one additional vote in each of California's precincts, he would have defeated President Woodrow Wilson's reelection bid. In 1955, the mayor of Huron, Ohio, was elected to office by one vote, as was the mayor of Odin, Minnesota in 1959.

Yes, one vote really *does* matter. Each person matters.

As Christians, we need to remember that we are part of the body of Christ and each person has a unique role. The body cannot succeed or be healthy unless each person fulfills their calling. That includes you.

Today, remember you are part of the body of Christ with a special role to fill! You have a special destiny. God has placed you in a special position and given you special assignments and special gifts and talents. Make sure you do your part. *Your* life matters. Your testimony matters. Your prayers matter. Your vote matters. *You* matter.

PRAYER:

Father, thank You for Your call on my life. Help me fulfill Your purposes for me. Use me in the lives of others. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your Shrewd Enemy

TODAY'S BIBLE READING: 1 PETER 5

THURSDAY
October
31

As a writer and a British army officer, B.H. Liddell Hart studied and wrote about the history of warfare. These studies revealed the importance of what he called the “indirect approach.”

Hart, who was born on this day in 1895, discovered that “effective results in war have rarely been attained unless the approach has had such indirectness as to ensure the opponents’ unreadiness to meet it.” Consistently, Hart found that victories were won by armies that *disguised* their true intentions, *surprised* their opponents, and *caught* them unprepared.

In the same way, many Christians are defeated in life because they are not prepared for spiritual warfare. They forget that the devil is shrewd and deceptive. He will not announce his attacks, but will seek to confuse us with mixed messages, prey on our weaknesses, and sneak up on us when we are not ready. Instead of attacking us directly, he may lash out at our family members or friends, or our emotions, health, or finances.

Make sure that you are on guard against these attacks. Like a lion, your enemy looks for “*someone to devour*.” Make sure that you are shielded with a strong faith. Live a life of truth, have “*a breastplate of righteousness*,” and do the right things. Be armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is God’s Word, and fill your life with prayer (Ephesians 6:10-17).

Be careful, always ready.

*Be of sober spirit,
be on the alert. Your
adversary, the devil,
prowls around like a
roaring lion, seeking
someone to devour.*

1 Peter 5:8 NASB

PRAYER:

Father, help me to be ready for spiritual warfare. Help me be strong in Spirit and armed with Your Word. Thank You for victory! In Jesus’ name, amen.



CHANGING GOD'S MIND

Do you need a change of seasons?

Daniel 2:21 says, *“He changes the times and the seasons.”*

Some of you have been waiting for your season to change. Daniel plainly says that God is a God who will change your time and your season. If He wants to open up the Red Sea, He'll do it. If He wants to get water out of a rock, He'll do it. If He wants to raise his friend Lazarus from the dead, then He can, and He will.

And if He wants to change your situation, guess what? He can, and He will.

When God wanted to annihilate the people because of their disobedience, the Bible says that Moses stood firmly in the way and said, “God, let me just tell You something. Do You remember your covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? You said, ‘In blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’

But God, if You kill off all these people, then everybody will say, ‘Look what God did. He brought them out here to kill them.’” And the Bible says that God did what? He changed His mind.

You're in a season that's getting ready to change. Why? Because you've been calling out to God, and you've been crying out to him. Maybe it's been a season of growth, or maybe it's a season of going through some situations when God says, “I'm not going to get you out. I'm just going to get you through it.” The breakthrough you've been waiting for is coming now.



Judy Jacobs is an anointed servant of God who serves as co-pastor of Dwelling Place Church International. Watch Judy on

Inspiration TV October 10 & 22 at 12 p.m. EST.



be a Partaker

Imagine if you got a phone call from an attorney in your city, and he said, “We’ve got good news for you. A relative you’ve never met, you probably never even heard of, has died and left you a million dollars cash in their will.” What would you do?

Well, if you knew it was legitimate, you would walk on broken glass if you had to in order to get that money, right? I mean, they would have to physically hold you back from going down to that attorney’s office to obtain your rightful inheritance.

Not only that, but if you were really smart, and I know you are, you would ask the attorney as you received the check, “Are there any more relatives I don’t know about that know about me?” In other words, “Should I expect more in the future?

Read this amazing passage of Scripture in 2 Peter 1:4. The Bible says, “*He has granted unto us His precious and magnificent promises.*” Why? “*So that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the*

corruption that is in the world by lust.” Think about that. More than a million dollar check, more than an inheritance from an uncle you never heard of, Jesus Christ said, “For those who are saved and born again, I have laid up all of my promises, all of My reward system, all of My benefits. And I have now given you the privilege of sharing in those benefits with me.”

Isn’t that amazing? The Bible calls you a “*joint heir with Christ*” (Romans 8:17), which means every benefit the Father gives Jesus, He gives to you as well. We’re partakers of the divine nature of Christ. We’re joint heirs for every blessing in Heaven and on earth. Hallelujah! I don’t know about you, but I believe that’s something to rejoice about!



Dr. Mike Smalley

is a pastor, author, speaker, and broadcaster on Inspiration TV. Watch Mike October 15 & 28 at 12 p.m. EST.

A photograph of a person standing in the center of a large, arched tunnel. The person's arms are raised in a gesture of triumph or praise. The tunnel is made of stone or brick and is dimly lit, with a bright light shining from the opening at the end, creating a silhouette effect. The overall mood is one of hope and breakthrough.

A New Life

Money Could Never Buy

See how God used a broadcast on Inspiration TV to free Terry from years of emotional pain and addiction.

“My wife and I used to have three houses, a business, and a family who loved each other,” Terry recalls. “We had healthy children and were financially blessed.”

But suddenly Terry endured incredible tragedy, losing his wife, father, and grandmother within just a few weeks. Then disaster struck again when his son attempted suicide and his daughter was hit by a truck, becoming a paralyzed double amputee.

Terry’s life was completely turned upside down by these events, reminiscent of the story of Job in the Bible. Unable to face the pain in his own strength, he turned to the alluring appeal of drugs, alcohol, prescription pills, and prostitutes for comfort.

“I had no purpose for my life,

other than to avoid pain,” he says. “The pain killers and drugs helped to deaden the pain of losing my family, and I became addicted to feeling numb.”

“I had no purpose for my life, other than to avoid pain.”

Terry was so despondent that his children even purchased his gravesite, expecting him to soon be found dead. Twice he was sent to prison, and it seemed that everyone had given up on him.

BUT GOD STILL HAD PLANS FOR TERRY...

While sentencing Terry to his second prison sentence, the judge

What Kind of Turnaround Do YOU Need?

As we observe the Feast of Tabernacles and celebrate God's abundant blessings this month, ask yourself what kind of turnaround *you* need from God. As the Lord illustrated by freeing the Israelites from Egypt and setting Terry free from addiction, you no longer have to be bound by chains of addiction, guilt, or hopelessness.

If you or a loved one needs a fresh start during this special season on God's calendar, the prayer ministers in our International Prayer Center are waiting to pray with you!

US / CAN / CAR: +1 (803) 578-1800

UK / Intl: +44 (0) 84 5683 0584

said in frustration, "I'm tired of your ways, Terry. Your daughter, son, friends, and the police are all tired of your choices. When will this end?"

While sitting in prison, Terry realized he was living in an *internal* prison behind the physical bars that separated him from the outside world. And the judge's question kept ringing in his head, "When will this end?"

Soon after being released, Terry woke up at four o'clock one morning and turned on his TV. He began watching a preacher on Inspiration TV, and in that moment he realized that he could no longer survive a self-directed life. It was time to turn his life over to God's direction and care – and that's exactly what he did.

TERRY'S NEW BEGINNING

After beginning his new life in Christ, Terry has mended relationships with his children, found a sponsor to guide him through addiction recovery, and met his fiancé, who faithfully loves and prays for him.

"The Lord has set me free!"

And best of all, Terry now has the peace of God and hope for his future.

"I no longer get drunk or high, nor do I deceive my family or friends anymore. The Lord has set me free from anger and given me a new life money could never buy!"

Powerful Christian TV

From Black History Month in the UK to inspiring Reel Inspiration Movies, there's something for everyone on Inspiration TV!

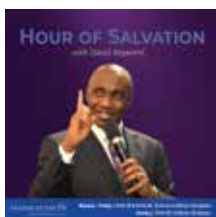
October is Black History Month in the UK, and to mark the occasion, Inspiration TV is showcasing a number of anointed black preachers and evangelists who powerfully present the Word of God. Join us all month for an incredible lineup of dynamic, God-inspired speakers.



Order My Steps with Bishop John Francis

Gospel singer and Christian evangelist Bishop John Francis helps *Order My Steps* with encouraging messages of life and restoration for today's Christian believers.

Sundays at 2:30 p.m. US Eastern, 14:30 UK



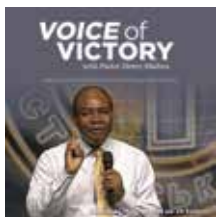
Hour of Salvation with Pastor David Ibiyeomie

Join Pastor David Ibiyeomie as he shares a truly inspirational word on how to transform your life and “establish the Kingdom of God here on Earth.”

Monday – Friday at 10:00 a.m. US Eastern, 10:00 UK

Monday – Friday at 8:00 p.m. US Eastern, 20:00 UK

Sundays at 10:00 p.m. US Eastern, 22:00 UK



Voice of Victory with Henry Madava

Watch Henry Madava of *Voice of Victory* on Inspiration TV for clear explanations of the Word of God that will fill your heart and ignite your faith.

Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. US Eastern, 16:00 UK

You Don't Want to Miss!

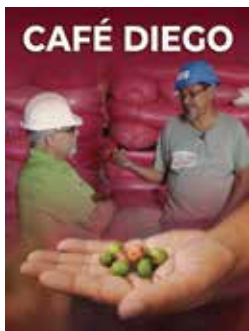
And don't forget to tune in this month for our featured Reel Inspiration movies and documentaries...



Life With Dog

When Joe's wife dies in a mysterious bicycle accident, he finds himself angry and spiraling into a dark abyss. An unlikely bond with a stray dog gives him a new view on life.

Saturday October 12 at 9 p.m. US Eastern, 21:00 UK
Sunday October 13 at 5:30 p.m. US Eastern, 17:30 UK



Café Diego

In the midst of a financial crisis and a debt over a million dollars, a Nicaraguan coffee maker's unwavering faith leads to a breakthrough that will impact generations to come.

Friday October 4 at 9 p.m. US Eastern, 21:00 UK
Saturday October 5 at 5:30 p.m. US Eastern, 17:30 UK

For airtimes or more information on these and other great programs, visit ini.tv/schedule.

Don't miss these Christ-centered programs for your Christ-centered family! You can watch Inspiration TV 24/7 on Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire, Chromecast, via livestream at ini.tv/livestream, or on the free Inspiration TV mobile app.

Livestream on
INI.TV





Your Day of LIBERATION!



Ben Cerullo

Feel like the enemy has put chains around your life? Allow the Great Liberator to set you free, so you CAN fulfill your destiny.

If you look at Jesus' earthly ministry, you can see how urgently He wanted to liberate others. Jesus had a keen understanding of what kept people in bondage. That's why He did everything supernaturally possible to free them from their shackles and chains.

Even in the early stages of His ministry, Jesus didn't waste any time laying out this theme of liberation for everything else He would do:

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up

to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD" (Luke 4:16-19).

Can you imagine a more powerful moment? Jesus was fueled and focused on freedom for the people. And here He is declaring His ministry in the synagogue itself. Hallelujah! Set the captives free!

The Son of God came with a powerful anointing to bring the resources of Heaven to earth. The poor would be delivered from poverty...the brokenhearted would be healed...the spiritual captives would be set free...the blind would receive their sight...and the oppressed would be liberated. Oh, how we need more of this kind of power today!

Jesus was quoting from Isaiah 61:1-2, a popular Scripture passage His hearers recognized as describing the coming Messiah. It's stunning to see that not much has changed among humankind since these words were written. People *still* need to be healed and set free from various kinds of oppression.

The next two verses, Isaiah 61:3-4, are also incredibly relevant to our world today:

*To comfort all who mourn,
to console those who mourn
in Zion, to give them beauty
for ashes, the oil of joy for
mourning, the garment of
praise for the spirit of heaviness;
that they may be called
trees of righteousness, the
planting of the LORD, that He
may be glorified.*

*And they shall rebuild the old
ruins, they shall raise up the
former desolations, and they
shall repair the ruined cities,
the desolations of many
generations.*

Take a moment to apply these wonderful words to your own life. Do you need to be comforted over some loss you've experienced? Has some area of your life turned to ashes, needing God to restore hope and beauty? Do you want to exchange your heaviness and depression for the oil of joy and the garment of praise?



This passage also speaks words of hope for our troubled cities today. In so many ways, our major urban areas are desolate and in ruins, and the devastation has been mounting for “*many generations.*” But it's time for those of us who follow the Great Liberator to arise and bring healing and restoration to our communities. Since Jesus has liberated us, He can use us to liberate others.

The Jewish rabbis of Jesus' day used to quote this same passage as

if it were some faraway dream of a future world. But no one dared to make the claim Jesus was about to make:

Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:20-21).

I absolutely love this part of the story. I meet so many church folks who tell me about the glorious days of revival and healing many decades ago. And others spend all their time thinking about some future day when Jesus will come back and take them to heaven. All of that is good, but what about TODAY?!



For generations, the rabbis told endless stories about the miracles God did in Old Testament times, and they spoke glowingly about a future age when the Messiah would rule and reign. But they had nothing of substance to offer people in the *present tense*!

Think about your own life, my friend. Do you have a present-tense faith? The Bible is full of references to this:

"NOW faith is..."
(Hebrews 11:1).

"TODAY, if you will hear His voice..."
(Hebrews 3:7).

"NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation"
(2 Corinthians 6:2).

You see, if you're ever going to break loose from the things holding you back, you will need a NOW kind of faith. Yesterday's faith won't do. Tomorrow's faith hasn't arrived yet. You need a powerful anointing of the Spirit of God TODAY to break every yoke and chain that has kept you from fulfilling your destiny.

So go ahead and identify the area of your life where you need the Great Liberator to set you free. He can heal your sick body or your broken heart. He can replace fear, loneliness, and depression with His incredible love, joy, and peace.

What are you waiting for? He offers you everything you need TODAY. Cry out to Him and listen for His instructions. This can be your day of liberation...so don't let it slip by. Trust Him with everything and let Him transform you... heart, mind, and soul.

A Merry Heart...

A merry heart does good, like medicine. – Proverbs 17:22

FUN FACT:

If humans stood in a single-file line around the equator, most of them would drown.



BULLETIN BLOOPERS



Drug Awareness Week:

Get involved in drugs before your children do.

TODAY'S SERMON:

Jesus walks on water

TONIGHT'S SERMON:

Searching for Jesus



Little Mothers' Club

meeting Thursdays at 5 pm

All wishing to become little mothers, please see the minister in his study.

The INSPIRATION devotional magazine is looking for examples of humor in the church or the Christian life. If you have humorous stories, jokes, or photos you would like to share, please send them to MerryHeart@inspiration.org.

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See page 32 for details.



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