Moments in the morning
Moments

in the morning
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Selected and edited by Abi May
Design by M-A Mignot
ISBN: 978-3-03730-686-4
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www.auroraproduction.com

Moments in the Morning has been taken both from writings that date back centuries as well as modern texts. Some were originally in languages other than English. Consequently, on these pages you will find a variety of styles, with differing conventions for punctuation, capitalisation, spelling and grammar. Quotations have been left as they were in the originals when texts were taken from contemporary writers. However, some quotations from historical authors have been adapted into more modern language for easier reading; British/American spellings, capitalisation, and other grammatical and typographical differences have also been standardised in some cases.

Texts by the compiler Abi May, identified as A. M., follow British spelling and grammatical conventions.

A variety of historical and contemporary figures are quoted throughout this book. Including a quotation is not meant to indicate agreement with everything that the author has written or done. In my view, we can enjoy these selected thoughts, no matter what their origin; there is an old anecdote that tells us: “Even a clock that has stopped is correct twice a day.” I hope you will find here an abundance of “apples of gold in settings of silver,” as Proverbs describes the right words at the right time.¹

A thematic index and a list of scripture references are also included, making this collection of readings an ideal resource for Christian teachers and leaders.

Abi May, April 2012

¹ Proverbs 25:11
Chances are you start your day with a drink of some type. Thirsty? A glass of cool water replenishes your body’s liquid balance. Still sleepy? A cup of coffee or tea provides stimulation. Need some energy? A glass of fruit juice restores your blood sugar, or maybe you prefer a mug of milk for body-building proteins and energy.

It does not take more than a few minutes to prepare and drink your morning liquid, but if on occasion you have to rush out of the door without it, you will notice the lack.

Enjoying this book, like your morning drink, will only take a few minutes. Each reading is designed to help you start your day out right. Some readings are quiet meditations; others are challenging. Some are devotional passages; others are a collection of thoughts. Drawn from a host of authors as well as favourite Bible passages, each selection provides a spiritual boost to start your day. Whether you need some encouragement, comfort or stamina to face the day ahead, you can find it in these pages.

Just like your favourite morning drink, you may soon find that you do not want to start your day without your Moments in the Morning.
Rainbows

Life is not always easy: Loss, disappointment and troubles are all part of the human condition. Yet there is comfort to be found, just as rainbows follow rain. Look for the Rainbows pages when you are in need of encouragement, strength or comfort.

Onwards and upwards

Life is full of challenges; climbing the mountains of challenge, appreciating the value of each day and seizing life’s opportunities are vital ingredients for a successful life. You will find thought-provoking readings on Onwards and upwards pages.

Wings

"On wings of prayer, our burdens take flight," wrote Helen Steiner Rice, and oftentimes the wings that fly highest are those of gratitude. Wings selections explore the art of prayer and celebrate the positive uplook—above the clouds, the sun is always shining.

Key to daily themes

1 Luke 17:5
2 Matthew 22:37–40
3 Matthew 6:9–13
4 Joel 2:28

Each daily reading has a theme that gives an idea of what to expect. Although the selections have been designed as daily readings, you can also travel through Moments in the Morning thematically, guided by the headings [symbols] on the top right-hand corner of each page. (If you are looking for something in particular, see the subject index on page 371.)

God’s forever love is the theme of the Alpha and Omega pages. His love is nowhere seen more clearly than in His Son, Jesus, who is not only our Saviour, but much more—Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End; the Lamb and the Shepherd; the Door and the Way; the Light and the Life; our Friend.

How often do we wish that we could increase our faith? Foundations pages explore some of the principles of faith, including the foundation upon which God grants it to us—His Word.

Special days commemorating people or events deserve our thoughts and sometimes celebrations. (A few days that are not fixed to the calendar are included in the Special days section on page 368.)

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ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR

The New Year is set before us like an unwritten volume, all of its pages blank. Let us write upon each day’s page things that at the end of the year we will look upon with rejoicing rather than regret.

Mottos for Success

Arthur Charles Hervey

For Pax and Catherine
—always remembered, always loved;

And for Simon,
whose unending patience and support has made this book possible.

The goodness of God endures continually.

Arthur Charles Hervey

Psalm 52:1
O LORD God ... please give me success this day.  
*Genesis 24:12*

One today is worth two tomorrows.  
*Francis Quarles*

Know the true value of time; snatch, seize and enjoy every moment of it.— No idleness, no delay, no procrastination; never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.  
*Philip D. S. Chesterfield*

Men spend their lives in anticipations, in determining to be vastly happy at some period when they have time. But the present time has one advantage over every other—it is our own. Past opportunities are gone, future are not yet come. We may lay in a stock of pleasures, as we would lay in a stock of wine; but if we defer the tasting of them too long, we shall find that both are soured by age.  
*Caleb C. Colton*

Happy the man, and happy he alone,  
He who can call today his own;  
He who, secure within, can say,  
To-morrow, do thy worst, for I have liv’d today.  
*John Dryden*

He has redeemed my soul in peace. ...  
For He Himself is our peace.  
*Psalm 55:18, Ephesians 2:14*

All the peace and favour of the world cannot calm a troubled heart; but where this peace is which Christ gives, all the trouble and disquiet of the world cannot disturb it.  
*Robert Leighton*

Submarine navigators tell us from their experience that storms do not reach very deep into the ocean. The water is perfectly calm a hundred feet down, no matter how high the breakers may rise on the surface. There is quiet in the depths that no surface storms can disturb. This is possible, too, in human lives; there can be serenity and peace within, undisturbed by the storms of the world. Jesus is our peace.  
*Author unknown*

Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace;  
Thereby good will come to you.  
*Job 22:21*
January 4

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

In this coming year, I can help you become more like you want to be. In fact, I can do better than that! I can help you become more like I want you to be. As I do, I think you’ll find that your plans for yourself and My plans for you really aren’t that different. They may start out that way, but if you’ll trust that I know best and go My way, you’ll soon find that I was right. You will know that by the love and happiness and fulfilment you will experience, which will be much greater than anything you might have found on your own.

Jesus

There is but one way to tranquillity of mind and happiness, and that is to account no external things your own, but to commit all to God.

Epictetus

January 5

Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.

John 16:23

Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

Richard Chenevix Trench

Wonder at the love of God! He receives our prayers as if they were things of value. He longs that we should love him; and He receives our petitions for blessings as favours done to himself. He has greater joy in giving than we in receiving.

Gregory of Nazianzus

Our prayers and God’s mercy are like two buckets in a well; while the one ascends, the other descends.

Mark Hopkins

This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

1 John 5:14–15
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE VISIT OF THE THREE WISE MEN

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

The star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:1–2, 9–11

What can I give Him
As small as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I’d give Him a lamb.
If I were a wise man
I’d do my part.
I know what I’ll give Him,
I’ll give Him my heart.

Christina Rossetti

Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Psalm 37:3–4

Dear Jesus,
I don’t know what the future holds for me, but I put that future in your hands. Thank you for the many promises you have given that encourage me to trust you. Help me to have faith as I begin this new year, to be fully persuaded that what you have promised, you will also perform.1 No matter what life has in store, may I stay close to you and draw comfort from the knowledge that nothing can separate me from your love.2 May I walk in truth, in love, in wisdom, and most of all with you.

1 Romans 4:21
2 Romans 8:38–39
January 8

In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Romans 8:37

I arise today

Through God’s mighty strength,
His power to uphold me,
His wisdom to guide me,
And his hand to guard me.

I arise today,

Through Christ’s mighty strength,
Through his death and resurrection,
Through the Spirit’s empowering,
Through the presence of angels and the love of the saints,
Through the threefold Trinity to protect me from evil.

St Patrick

Obstacles cannot crush me. Every obstacle yields to stern resolve. He who is fixed to a star does not change his mind.

Leonardo da Vinci

Keep a green branch in your heart and the singing bird will come.

Chinese proverb

This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

1 John 5:4

January 9

Blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath.

Genesis 49:25

A woman spent most of her life yearning impatiently for heaven. The years went slowly by, until in due time she passed from this life.

Upon her arrival in the next world, an angel took her on a tour. During the guided visit she was shown magnificent mountains, sparkling rivers, lush green fields, meadows of flowers, rolling hills and rich green woodland. Leaves rustled as tall trees swayed in the gentle breeze. Vista after vista of untold beauty unfolded, accompanied by the sounds of children laughing, of birds singing, of music that stirred the soul.

Joy filled her heart until she exclaimed, “This is tremendous! Heaven is all I ever dreamed of and more!” But the angel softly replied, “No. This is the world which you lived in, but never saw.”

Retold by A. M.

Praise the Lord from the earth,
Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and flying fowl.

Psalm 148:7–10
Learning to converse freely with Me, like learning to be natural, open, honest and trusting in your communications with any friend, is something that comes with time and practice. It may feel awkward or even seem like work at first, learning to come into My presence and recognize My voice, but if you will do your part by making that effort, I will speak to you. At first you may think that little voice you hear deep inside is your mind, but in time you will know that it is Mine. I may give you ideas or solutions or answers to your questions, or I may give you a feeling of peace and well-being, or I may simply tell you how special you are to Me and how much I enjoy being with you. I’m full of surprises, so you’ll never know what to expect, but this one thing I promise: I will never disappoint you!

Jesus

Out of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you.  
Deuteronomy 4:36

We must make a great difference between God’s word and the word of man. A man’s word is a little sound, that flies into the air and soon vanishes; but the word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, greater than death and hell, for it forms part of the power of God and endures everlastingly.  
Martin Luther

Many books in my library are now behind and beneath me. They were good in their way once, and so were the clothes I wore when I was ten years old; but I have outgrown them. Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years.  
Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.  
Romans 10:17

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.  
Isaiah 40:8
In the morning my prayer comes before You.
Psalm 88:13

Come into my soul, Lord,
As the dawn breaks into the sky;
Let your sun rise in my heart
At the coming of the day.

Traditional

The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day.
Henry Ward Beecher

I know the morning—I am acquainted with it, and I love it. I love it fresh and sweet as it is—a daily new creation, breaking forth and calling all that have life and breath and being to a new adoration, new enjoyments, and new gratitude.
Daniel Webster

The morning steals upon the night, melting the darkness.
William Shakespeare

He shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises,
A morning without clouds,
Like the tender grass springing out of the earth,
By clear shining after rain.
2 Samuel 23:4

A motivational speaker started his seminar by holding up a $20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, “Who would like this $20 bill?” Hands started going up.

He said, “I am going to give this $20 to one of you, but first, let me do this.” He proceeded to crumple the bill.

He then asked, “Who still wants it?” Still the hands were up in the air.

“Well,” he replied, “what if I do this?” And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now crumpled and dirty. “Now who still wants it?” Still the hands went into the air.

“My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It is still worth $20.

“Many times in our lives, we are crumpled, dropped and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value in God’s eyes. To him, dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, you are still priceless.”

Author unknown
Lord, teach us to pray.

Luke 11:1

Teach me how to let down my burdens at your feet one by one and leave them there. Instruct me in the art of tapping into the universe of power that is waiting for my command, if only I am willing to labour in prayer. Help me to go slow enough, to wait enough, that you have time to give the answers that I seek from you. Let me grow to depend on prayer as my defence, my insurance, my rest, my joy, my labour.

Teach me to pray, Lord. For some trust in their own intelligence and strength, some labour with their hands and endeavour to be great, but I will depend on you, my Lord and God, and through my prayers, you will change what needs to be changed.

Imagine ... you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, “Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!” and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you?

James 2:15–16 (adapted from The Message)

Live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with, year by year, and you will never be forgotten. Your name and your good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.

Dr Thomas Chalmers

Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden like the heaven above.

Frances Sargent Osgood
January 16

Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea.
He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness
and prayed.

Mark 3:7; Luke 5:16

January 17

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth
the living creature according to its kind:
cattle and creeping thing and beast of the
earth, each according to its kind”; 
and it was so.

Genesis 1:24

God in his peace spreads peace all around. To behold him at rest
is to rest. You see the King, so to speak, after the day-long pleadings of all
the various causes upon earth, the crowds dismissed, withdrawing from
all cares, seeking his rest for the night, entering his chamber with the
few, whom he counts worthy of his privacy and familiarity, resting more
completely as in his own retiring-place, serener of aspect, as only looking
on those whom he loves.

If any of you have been rapt and hidden in this secret sanctuary of God,
so that no sense of want, no pricking care, no gnawing sin, nor, which are
yet more difficult to put away, any thronging phantasms of earthly images,
could at all distract or disturb you, then may you glory and say, “The King
has brought me into his chamber.”

Bernard of Clairvaux

A righteous man regards the life of his animal.

Proverbs 12:10

A little while with Jesus, oh, how it soothes the soul,
And gathers all the threads of life into a perfect whole.

Author unknown

God our heavenly Father, you created the world to serve
humanity’s needs and to lead them to you. By our own fault we have lost
the beautiful relationship which we once had with all your creation. Help
us to see that by restoring our relationship with you we will also restore it
with all your creation. Give us the grace to see animals as gifts from you
and to treat them with respect, for they are your creation. Amen.

Prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi
The Lord’s love is unending, unfailing and unchanging. No matter what happens, no matter how dark it looks, no matter how difficult the battle, no matter how dark the tunnel, no matter how long the suffering, Jesus loves you—and He doesn’t give His love stingily. He doesn’t mete it out a little bit here or a little bit there as you earn it, and then get angry with you and withdraw His love if you are not good enough or make mistakes. That’s not the way the Lord does it! He never stops pouring forth His love freely and abundantly. He never turns His back. He never closes His eyes or His ears to your needs or your cries for help and comfort.

M. S. Fontaine

If we will go with God upon the highway of love, we shall rest with him eternally and without end: and thus we shall eternally go forth towards God and enter into him and rest in him.

John of Ruysbroeck

I cried out to God and He listened to me. I am in difficulty and I don’t know what else to do but seek his help. I’ve been up all night; I’m so troubled I couldn’t sleep. When I started to grumble and complain about my problems, then I got completely overwhelmed. Something to think about. I can’t even put my sorrows into words.

Then again, I remember in the past, when things looked so bleak, he pulled me out of it. When I think back really hard and focus on what he has already done in my life, I can remember the ways he has helped me out.

Is he going to leave me this time? Won’t he help me again? Won’t he be merciful? Have his promises failed? Has he forgotten how to take care of me—or is he too angry this time? Something else to think about.

But I’ve got to go back to the crux of the matter. I’ve got to focus on how he has taken care of me and my loved ones all through the years.—And not just us, but so many of his children throughout the centuries. Just thinking about this and putting it into words is lifting me out of the doldrums.

Yes, God is great; he is taking care of things; he’ll even do miracles if that’s what it takes. He’s going to work things out.

Psalm 77:1–14, loosely paraphrased
In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.  
1 Thessalonians 5:18

Reflect upon your blessings, of which every man has plenty, not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.  
Charles Dickens

Though prayer purchases blessings, giving praise keeps the quiet possession of them.  
Thomas Fuller

Praise is the best auxiliary to prayer; and he who most bears in mind what has been done for him by God will be most emboldened to ask for fresh gifts from above.  
Henry Melville

Raise your heart continually to God, seek his aid and let the foundation stone of your consolation be your happiness in being his. All vexations and annoyances will be comparatively unimportant while you know that you have such a friend, such a stay, such a refuge. May God be ever in your heart.  
Francis de Sales

Blessed be the Lord,  
Who daily loads us with benefits,  
The God of our salvation!  
Psalm 68:19

Jesus, when I feel weak, tired or out of sorts, you’re right there to put your arms around me, to comfort me and tell me that everything is going to be okay. You reach out and soothe my ruffled nerves, melt away my worries and fears and blow away the confusion that seeks to surround me.  

Thank you for blessing me so! I’m so blessed to have your peace. Thank you for delivering me from the worries of the world. Thank you for your peace that passes all understanding. Thank you that I can sit down for a few minutes with you and feel your soothing touch that gives me strength to continue on in my busy day.  

Thank you, wonderful Jesus, for your touches of love that melt away the mountains of obstacles and problems. Thank you, too, that when I feel good, you make me feel even better.
Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on ... reaching forward to those things which are ahead.

Philippians 3:12–13

Every year of my life I grow more convinced that it is wisest and best to fix our attention on the beautiful and the good, and dwell as little as possible on the evil and the false.

Richard Cecil

Faith that increaseth, walking in light;
Hope that aboundeth, glowing and bright;
Love that is perfect, casting out fear,
Crown with rejoicing thine opening year!

Frances Ridley Havergal

The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand.

Deuteronomy 28:12

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Psalm 139:14

You’re special! You are part of a magnificent, vast, overall plan. You can’t see that plan, but I can. You can’t see how beautifully you fit in with the overall panorama of life and the balance of the universe, but I can. Someday you will see it too, and you will marvel together with Me at how wonderfully it all came together and how perfect it all is.

You are unique. There has never been a person like you, nor will there ever be another just like you. That’s one of the things I like most about you. Resist the temptation to look negatively at yourself and focus on what you think are your shortcomings—weaknesses and inabilities, a less-than-perfect body or personality or whatever. What you perceive as imperfections, I perceive as uniqueness. What is perfection, after all? It is fulfilling the purpose for which you were created, which is to love and be loved. I love you just the way you are, and I love you as though you were the only person in the world.

Jesus
I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 

Genesis 9:13

A rainbow ... that smiling daughter of the storm. 

Caleb C. Colton

In times of trouble, it is as though the skies darken; thick clouds gather overhead. There is the rumble of thunder; down pours the rain. “Will it ever stop?” Mark Twain was asked. His reputed response: “It always has.” And indeed, the rain does stop. The sun peeks through the clouds, and if we are fortunate, we will see the rainbow. Pause each time you see a rainbow, for each rainbow is a reminder of God’s promises and care.

A. M.

Trust God where you cannot trace him. Do not try to penetrate the cloud he brings over you; rather look to the bow that is on it. The mystery is God’s; the promise is yours. 

John Macduff

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred. Better is a little with righteousness, than vast revenues without justice.

Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife. The end of a thing is better than its beginning; The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

How much better to get wisdom than gold! 
For wisdom is better than rubies; Wisdom is better than strength.

Psalm 118:8; Proverbs 15:17, 16:8, 16:19, 19:1, 17:1; Ecclesiastes 7:8; Proverbs 16:16, 8:11; Ecclesiastes 9:16
Do you have faith?
Have it to yourself before God.  

**Romans 14:22**

**Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that you may understand.**  

*Augustine of Hippo*

Faith tells us of things we have never seen, and cannot come to know by our natural senses.  

*John of the Cross*

Faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you can see no glory, nor can imagine any, but standing within every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendours.  

*Nathaniel Hawthorne*

No man can do a greater honour to God than to count him true.  

*Patrick Hamilton*

Corrie ten Boom survived a concentration camp and the death of her closest family during the Second World War. She went on to share her faith with the world, telling us, “Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable and receives the impossible.”  

*A. M.*

Then [Saul] fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”
And he said, “Who are You, Lord?”
Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus.”  

**Acts 9:4–5**

The common expression “to see the light” means to realise the truth, and it is an allusion to the conversion of Paul (earlier known as Saul), one of Christianity’s founders. The Bible describes how during his journey to Damascus, intent on persecuting believers, a light shone around him from heaven. The voice from the light told him it was Jesus.

Paul got the message directly from Jesus himself. We may not meet the Lord in such a dramatic way, but we can be assured that when we open our hearts to him, the Light of the world enters.1

*Patrick Hamilton*

As many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.  

**John 1:12**

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1 *John 8:12*
LORD,

Give us hearts never to forget your love, but to dwell therein whatever we do, whether we sleep or wake, live or die, or rise again to the life that is to come. For your love is eternal life and everlasting rest; for this is life eternal, to know you and your infinite goodness.

O let its flame never be quenched in our hearts; let it grow and brighten, until our whole souls are glowing and shining with its light and warmth. Be our joy, our hope, our strength and life, our shield and shepherd, our portion for ever. For we are happy if we continue in the love with which you have loved us; holy are we when we love you steadfastly. Therefore, dear Lord, whose name and essence is love, enkindle our hearts, enlighten our understanding, sanctify our wills, and fill all the thoughts of our hearts, for Jesus Christ’s sake.

Prayer of Johann Arndt, adapted

I am with you always.
Matthew 28:20

I AM NOT A FABRICATION, A FIGMENT OF THE IMAGINATION, OR A FABLE. I am real—and I am what you need. I am the great problem-solver. If you want to know how to overcome life’s trials, come to Me. I will give you comfort to replace anxiety, faith to replace fear, rest in place of struggle, peace in place of worry, happiness in place of sadness and answers to your questions. I will be your strength, your help in time of need, your friend and companion. That does not mean you will never have another problem or challenge in life, but I will be able to help you with life’s problems. You will no longer have to try to handle things on your own, because you can call on Me.

I have all that you need, but you must open your heart to receive My blessings and love. Reach out and receive My love, and there you will find fulfilment.

Jesus
Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Hebrews 13:15

Blessings we enjoy daily, and for the most of them, because they be so common, men forget to pay their praises.—But let not us, because it is a sacrifice so pleasing to him who still protects us, and gives us flowers, and showers, and meat, and content.

Izaak Walton

Let praise begin the day and wake I thank thee who art day by day The echoes of the morn, The fountain of all love, As I my pilgrim journey take Whence spring the lower streams and they In strength of life new-born. That flow from heaven above.

To thee my thankful heart does sing, But for thyself I thank thee most, God, my exceeding joy; In praises o'er and o'er— My morning sacrifice I bring, The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Of love without alloy. Lord for evermore.

Author unknown

Every promise which God makes is evidence of his good will.

John Calvin

The Bible is full of promises that God has made—promises laden with spiritual power that He wants us to apply practically. Some of His promises are universal, like: “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Others were originally made to certain individuals or groups, like, “If you ask anything in My name, I will do it”—a promise that Jesus first made to His twelve disciples.

But God’s promises were not given solely for the sake of the original hearers. They are for anyone who has faith enough to believe that God will be true to His word. God means exactly what He has promised, and He will fulfil His promises to the very letter if you will reach out with the hand of faith and claim them in a definite manner.

Jason Rae and Shannon Shayler

1 Acts 2:21
2 John 14:14
As your days, so shall your strength be.

Deuteronomy 33:25

Today is the day to love, to give, to take action. Tomorrow is not within your realm of view, so don’t worry about it. If there was ever a time to practice the art of taking one day at a time, it’s now! I’ve given you the strength, wisdom, and nurturing you need for today, and today is all you have at this moment. I’ll give you resources equivalent to your needs tomorrow, and more, all because of My love for you—love that comes from an endless reservoir. So trust.

Jesus

I love to think that God appoints
My portion day by day;
Events of life are in His hand,
And I would only say,
Appoint them in Thine own good time,
And in Thine own best way.

Anna Laetitia Waring

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

John 8:12

The sky is grey today, dark clouds filling the wide expanse. There appears no hope on the horizon. But the sun is always shining, constantly lighting and heating the earth, keeping our planet in orbit. Just so, Jesus, the light of the world, is always with us, loving and caring for us, and keeping us on his path.

A. M.

Light is the shadow of God.

Plato

Walk in the light! And thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His,
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrined,
In whom no darkness is.

Bernard Barton
For in Him we live and move
and have our being.
Acts 17:28

But what is heaven, great God, compared to thee?
Without thy presence, heaven’s no heaven to me.
Francis Quarles

Thou art a sea without a shore,
A sun without a sphere;
Thy time is now and evermore,
Thy place is everywhere.
John Mason

No masses of earth can block his vision as he looks over all. With one
glance of his intelligence, he sees all that has been, that is, and that is
to come.
Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has
loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,
comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.
2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

Yesterday, the sea was calm. You promised yourself that you
would sail out into the open waters, and that nothing would stop you. Your
heart was ready; your courage at its peak. Your hands gripped the vessel’s
helm and the gentle breeze calmed your spirit. You steered forward.

But today, today ... rain lashes at your ship. Towering waves roll before
you. The fog obstructs your vision so you cannot see beyond your bow. But
you don’t need to see. You just know that something spurs you onward—
the same thing that gave you such peace yesterday. That thing called faith,
a belief in what you cannot see. It anticipated and rose to this challenge.
It tells you that the sun will eventually break through those murky clouds.
That knowledge buoys your spirit and guides you.

Sail on, with your focus not on the storm, but beyond it. There, your
destiny awaits you. Today is the tomorrow you dreamed of yesterday. It is
stormy, yes, but faith knows no limits, no depths, no boundaries. With your
faith in God strong, you will be able to weather any storm and sail any sea.
Sail beyond the billows!
Nyx Martinez
February 5

Do not worry about your life. Matthew 6:25

Each event in a person’s life, each thought, each decision, each bit of love and each interaction with someone else is like a thread in a tapestry. Day after day, dark threads and bright threads are woven together, often, it seems, without rhyme or reason, but in the end they form a picture.

I’m looking at the tapestry of your life now, and it’s beautiful! All the good things—the happiness and fulfillment, the love you gave and received, the lives that were better because of you—these are bright threads. The dark threads are the difficulties and disappointments, the trials and the tears. These are also necessary because they make the bright threads look all the brighter and help give your tapestry its rich, warm glow.

No one else has ever woven a tapestry quite like yours, and no one could have. Your life is unique.

Jesus

February 6

God’s goodness hath been great to thee. Let never day nor night unhallowed pass, but still remember what the Lord hath done. William Shakespeare

Praise the Lord from the earth,
You great sea creatures and all the depths;
Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and flying fowl;
Kings of the earth and all peoples;
Princes and all judges of the earth;
Both young men and maidens;
Old men and children.
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
For His name alone is exalted;
His glory is above the earth and heaven.

Psalm 148:7–13

Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received. Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse.

Henry van Dyke
Dear Jesus,

Thank you for Your love! Your love is light and warmth, love and caring, sharing, believing and receiving. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. It never brings fear or worry or anxiety, pressure, problems, pain or preoccupation. You only are light, life, liberty and love—Love beyond measure, love that never fails, love that knows no hours, love that is always there, love that extends beyond the tides of time.

Your love reaches up to the highest star, and even reaches down to the very depths of the deepest sea. Your love knows no days, no nights, no hours. It’s always! It’s forever, and goes on and on and on and on and on and on!

My song shall be of you, Lord,
Your mercy crowns my days.
You fill my cup with blessings,
And tune my heart to praise.

Suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.” Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that hour.

Matthew 9:20–22

The good Instructor, the Wisdom, the Word of the Father, who made man, cares for the whole nature of His creature. The all-sufficient Physician of humanity, the Saviour, heals both our body and soul, which are the proper man.

Clement of Alexandria

Let us come in the simplicity of sickness, in the helplessness of want; to trust is to be healed, to touch the hem of his garment is to be whole; but let us keep touching him, for virtue is ever coming from him.

Lady Theodosia Powerscourt
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

John 1:1-2,14

The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.

William Romaine

The Bible is to us what the star was to the wise men; but if we spend all our time in gazing upon it, observing its motions, and admiring its splendour, without being led to Christ by it, the use of it will be lost to us.

Thomas Adams

We know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true.

1 John 5:20

He has filled them with skill to do all manner of work.

Exodus 35:35

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance: it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pickaxe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

Samuel Johnson

If you wish success in life, make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counsellor, caution your elder brother, and hope your guardian genius.

Joseph Addison
Love, simplicity and humility—if you embrace these three qualities, you can’t go wrong.

Mottos for Success

The world measures greatness by money, or eloquence, or intellectual skill, or even by prowess on the field of battle. But here is the Lord’s standard: “Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

John Henry Jowett

“I long to accomplish great and noble tasks, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”—Thus wrote Helen Keller, blind, deaf and dumb from infancy.

A. M.

If you are humble, nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are.

Mother Teresa

Come to me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart; and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28–30 (WEB)

Every time you feel the cares and burdens of this life, picture yourself taking that backpack of burdens and throwing it off your shoulders and then walking away from it. Will you do that for Me today? Don’t even look back, wondering if I’m going to take care of your burdens. I will. I promise to take all your burdens upon Myself, as My Word says.

Jesus

“Come unto Me, ye weary, and I will give you rest.”

O blessed voice of Jesus, which comes to hearts oppressed! It tells of benediction, of pardon, grace and peace, Of joy that hath no ending, of love which cannot cease.

William C. Dix

1 Matthew 18:4 (kJV)
God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us ... made us alive together with Christ.

Ephesians 2:4–5

God will never leave thee,
All thy wants He knows,
Feels the pains that grieve thee,
Sees thy cares and woes.

When in grief we languish,
He will dry the tear,
Who His children's anguish
Soothes with succour near.

H. S. Oswald

The Lord's love is amazing! When we are reassured of His love, it gives us the faith to reach beyond our own limits and confines, and enables us to step out into the unknown and reach our full potential. It helps us to believe that anything is possible. His love gives us confidence. His love gives us faith.

M. S. Fontaine

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE LOVE

Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.

Song of Solomon 8:7

Love is not blind. Love is the only thing that sees.

Frank Crane

The heart of him who truly loves is a paradise on earth; he has God in himself, for God is love.

Abbé Hugo Félicité de Lamennais

Love is an image of God, and not a lifeless image, but the living essence of the divine nature which beams full of all goodness.

Martin Luther

In peace, love tunes the shepherd's reed; in war, he mounts the warrior's steed; in halls, in gay attire is seen; in hamlets, dances on the green. Love rules the court, the camp, the grove, and man below, and saints above; for love is heaven, and heaven is love.

Sir Walter Scott

To love another person is to see the face of God.

Victor Hugo

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M. S. Fontaine

God loves you as though you are the only person in the world, and He loves everyone the way He loves you.

Augustine of Hippo
February 15

**AS THE DEER PANTS FOR THE WATER BROOKS,**
So pants my soul for You, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?
My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
“Where is your God?”

**WHEN I REMEMBER THESE THINGS,**
I pour out my soul within me.
For I used to go with the multitude;
I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

**WHY ARE YOU CAST DOWN, O MY SOUL?**
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him
For the help of His countenance.

*Psalm 42:1–5*

February 16

The **L O R D** is good to those who wait for Him,
To the soul who seeks Him.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

*Lamentations 3:25; Matthew 5:6,8*

I know that, if any of you have tasted the sweetness of Christ,
you would be content to abide in him for eternity.

*Robert Murray M’Cheyne*

Filling up our time with and for God is the way to rise up and lie down in peace.

*David Brainerd*

The capital of heaven is the heart in which Jesus Christ is enthroned as King.

*Sadhu Sundar Singh*

O God, who art the truth, make me one with thee in everlasting love! I am often weary of reading and weary of hearing; in thee alone is the sum of all my desires. Let all teachers be silent, let the whole creation be dumb before thee, and do thou only speak to my soul.

*Thomas à Kempis*
If you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others?

Matthew 5:46–47

Love is greater than faith, because the end is greater than the means. What is the use of having faith? It is to connect the soul with God. And what is the object of connecting man with God? That he may become like God. But God is Love. Hence faith, the means, is in order to love, the end. Love, therefore, obviously is greater than faith. “If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”

Henry Drummond

He that sows, even with tears, the precious seed of faith, hope and love, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him, because it is the very nature of that seed to yield a joyful harvest.

Richard Cecil

I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

Revelation 21:3

Every natural longing has its natural satisfaction. If we thirst, God has created liquids to gratify thirst. If we thirst for life and love eternal, it is likely that there is an eternal life and an eternal love to satisfy that craving.

Frederick William Robertson, adapted

We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth.—There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beings that pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence forever.

Edward Bulwer-Lytton

As it is written:

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

1 Corinthians 2:9
I want you to bring Me into every area of your life. I want you to think about Me, to talk to Me, and to listen to Me, and to learn to follow where I lead. I don’t ask this because I want to harness or control you, but because I love you. I want to provide for you and protect you and shower you with love. I want to be with you and around you and in you all the time, like a lover wants to be with the one he loves.

When you include Me in whatever it is you’re doing, it strengthens our relationship; it draws you closer to My Spirit, and we form stronger bonds of love and communication. The more we talk, the more you come to Me for companionship, the more you look to Me for answers to your questions and solutions to your problems, the more you bring Me into each area of your life, the more our love will grow and the greater satisfaction you will find in life, because all you do will be blessed with My presence.

Jesus

Please inquire of God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous.

Judges 18:5

Why should we think that unless we hear a booming, audible voice thundering from the top of Mt. Sinai, or unless we see the throne of God in the midst of an emerald sea with a rainbow round about, we are not really hearing from Him? The “still, small voice” came neither in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire. David’s messianic prophecies came in song. Jeremiah dictated his message of woe to the king, and Baruch wrote it “upon a roll of a book.”

Mike Holland

God is your true friend and will always give you the counsel and comfort you need.

François de la Mothe-Fénélon

1  1 Kings 19:11,12
2  Jeremiah 36:4
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE LANGUAGES

We hear them speaking in our own tongues
the wonderful works of God.

Acts 2:11

Language is the light of the mind.

John Stuart Mill

Language is an anonymous, collective and unconscious art; the result of
the creativity of thousands of generations.

Edward Sapir

Language is the amber in which a thousand precious thoughts have been
safely embedded and preserved.

Richard Chenevix Trench

You live a new life for every new language you speak.

Czech proverb

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If
you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

Nelson Mandela

You are worth as many men as you know languages.

Attributed to Charles V

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold
In settings of silver.

Proverbs 25:11

O LORD,

Grant me the blessing of greeting the coming day in peace. Help me in
all things to rely upon your holy will. In every hour of the day reveal your
will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat
all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul and with firm
conviction that your will governs us all. In all my deeds and words guide
my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events let me not forget that all
are sent by you. Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and
embarrassing others. Give me strength to bear the fatigue of this coming
day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray, pray yourself
in me.

Prayer of Filaret Drozdov, adapted

My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD;
In the morning I will direct it to You,
And I will look up.

Psalm 53
How great are His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!  
*Daniel 4:3*

In the vast and the minute, we see
The unambiguous footsteps of the God
Who gives its lustre to the insect’s wing,
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.
*William Cowper*

The universe is one of God’s thoughts.
*Friedrich Schiller*

What is a miracle? I know of nothing else but miracles. Every hour of the light and the dark is a miracle. Every cubic inch of space is a miracle. Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same; every foot underground swarms with the same. The sea is a continual miracle. The fishes that swim, the rocks, the motions of the waves, the ships with men in them. What stranger miracles are there?
*Walt Whitman*

The wise man’s eyes are in his head, he sees with an inner sight, and discovers God everywhere at work.
*Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.”
*Revelation 21:6*

Sages of the earth,
Christ is the key of your problems, the completion of that philosophy which you resume without ceasing, but never finish;
Troubled spirits, he is your peace;
Lovers of wealth, he is your true treasure;
Men, he is the word that solves the enigma of life, and conquers the power of death.
He alone binds us to the author of our being, and to universal order.
*Alexandre Rodolphe Vinet*

I believe there is no one lovelier, deeper, more sympathetic and more perfect than Jesus—not only is there no one else like him, but there could never be anyone like him.
*Fyodor Dostoevsky*
February 25

Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts,
My King and my God.

Psalm 84:3

When you heard the bird singing this morning outside your window, that was a sign of My love for you. I knew that the bird’s song would encourage you. You see how I take care of the birds? How I supply food for them, shelter for their young, and how I put a song in their heart, how carefree and happy I make them?

That’s exactly what I would like to do for you too, every day of your life—care for you, supply all of your needs, and make you carefree and happy. All you need to do is come to Me and trust in My power that I am able to do it, and I will.

Jesus

February 26

Hear my cry, O God;
Attend to my prayer.
From the end of the earth I will cry to You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Psalm 61:1–2

Should we feel at times disheartened and discouraged, a confiding thought, a simple movement of heart toward God will renew our powers. Whatever he may demand of us, he will give us at the moment the strength and the courage that we need.

François de la Mothe-Fénelon

From one disaster after another he delivers you; no matter what the calamity, the evil can’t touch you.

Job 5:19 (The Message)

Grant, O God, that amidst all the discouragements, difficulties, dangers, distress and darkness of this mortal life, I may depend upon your mercy and on this build my hopes, as on a sure foundation. Let your infinite mercy in Christ Jesus deliver me from despair.

Thomas Wilson
February 27

There is a wonderful law of nature that the three things we crave most in life—happiness, freedom and peace of mind—are always attained by giving them to someone else.

Peyton Conway March

You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; and just so, you learn to love by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves.

Francis de Sales

There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer, no disease that enough love will not heal. No door that enough love will not open, no gulf that enough love will not bridge. No wall that enough love will not throw down, no sin that enough love will not redeem. It makes no difference how deeply seated may be the trouble, how hopeless the outlook, how muddled the tangle, how great the mistake. Sufficient love will dissolve it all.

Emmet Fox

February 28

It is good for me to draw near to God;
I have put my trust in the Lord God,
That I may declare all Your works.

Psalm 73:28

Jesus,
I can be thankful even for the struggles in my life and the things that are difficult, because they force me to turn to you for help and you always give me the answers. You make things so clear and easy to understand. All I have to do is turn my heart to you and receive.

Without difficulties, disappointments, and failures, I wouldn’t have come to know your compassion, your understanding and your forgiveness, and I wouldn’t be able to pass them on to others.

Thank you for all the things you bring my way to keep me humble and make me more dependent on you. Thank you for keeping me close to you.
“For the mountains shall depart
And the hills be removed,
But My kindness shall not depart from you,
Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,”
Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

Isaiah 54:10

I will hear what God the Lord will speak;
For He will speak peace
To His people.
LORD, You will establish peace for us,
For You have also done all our works in us.
Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your word.

Psalm 85:8; Isaiah 26:12; Psalm 119:41

O God, you are the unsearchable abyss of peace,
The ineffable sea of love,
And the fountain of blessings.
Water us with plenteous streams
From the riches of your grace;
And from the sweet springs of your kindness,
Make us children of quietness and heirs of peace.

Clement of Alexandria

He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much.

Luke 16:10

Be joyful, and keep your faith and your creed. Do the little things that you have seen me do and heard about.

St David

The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Take your needle, my child, and work at your pattern; it will come out a rose by and by.” Life is like that; one stitch at a time taken patiently, and the pattern will come out all right, like embroidery.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

It’s not a single, great, heroic deed that defines who you really are. It’s the little things you do day by day that count.

Mottos for Success
God is my strength and power,  
And He makes my way perfect.  
\textit{2 Samuel 22:33}

This life and its limited existence can be so full of care, worry, and fear if you let those things in. But if you instead choose to accept My love and My perspective in all things, you will begin to see the opportunity in every difficulty, the positive in every negative situation. You will have the faith to rise above this finite world and accept that there is a higher plan for your life and that I am the one who is ultimately in control.  
\textit{Jesus}

The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.  
\textit{Galatians 2:20}

The path of the just is like the shining sun,  
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.  
\textit{Proverbs 4:18}

All of us carry the future in us, the hopes, the dreams, the good and the evil, the potential to create a better world, if we can only make the right choices, if we are only willing to pay the price, to search for the goal and reach out for it.

We all search for love at some time or other, and so love will come to us. But how will we treat it when it arrives? For love might come to you as a princess, or as a beggar, or a slave; majestic and glorious, or uncomely and in rags, and void of respect. Though we cannot choose who we are when we are born, and what kind of life we get born into, still we can choose how to live our lives and what kind of person we will be when our earthly path ends.  
\textit{Colin C. Bell}
In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.  
Isaiah 30:15

Stillness of spirit is like the canvas for the Holy Spirit to draw his various graces upon.  
John Love

Have you ever stopped to listen to the silence? Quietness is a virtue, and it takes practice to perfect. But it’s so beneficial. Quietness teaches you stillness of mind. Your mind must be quiet for you to really enjoy that state of quiet calm.  

Mottos for Success

Lift up my soul, O Lord,  
above the weary round of harassing thoughts,  
to your eternal presence.  
Lift up my mind  
to the pure, bright, serene atmosphere of your presence,  
that I may breathe freely,  
and rest there in your love.  
From there, surrounded by your peace,  
may I return to do or to bear whatever shall best please you,  
O blessed Lord.  
Prayer of Edward Pusey, adapted

Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.  
Matthew 10:29–31

I sit here and consider the lilies, and behold the sparrows, and know that as the Lord is taking care of them, he will certainly take care of us. Whenever one sparrow falls to the ground, our heavenly Father knows that it has fallen. How much more is he looking after us! Each of us is special to him.  
Author unknown

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come, Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home, When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He: His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.  
Civilla D. Martin
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Psalm 90:2

Dear Lord,

How brief is our span of life compared with the time since you created
the universe. How tiny we are compared with the enormity of your
universe. How trivial are our concerns compared with the complexity
of your universe. How stupid we are compared with the genius of your
creation. Yet during every minute and every second of our lives you are
present, within and around us. You give your attention to each and every
one of us. Our concerns are your concerns. And you are infinitely patient
with our stupidity. I thank you with all my heart—knowing that my thanks
are worthless compared to your greatness.

Prayer of Fulbert of Chartres

So teach us to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

According to researchers, on average it takes 66 days to form a
habit. Add some new activity into your daily routine—such as taking a
walk after dinner, eating fruit in the mid-afternoon, or having five minutes
of quiet meditation when you wake in the morning—and if you’re still
doing it two months later, it is likely you’ll be doing it automatically.

Did you make a resolution at the start of this year? If so, and you’ve
been able to keep it up, you have successfully integrated a new feature into
your daily living. Today is the 66th day! If you haven’t yet, it’s never too
late to start.

A. M.

We think very little of time present; we anticipate the future, as being too
slow, and with a view to hasten it onward, we recall the past to stay it as
too swiftly gone. We are so thoughtless, that we thus wander through the
hours that are not here, regardless only of the moment that is actually our
own.—To eternity itself there is no other handle than the present moment.

Blaise Pascal
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

Woman was taken out of man; not out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled underfoot; but out of his side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved.

Matthew Henry

DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF CHRISTIANITY, THE FLEDGLING MOVEMENT suffered considerable persecution. Gatherings of any number could draw the attention of the authorities, yet even under these circumstances, Mary, the mother of a follower named John Mark, opened her house for prayer meetings. She was presumably a widow, as the biblical text refers to the house as her own, not her husband’s. She knew the risks, but that did not stop her opening her doors. In doing so, she was not only supporting the new church, but also her own son, and stands as yet another example of the generosity and bravery of women.

A. M.

There were also women looking on from afar ... who also followed [Jesus] and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

Mark 15:40-41

The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, And with my song I will praise Him.

Psalm 28:7

God has two dwellings: one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart.

Izaak Walton

Joy is the echo of God’s life within us.

Joseph Marmion

Gratitude is the memory of the heart; therefore forget not to say often, I have all I have ever enjoyed.

Lydia M. Child

A map tells us where we’re going and a compass tells us the direction to travel, but Owen Young gives us heavenly directions: “Praise, more divine than prayer; prayer points our ready path to heaven; praise is already there.”

A. M.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Psalm 100:4
March 10

I heard the voice of the Lord.  
Isaiah 6:8

I'm like a butterfly floating down from heaven. I flutter down to rest on your shoulder. I am gentle and unobtrusive. You can talk to Me about any of those secret thoughts that you have—those inner thoughts that are not talked about or shared with anyone else. You can tell Me anything that weighs on your heart.

I will listen to your heart's cries and they will be our secret. I will then carry them away up to heaven, and you will feel a healing balm on your life and your heart which will help you to carry on. I look forward to these times together, where you speak and I listen.

Then, I can fly high to heaven with all that you have given to Me, and you can know that the answers are on their way to you in heaven's time. Your secrets will be turned into prayers, and the answers that you receive will be tailored just for you.  

Jesus

March 11

I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.  
Leviticus 26:4

Four friends were reminiscing over a drink. It so happened that during the course of the year, each in turn had passed through a picturesque valley some distance away, well known for its pear orchards.

The first friend had passed through the area in winter. He described his disappointment at driving through a bleak landscape of twisted, bare trees. The second friend disagreed with his negative appraisal of the countryside; the trees had been covered with green buds. The third had passed through a little later in the year, and during his visit the trees had been filled with sweet fragrant blossoms.

The last friend had seen something different from all of them. “The orchards were heavy with ripe golden fruit!” In fact, the sweet pear cider they were drinking had been bottled in that valley.

Sometimes we think we know the whole picture, but we are only seeing a part, just as each of the friends had only seen one season of life in the valley. It may seem like winter in our lives, but the promise of spring, the beauty of summer and the fulfilment of autumn await us.  

Retold by A. M.
Unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

IN THE WORDS OF BETTIE J. EADIE, NEAR-DEATH SURVIVOR AND AUTHOR OF *Embraced by the Light*: “Heaven in all its glory could be summed up in one word: Christ. He is the light of creation, the joy of all life, and above all, the deepest love of our souls. To embrace Him is to embrace the meaning of life and the eternal power of God.”

A. M.

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

Henry van Dyke

The Lord will guide you continually.

Isaiah 58:11

God speaks in a number of ways. As you read the Bible, he will often cause a particular passage to stand out to you and show you how it applies to your situation or how it answers a question you may have. He may speak to you through vivid dreams or visions. He may speak through godly counsellors, people who are strong in faith and knowledge of God’s Word and ways, who he inspires with advice that he knows will benefit you.

God is also able to speak to you directly. Under special circumstances, some people hear God speak in an audible voice, like the child prophet Samuel did¹ and as appears to have been the case when he spoke to the prophet Elijah through a “gentle whisper” when Elijah was desperate for God’s guidance.² Usually, however, he speaks in our minds at those times when we get quiet, clear our minds of other busy thoughts, ask him to speak and then wait for an answer. Sometimes he may not even use words; he may just give you an impression or inner conviction, a sort of intuitive knowledge about a particular situation.

Alex Peterson

¹ 1 Samuel 3
² 1 Kings 19:11–12
Heavenly Father,

Thank you for another fresh start today. The most important thing I want to do with this day is share it with you. Before I do anything else, I want to sit right here, at your feet, and listen to what you have to tell me today. If you want to tell me anything, here I am, Lord. You have my undivided attention. If you have any direction, counsel, guidance, words of wisdom—or maybe even some practical tips that could help me to make it through this day—or any of your sweet words of love, here I am. I’m listening.

This is my favourite part of each brand-new day, this time in the morning when I can put aside the cares of life to listen to you and find the strength I need to make it through the day. Thank you for this time.

In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3,13

They are the true disciples of Christ, not who know most, but who love most.

Frederick Spanheim

Love is not getting, but giving. Love is ... the best thing in the world, and the thing that lives the longest.

Henry van Dyke
Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.  

Colossians 1:12

**What is this inheritance?**

It is a tearless state: God himself will wipe away all tears. Now He puts them into His bottle; then He will stop their flow.

But it is also a place. There is a heavenly “city.” This suggests the idea of locality, society, security; there will be sweet companionship.

It is a “fold” where all the sheep of the Good Shepherd will be safe: He who brought them there will guard them.

It is a “kingdom:” and there the glory of God will be revealed.

It is a “feast:” and there the bounties of the great Giver will be enjoyed.

It is a “garden,” an Eden, a paradise: and there will bloom, in immortal freshness, the most beautiful and fragrant flowers.

It is an inheritance in light.

Rev Canon Money, adapted

Now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.  

Ephesians 5:8

**ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE ST PATRICK**

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  

Matthew 28:19

Patrick (373–465 AD), the patron saint of Ireland, is said to have used a shamrock—a three-leaf clover—to explain the three parts of the Godhead: God the Father, Jesus His Son and the Holy Spirit.

Patrick would hold up a shamrock and challenge his hearers, “Is it one leaf or three?”

“It is both one leaf and three,” was their reply.

“And so it is with God,” he would say.

Retold by A. M.

All glory to the Father,  
The unbegotten One;  
All honour be to Jesus,  
His sole begotten Son;  
And to the Holy Spirit—  
The perfect Trinity.  
Let all the worlds give answer,  
“Amen—so let it be.”

Columba

1 Revelation 21
No matter what, you will always have My unconditional love. It will see you through anything. It will be a light in dark places, a compass when you are lost, an anchor to hold you fast in a storm, and a warm blanket to comfort you when you are alone and cold.

Treasure My unconditional love. Know that it doesn’t cost you anything, but has been freely given to you from someone who loves you to the core.

Bless the Lord, O my soul ...
Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

Psalm 103:2–5

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

Romans 11:33

As well might a gnat seek to drink in the ocean, as a finite creature to comprehend the Eternal God. A God whom we could understand would be no God. If we could grasp him, he could not be infinite: if we could understand him, then were he not divine.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

To believe in God for me is to feel that there is a God, not a dead one, or a stuffed one, but a living one, who with irresistible force urges us towards more loving.

Vincent van Gogh

Lord God of Israel, there is no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.

1 Kings 8:23
March 20

Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
Galatians 6:7

The gardens of kindness never fade.

Greek proverb

Wherever there is a human being there is a chance for kindness.
Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in
which smiles, and kindnesses, and small obligations, given habitually, are
what win and preserve the heart and secure comfort.
Sir Humphrey Davy

In this world of hurry, and work, and sudden end,
If a thought comes quick of doing kindness to a friend,
Do it that very minute; don't put it off, don't wait;
What's the use of doing a kindness, if you do it a day too late?

Author unknown

God’s got you covered. He’s watching out for you, and he guarantees that
all decisions made for love will be rewarded.

Author unknown

March 21

I will give thanks to You, O LORD ...
And sing praises to Your name.
2 Samuel 22:50

On my lips are praises to you, my God. In my heart I want to
continually sing songs of thanksgiving to you, my Lord. In my mind I want
to continually think thoughts of goodness towards you, my King. Your
mercy endures forever. Your tenderness and forgiveness are without end.
Your love envelops me as a warm, soft summer breeze. It refreshes my
soul; it gives me life and strength and vision.

In my weakness I look to you, O my God. In my sinfulness, I look to
you, and I find strength and forgiveness and the realisation that your love
is without end. I know that I am undeserving. I am unworthy of such love
and such forgiveness. I am unworthy of such tender care. But I find such
peace of mind, such satisfaction and contentment in knowing that you
care for me.
Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Philippians 4:4

“When I think upon my God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap from my pen; and since God has given me a cheerful heart, it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit.”—So spoke the creative inspiration of composer Franz Joseph Haydn.

A. M.

A praiseful heart can find joy in so many things—learning a skill, walking through the woods, meeting a friend, viewing a beautiful sight, cooking a good meal, giving a gift, teaching a child, helping someone in need, finding ways to serve, discovering a new truth, appreciating an old one, reaching out to God in prayer, passing His love on in little or big ways. There are so many things in life to be happy about—simple things, little things, joyous things, precious things.

Jesus, please help us to seize each opportunity for enjoyment of all You’ve given us. Help us to see all the sparkles You’ve put in our path and to not fail to thank You for them, knowing that they and You are what make life wonderful.

Chloe West

Then [Jesus] came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.

Mark 8:22–25

We don’t always understand why things are out of focus. Hours turn into days, and days into weeks, and it seems there is a never-ending stream of things to take care of. Then one morning we wake up, and we just feel at a loss. Where are we heading? It’s hard to keep going when our vision is blurred.

The solution is there waiting for us: First of all, step aside with Jesus, “out of town” in spirit if not in body. Focus on him. Have patience; the answer doesn’t always come right away, but in those quiet moments, resting in prayer and meditation, he will restore our vision.

A. M.
[Jesus] came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar. ... Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink. ... If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”

The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?”

Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst.”

John 4:5–15

Truly God is good.

Psalm 73:1

Darkness is fled.—Now flowers unfold their beauties to the sun, and blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake them.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

If the sun of God’s countenance shines upon me, I may well be content with the rain of adversity.

Author unknown

What we count the ills of life are often blessings in disguise, resulting in good to us in the end.—Though for the present not joyous but grievous, yet, if received in a right spirit, they work out fruits of righteousness for us at last.

Matthew Henry

The very word “God” suggests care, kindness, goodness; and the idea of God in His infinity, is infinite care, infinite kindness, infinite goodness.

Henry Ward Beecher

There are many who say, “Who will show us any good?”

Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

For You are my lamp, O Lord;

The Lord shall enlighten my darkness.

Psalm 4:6; 2 Samuel 22:29
What is man that You are mindful of him, 
And the son of man that You visit him? 
For ... You have crowned him with glory 
and honor.  

Psalm 8:4–5

As small as we may feel, as insignificant as we may judge ourselves to be in the great scope of the world and history, God thinks about each of us. He “is mindful” of us. The God who set the great creation into motion, the same God knows the very hairs of our heads,¹ knows our thoughts and plans,² knows our secret sorrows just as He knows our wishes.³ We are not alone in the universe; God knows and loves me and you.⁴

A sense of wonder accompanies this realisation of the distinct love of God for each of us, each solitary individual. We can surely conclude along with David, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!”⁵

A. M.

1 Luke 12:7  
2 Hebrews 4:12  
3 Psalm 38:9  
4 John 3:16  
5 Psalm 8:9

I do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.  

Ephesians 1:16

It’s a sacrifice to pray for others. It costs you time and effort, but it’s a sacrifice that pleases Me.

If you haven’t made prayer a habit, don’t worry; I see your heart. If you don’t know where to start, don’t worry; I see your heart. If you don’t feel eloquent, don’t worry; I see your heart. If you think you don’t have much faith, don’t worry; I see your heart. It’s your love and concern that moves My hand to meet the needs of those you pray for.

So put your love into action, your faith to work, and My promises to the test by praying for others, and I will more than repay.  

Jesus
The Lord is my shepherd.  
So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, 
Will give You thanks forever;  
We will show forth Your praise to all generations.

Psalm 23:1; Psalm 79:13

O our Saviour! Of ourselves we cannot love you, cannot follow you, cannot become one with you, but you came down that we might love you. You ascended that we might follow you. You bound us close to you that we might be held fast to you. Since you have loved us, make us love you. Since you found us when we were lost, be yourself the way, that we may find you and be found in you, our only hope and our everlasting joy.

Prayer of Edward Pusey

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.  

Hebrews 6:19

We do not steady the ship by fixing the anchor on anything that is inside the vessel. The anchorage must be outside of the ship. And so the soul does not rest on what it sees in itself, but on what it sees in the character of God, the certainty of his truth, the impossibility of his falsehood.

Dr Thomas Chalmers, adapted

I've an anchor safe and sure, that can evermore endure.  
[I withstand] the tempest’s shock, for my anchor grips the rock.  
Through the storm I safely ride, till the turning of the tide.  
For in Christ I can be bold, I've an anchor that shall hold.

And it holds, my anchor holds;  
Blow your wildest, then, O gale,  
On my bark so small and frail;  
By His grace I shall not fail;  
For my anchor holds, my anchor holds.

William Clark Martin
A family had a few apple trees at the bottom of their garden. The trees yielded more fruit than could be eaten immediately or given to neighbours, so some needed to be stored for the coming months.

One autumn, little Tommy was finally big enough to help his mother store the apples. They had been picked and piled up in a basket with care, as bruised apples will spoil. Now it was time to transfer them to storage racks in the cellar.

Tommy, eager to help, put his arms around a dozen shiny apples and tried to carry them over to the rack. To his dismay, one by one the apples dropped out of his arms until they were all on the floor.

His mother wasn't too worried. “Here, let me show you,” she said gently as she put his hands around one apple. “Take this one and put it over there, and then come back and get another one.”

Too often we try to put our arms around a year or a month or a week, but God tells us, “Take it a day at a time.” We aren't equipped to carry all of our future cares at once, but we can face each challenge as it comes.

Retold by A. M.

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Heaven, the treasury of everlasting joy.
William Shakespeare

Jesus taught us to pray, “Our Father in heaven.”—And that's why heaven is heaven. God is there.
A. M.

The happiness of mankind is not to be found in this life; it is a flower that grows in the garden of eternity, and to be expected in its full fruition only in that life which is to come.
Matthew Hale

This is the house of complaints, heaven is the house of praise; this is the house of sorrow, heaven is the house of joy; this is the house of pilgrimage, heaven is the house of our abode; this is the house of our misery, heaven is the house of our eternal solace, when there shall be no end of our joy and rejoicing. Wait, and then, for behold he comes with ten thousand of his saints.
Andrew Gray

If God hath made this world so fair, where sin and death abound, how beautiful, beyond compare, will paradise be found.
James Montgomery

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1 Matthew 6:34
1 Luke 11:2
Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

He who provides for this life, but takes no care for eternity, is wise for a moment, but a fool forever.

Beware what earth calls happiness; beware all joys, but joys that never can expire.

Let temporal things serve your use, but the eternal be the subject of your desire.

Lift up our hearts, O Christ, above the false shows of things, above laziness and fear, above selfishness and covetousness, above whim and fashion, up to the everlasting Truth that you are; that so we may live joyfully and freely, in the faith that you are our King and our Saviour, our Example and our Judge, and that, so long as we are loyal to you, all will ultimately be well.

“What is truth?”

It seems that everywhere you look today, someone is marketing “the truth” in the form of some new book, program, or product. Who are you supposed to believe—and how much will it cost you?

Jesus has the real article. “If you abide in My word,” He promises, “you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” You can rest assured that the Bible tells the truth. Become familiar with its precepts and you will have a standard by which you can measure all things.

The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond; but if he looks at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that. The Bible is a thing to look through, to see that which is beyond.

For the word of the LORD is right, And all His work is done in truth.

1 John 8:31–32
My prayer is to You, 
O LORD, in the acceptable time.  

Psalm 69:13

The prayer that begins with trustfulness, and passes on into waiting, will always end in thankfulness, triumph and praise.

Alexander Maclaren

God looks not at the oratory of your prayers, how elegant they may be; nor at the geometry of your prayers, how long they may be; nor at the arithmetic of your prayers, how many they may be; nor at the logic of your prayers, how methodical they may be; but the sincerity of them He looks at.

Thomas Brooks

O my divine Master, teach me to hold myself in silence before you, to adore you in the depths of my being, to wait upon you always and never to ask anything of you but the fulfilment of your will. Teach me to let you act in my soul, and form in it the simple prayer that says little but includes everything. Grant me this favour for the glory of your name.

Jean Nicolas Grou

Wait on the LORD.

Psalm 37:34

The realm of prayer is so vast and the answers and resolutions to a problem can be so numerous. Don’t tie your expectations and faith only to the solution that you have in mind. It might not be what I have planned for you.

Consider a man in the woods who encounters a giant tree blocking his path. I could lift him over it, I could tunnel him under it, I could lift it, I could help him climb it, I could show him a way around it, or I could even help him to see why it’s not My will for him to cross it in the first place. But all that the man prays for is a chainsaw—his ideal solution to the problem. He shouldn’t be disappointed if I don’t supply that saw, because maybe My answer to the situation is not at all what he was expecting.

Don’t be so stuck on a situation ending up exactly as you think it should that you miss the other options that I wanted to use to bring the ultimate answer to your prayer.

Jesus
Sing to the **LORD** with thanksgiving; 
Sing praises on the harp to our **God**, 
Who covers the heavens with clouds. 

*Psalm 147:7–8*

The soul would have no rainbow had the eyes 
had no tears. 

*John Vance Cheney*

Life is not a cloudless journey, 
Storms and darkness oft oppress, 
But the Father’s changeless mercy 
Comes to cheer the heart’s distress; 
Heavy clouds may darkly hover, 
Hiding all faith’s view above, 
But across the thickest darkness 
Shines the rainbow of His love. 

*Flora Kirkland*

Why should we hang down our heads? Why do we not pluck up good 
hearts and be of good cheer? God is our father, our best friend, our daily 
benefactor. Let us, therefore, rejoice and be merry; for heaven is ours, 
earth is ours, **God** is ours, Christ is ours, all is ours. 

*Arthur Dent*

The next day a great multitude that had come 
to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was 
coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm 
trees and went out to meet Him, and cried 
out: “Hosanna! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the 
name of the Lord!’ The King of Israel!”

*John 12:12–13*

Excitement mounted. An enthusiastic crowd had gathered, some 
waving branches of palm trees. Others, to show their respect, spread 
clothes on the road before him. Shouts of praise rang out. The 
tumultuous, joyous entry of Jesus is described in all four Gospels, 
signifying just how important this event was. 

Just as those men, women and children of long ago welcomed Jesus 
into their city, we can each welcome him into our lives. When we greet 
him with the same enthusiasm, love and respect that they showed, we are 
rewarded with the joy of his presence. 

*A. M.*

To you before your passion 
They sang their hymns of praise; 
To you now high exalted 
Our melody we raise. 

You accepted their praises; 
Accept the prayers we bring 
Who in all good delights, 
Oh good and gracious King. 

*Theodulph of Orleans, adapted*
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE WORLD HEALTH DAY

Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

† Corinthians 6:19

Look to your health; and if you have it, praise God and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of—a blessing that money cannot buy; therefore value it, and be thankful for it.

Izaak Walton

Wellness—balance of health of body, mind and soul—is something to work and pray for. The Lord promises restoration of health, healing and safekeeping. Let us do our part so He can do what we cannot.

A. M.

‘For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,’ says the Lord. Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily.

Jeremiah 30:17; Isaiah 58:8

Thank you for your love, Jesus. Thank you for taking me as I am and loving me in spite of all my many weaknesses. Thank you for leaving your Father and your heavenly home and coming down to earth to be a sample of love for us. Thank you for dying for me that I may live with you forever.

I thank you, Jesus, that I’m able to travel the road of life with you as my constant companion. I thank you for revealing to me our ultimate destination, your heavenly kingdom. Thank you for the heavenly kingdom that you have prepared for your children, a place of such beauty and happiness!

Thank you, Jesus, that your love, mercy and patience with me is not the same as mine is for others. Your love cannot be measured. Your mercy is higher than the heavens. Your patience is deeper than the deepest sea. Your understanding of my problems and cares gives me comfort and faith. I love you! I praise you! I honour and extol you!

I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty,
And on Your wondrous works. …
I will declare Your greatness.

Psalm 145:5–6
If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well.

James 2:8

Our God-given responsibility to love others is spelled out in the Old Testament,¹ and asserted by Jesus² and His followers.³ Christian authors through the ages have returned repeatedly to the theme. One of these, Betty J. Eadie, expressed our duty beautifully when she wrote,

“Whatever we become here in mortality is meaningless unless it is done for the benefit of others. Our gifts and talents are given to us to help us serve. And in serving others we grow spiritually. We are here to help each other, to care for each other, to understand, forgive and serve one another. We are here to have love for every person on earth.”

A. M.

Be loving—because God is love.

Mottos for Success

Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.

Jeremiah 33:6

Isolated from infancy due to being deaf and blind, after much effort Helen Keller learned to communicate and went on to achieve a place of influence in the world. Aptly she tells us, “Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”

A. M.

May you have enough happiness to keep you sweet, Trials to keep you strong, sorrow to keep you human; Hope to keep you happy, failure to keep you humble; Success to keep you eager, friends to give you comfort, Wealth to meet your needs, enthusiasm to look forward; Faith to banish depression, And determination enough to make each day better than yesterday.

Author unknown

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¹ Leviticus 19:18
² Matthew 22:39
³ Galatians 5:14
He poured out His soul unto death...
And He bore the sin of many.  

Isaiah 53:12

The nail-pierced hands of Jesus reveal the love-filled heart of God.

Author unknown

A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act.

Mahatma Gandhi

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Eternal light, shine into our hearts,
Eternal goodness, deliver us from evil,
Eternal power, be our support,
Eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance,
Eternal pity, have mercy upon us;
That with all our heart and mind and soul and strength
We may seek thy face
And be brought by thine infinite mercy to thy holy presence;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Alcuin of York

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Romans 8:35

Test My love when you feel lonely. When you feel like no one cares and there is no love to be found, that is the time to rest, to lie back in My arms and find peace. And when you are discouraged and you feel like you are a great big mess—look up into My wonderful face and see Me smile upon you, for I love you just the way you are!

When you feel weak, I will be strong for you. When you feel confusion, I will give you peace. When you feel fearful, I will comfort your heart. When you are doubting, I will give you faith. When you feel strain, I will bring relief. When you feel lost, I am right here to be found. When you feel useless, I will give you a purpose. When you feel anguish, I will give you joy. When you lack confidence, I will be your assurance. When you feel muddled and cloudy, I will give you clarity of thought. When all seems dark and stormy, I will be your shining light.

In big ways or small ways, I’m always there, ready, willing and waiting to shower you with love.

Jesus
Now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

1 Corinthians 13:12

Brief life is here our portion; And He, whom now we trust in, Shall then be seen and known; And they that know and see Him Shall have Him for their own.

There grief is turned to pleasure; The morning shall awaken, The sun shall not strike you by day, Shall shine as doth the day.

Such pleasure as below And each true hearted servant And the shadows flee away, Shall shine as doth the day.

No human voice can utter, The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; No human heart can know. He shall preserve your soul.

And after fleshly weakness, The Lord shall preserve your going out And after this world's night, and your coming in And after storm and whirlwind, From this time forth, and even forevermore.

And God, our King and Portion, There God, our King and Portion, We then shall see forever, In fullness of His grace, And worship face to face.

O Christ, the keeper of us all, let thy right hand guard and protect me day and night, when I rest at home, when I walk in my work abroad, when I lie down and when I rise up, that I may not anywhere fail. I commit my whole being unto thee; take charge of me; provide for all my real needs, from this moment forth and always.

Prayer of Nerses

I go and prepare a place for you, that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:3
April 15

To regain your joy of the Lord, you have to look past all your other priorities, all the things that keep you busy, all the things that you are bored with, and you have to realise that despite all those things, you have already obtained the most valuable asset you could possibly gain in any walk of life—eternal life.

That’s the joy of the Lord—to realise that you are a sinner, but that I have forgiven you; to realise that I unconditionally love you; to realise that I will never give up on you; to realise that at any point when you reach out and take My hand, I will take it immediately into Mine and forgive you; to realise that you will one day enter eternal joy and heavenly bliss forever.

April 16

We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near. For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God. So I will go about Your altar, O L O R D, That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.

Psalm 75:1; 86:10; 26:6–7

Imagine a small child with a birthday present. Excitedly he or she tears off the wrapping paper to discover what is in the package. Eyes widen as the new toy is revealed, and there is a shriek of joy. Perhaps she hugs the doll with golden hair, or perhaps he starts racing around the room pushing the little car.

That’s a tiny picture of the sense of wonder and appreciation we read in the Psalms—so let us express our own wonder and appreciation for all God’s gifts.

A. M.

Let there be for every pulse a thanksgiving, and for every breath a song.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
There is a time to be born, and a time to die, says Solomon,¹ and it is the memento of a truly wise man; but there is an interval between these two times of infinite importance.

Leigh Richmond

There is not a single moment in life that we can afford to lose.

Edward M. Goulburn

What is not started today is never finished tomorrow.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Have you ever dreamed a great dream or had an inspiring idea, but then went back to your daily routine and lost sight of it? The next time inspiration knocks, invite it in.

Mottos for Success

Time is not a commodity that can be stored for future use. It must be invested hour by hour, or else it is gone forever.

Thomas Alva Edison

Now is the watchword of the wise.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Romans 11:29

In My garden, each flower is different and unique, beautiful and special to My eyes. Each flower is a unique colour, and a unique size, and serves its own purpose and has its own place in the garden, and its own place in the heart of the Gardener. And I take each flower in My hand and I look upon it with great love and mercy. I water these flowers with the tears of My sympathy. I shine upon each flower the warmth of My love. I protect each flower with My own hands. I look upon it with great tenderness and I know each flower personally.

So do I know you—each of you is unique to Me. Each of you is a special flower in My eyes. Each has its own place, and its own purpose and calling.

Jesus

¹ Ecclesiastes 3:2
In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:2–3

Eternity is the divine treasure house, and hope is the window, by means of which mortals are permitted to see, as through a glass dearly, the things which God is preparing.

William Mountford

Our home, our country, is heaven, where there are no sorrows, nor fears, nor troubles: this world is the place of our travel and pilgrimage, and, at the best, our inn.

Matthew Hale

I have a home, forever free
From toil, and care, and misery,
Where stormy seas can never roll,
Where bliss eternal crowns the soul.

I have a home prepared for me,
A mansion bright across the sea;
And when I pass to yon bright shore,
I’ll dwell with Christ for evermore.

Barney E. Warren

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

Psalm 33:12

We must learn to see ourselves through the eyes of faith, through the perspective of what we can become, what God’s power can transform us into, what Jesus can be in us. So what if you aren’t perfect! Who is? You can still be a great success in life if you let the Spirit of God work in you and through you. His Spirit will fill in the gaps of the little problems and imperfections. God doesn’t need perfection from us to work His wonders.

Peter Amsterdam

When the impossibilities of life loom large, take God’s hand and take it one step at a time.

Ariana Keating

My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9
Dear Jesus,

You are the joy and the rejoicing of my heart, the sunshine of my soul, the light of my life. Thank you for reaching into the depths of my soul, opening the windows of heaven upon my life and causing your light to burst forth. When I asked you to come into my heart a tingle of joy, of excitement, a thrill of soul and spirit came into my life, as one who had been blind and had only known darkness, but who was then thrust into seeing a glorious and brilliant light.

I want to keep that thrill of soul and spirit and not allow the cares of this life—the burdens, the trials, the heartaches—to eclipse or crowd out the wonderful, glorious, marvellous light that you have shed abroad in my heart. I want to always keep my eyes on you, so that your power of love can shine brighter and brighter in me, while the things of the world grow dimmer and dimmer. You are the light and love of my life.

The joy of the Lord is your strength.
Nehemiah 8:10

Be still, and know that I am God.
Psalm 46:10

We may be richer in faith, and so richer in hope, and so richer in joy today, by remembering the certainty of God’s gracious promises, and how his word endures to all generations. In quiet hours, when we are laid aside, we may remember, too, that though the world is still the same world—full of disappointments—full of care—full of change—full of uncertainty—yet this one great certainty makes up to the Christian for all else. Truly all things are ours—life, death, things present, things to come, for we are his who says, “I am the Lord, I change not.”

Our Father is unchangeable in truth and love; and as we feel afresh our spiritual union with Christ, let us call to mind the words of his apostle John, “We are in him that is true.”

Can we not learn, like tired children, to fall into the everlasting arms and rest, not in what we know, but in whom we trust?

William M. Statham

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

1 Malachi 3:6
2 1 John 5:20
Lean on God’s love, and it will uphold you; abide in God’s love, and it will sustain you.

_Mottos for Success_

**The life of faith is the revelation of Jesus to the soul; the inshining of the glorious gospel; his indwelling and illuminating presence, rooting and grounding us in love. ... Belief without the abiding presence of Jesus pines and dies, but the abiding presence keeps faith alive.**

*Robert Milman*

Long did I toil, and knew no earthly rest, Far did I rove, and found no certain home; At last I sought them in his sheltering breast, Who opens his arms, and bids the weary come. With him I found a home, a rest divine, And I since then am his, and he is mine.

*John Quarles*

Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand.

_Zephaniah 1:7 (KJV)_

Then a voice came from the throne [in heaven], saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

_Resolution 19:5_

Enjoy the blessings of this day, as God sends them; and the difficulties of it bear patiently and sweetly; for this day is only ours, we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow.

_Jeremy Taylor_

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for.

_Epicurus_

We tend to forget that happiness doesn’t come as a result of getting something we don’t have, but rather of recognising and appreciating what we do have.

_Friedrich Gottlob Koenig_

Happiness is like manna; it is to be gathered in grains, and enjoyed every day. It will not keep; it cannot be accumulated; ... it has rained down from heaven, at our very doors.

_Tryon Edwards_
His banner over me was love.  

Song of Solomon 2:4

Come home, my soul, my wandering, tired, grieved soul! Love where thy love shall not be lost. Love him that will not reject thee, nor deceive thee, nor requite thee with injuries as the world does. The peaceable region is above. Retire to the harbour if you would be free from storms. God will receive you when the world does cast you off.

Richard Baxter

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Augustus M. Toplady

I love the Lord, because He has heard  
My voice and my supplications.

Psalm 116:1

God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

Genesis 1:3–4

What do we know of light? By refraction and reflection we learn more of the nature and beauty of light; we can analyse and we can feel. Look at those rosy tints on the snow-clad mountain, that wonderful glow in the western sky, those gorgeous clouds; see the rays of the setting sun lighting up some beautiful old ruin. Is there not something here which reveals to us more of a wonderful beauty and harmony than light alone unmingled with these forms of matter?

Well, hereafter, not on mountain, and sky, and ruin, but on the glistening robes of a great multitude, we shall see reflected the glory of God himself. By the light he gives we shall see the light which he is.

Rev Canon Money, adapted

In Your light we see light.

Psalm 36:9
I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Hebrews 13:5

My love is unconditional. I love without partiality. I love the unlovely and the difficult to love. I love the sad and the lonely. I love those who are struggling and those who are lost and confused. My unconditional love expects nothing in return. It doesn’t say, “This one does not return My love, so I will withdraw My love.” My unconditional love never gives up hope; it is enduring, patient and unfailing. My love gives and gives and gives again. My love knows no limits and has no stopping place. My love will go any distance to love and bring one lost, lonely, battered soul through to victory.

Of course you have weaknesses and shortcomings, but I don’t love you any less because of them. My love is unconditional. That means no matter what condition you are in, I love you just as much. My love for you doesn’t depend on you having a glowing record. Don’t ever think that I love you any less because you aren’t all that you would like to be or think you should be. When I look at you, I don’t see any of your lacks. I only see My creation that I love, and I love you just the way I made you.

Jesus

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6

Dear Lord,

Help me to spread your fragrance wherever I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through me, and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul.

Let them look up and see no longer me, but only you, O Lord! Stay with me and then I will begin to shine as you do; so to shine as to be a light to others. The light, O Lord, will be all from you; none of it will be mine. It will be you shining on others through me.

Let me thus praise you in the way that you love best, by shining on those around me.

Prayer of John Henry Newman
You will make your prayer to Him, 
He will hear you.  
Job 22:27

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, 
whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.  
Victor Hugo

How God works in answer to prayer is a mystery that logic cannot 
penetrate, but that He does work in answer to prayer is gloriously true.  
Oswald Chambers

Some prayers have a longer voyage than others, but they return with the 
richer cargo at last, so that the praying soul is a gainer by waiting for an answer.  
William Gurnall

Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would 
see the glory of God?” Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask 
when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.  
John 11:40; Mark 11:24

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.  
Acts 10:38

Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master. 
He had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer. 
He had no army, yet kings feared Him. 
He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world. 
He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him. 
He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.  
Author unknown

Jesus Christ is the centre of all, and the goal to which all tends.  
Blaise Pascal

Having been perfected, He [Jesus] became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.  
Hebrews 5:9
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE WORK

Man goes out to his work and to his labour until the evening. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might. When you eat the labour of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. That every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour ... is the gift of God.

Based on Psalm 104:23, 128:2; Ecclesiastes 9:10, 3:13

Our labour here is brief, but the reward is eternal.

Clare of Assisi

He who labours as he prays lifts up his heart to God with his hands.

Bernard of Clairvaux

Lord, in union with your love, unite my work with your great work, and perfect it. As a drop of water, poured into a river, is taken up into the activity of the river, so may my labour become part of your work. Thus may those among whom I live and work be drawn into your love.

Gertrude the Great

I will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?
My help comes from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1–2

As you’re going up the mountain, don’t just keep looking down and around you at the ground and the rocks under you, but stop as often as you can and look up! Look up to the beautiful blue sky and to the mountain peaks that you are climbing toward, and that will encourage you and refresh you and give you the stamina to keep going a little longer.

You’ll hardly notice the muddy paths because you’ll be looking up! You’ll be looking forward, and when you have that vision, these little nagging problems won’t get you down. That’s a promise!

Jesus
Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.

Albert Einstein

If you feel that you have made mistakes, taken wrong turns, even failed miserably at this or that, you're in good company. Many of God's heroes in the Bible did those same things, but they learned from their mistakes. And God came to them, sitting in the midst of failed dreams or disappointed hopes, and gave them a new reason to live. That's what He can do when we give up on our own plans and projects and decide to try His. He gives us goals to help us grow and move in the right direction, and then He helps us attain them.

Give Him your heart and life, and let Him give you all the good things He has planned for you.

Nana Williams

Never hesitate to trust the unknown future to a known God.

Mottos for Success

This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

An old man who had lived buoyantly through eighty years was asked, “Which is the happiest season of life?” He replied thoughtfully:

“When spring comes, the air is soft, the buds are breaking on the trees and they are covered with blossoms. I think, how beautiful is spring!

“And when the summer comes, and covers the trees and bushes with heavy foliage, and singing birds mingle with branches, I think, how beautiful is summer!

“When autumn loads them with golden fruit, and their leaves bear the gorgeous tint of frost, I think, how beautiful is autumn!

“And when it is sore winter, and there is neither foliage nor fruit, then when I look up through the leafless branches and see, as I can see in no other season, the shining stars of heaven, I think, how beautiful is the winter of life!”

A. M., adapted from “The Fireside,” 1885

Cheerfulness is a friend to grace; it puts the heart in tune to praise God.

Thomas Watson
May 5

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. 

Romans 12:2

Our daily lives can easily become filled with stress, pressure and confusion. But we can stop at any moment and slip away into the presence of God’s Spirit through prayer and meditation, and there find peace and refreshing. 

Mottos for Success

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word and trust His grace,
I’ll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

William W. Walford

O God, who art peace everlasting, whose chosen reward is the gift of peace, and who has taught us that the peacemakers are thy children, pour thy sweet peace into our souls, that everything discordant may utterly vanish, and all that makes for peace be sweet to us forever. Amen. 

Gelasian Sacramentary

May 6

Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear.

But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”

Peter said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So Jesus said, “Come.”

And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Matthew 14:22–31, abridged

Peter learned, and quickly forgot, the lesson of looking to Jesus.¹ If we want to pass safely over our own sea of troubles, we should remember to keep our eyes on the Author and Finisher of our faith. 

A. M.

¹ Hebrews 12:2
May 7

Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend into heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.  
Psalm 139:7–10

Thank you, Lord, for always being with me, no matter whether I am trudging through the valley of sorrow, or strolling through meadows of joy; surviving in the desert of need, or swimming in the oceans of plenty; climbing the mountain of difficulty, or resting in an oasis of peace. No matter my circumstances, you are always constant, and for that I give you my heartfelt thanks.

May 8

I have surrounded you with constant reminders of My love. I could have made the world drab or boring, but I made it special for you. I painted the skies and the land with exquisite living colours. Look at the flowers and the trees—they are alive with detail and variety. I could have made just a few types of trees and flowers, or made them all one colour, but I made nature full of diversity and beautiful for you.

There are so many kinds of flowers, and each one is unique and lovely in its own way. There are so many trees and they come in all different sizes and designs. Some trees bear fruit or nuts, while others do not bear anything edible. Even the trees that lose their leaves or whose leaves turn brown are a reminder of My love and care for you. Even though they go through hardships or dry or cold seasons, they eventually blossom again.

From now on, look around you at the things that I have created and be reminded of My love for you. Don’t take anything for granted. Each tree is alive and growing and part of the miracle of life. Each flower is a part of My creation. Each star in the heavens was placed there by My hand and according to My plan. I created it all because I love you.

Jesus
May 9

[I would that you] may be able to comprehend what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:18–19

Sweet Jesus, who shall lend me wings
Of peace and perfect love,
That I may rise from earthly things
To rest with thee above?

Author unknown

Without Christ you are like a sheep without its shepherd; like a tree without water at its roots; like a mere leaf in the tempest—not bound to the tree of life. With your whole heart seek him, and he will be found of you: only give yourself thoroughly up to the search, and truly, you will yet discover him to your joy and gladness.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, adapted

May 10

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

Live in faith and hope, though it be in darkness, for in this darkness God protects the soul. Cast your care upon God, for you are his and he will not forget you.

John of the Cross

The steps of faith fall on the seeming void, but find the rock beneath.

John Greenleaf Whittier

To place faith in something other than one's self requires an element of courage. Yet those who have put faith in God can testify that even greater courage—along with peace of mind—is to be found in doing so.

Mottos for Success

For who is God, except the LORD?
And who is a rock, except our God? The LORD lives!
Blessed be my Rock!
Let God be exalted,
The Rock of my salvation!

2 Samuel 22:32,47
When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand.”

Mark 7:14

Not in the earthquake or devouring flame,
But in the hush that could all fear transform,
The still, small whisper to the prophet came.
Oh soul, keep silence on the mount of God!
Though cares and needs throb around like a sea
From supplication and desires unshod,
Be still and hear what God shall say to thee.

Mary Rowles Jarvis

It is the man of prayer that receives large communications from God.

James Harrington Evans

The best and sweetest flowers in paradise, God gives to His people when they are on their knees in the closet. Prayer, if not the very gate of heaven, is the key to let us into its ... joys.

Thomas Brooks

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you?

Matthew 6:28–30

“Consider the lilies,” Jesus tells us. As we think of all the wonder and beauty of the flowers, the anxious spirit that haunts and distresses us often will be put to shame. We learn to trust the wisdom, love and power of him who clothes the little blossoms. The future may look dark, but that flower in the foreground takes away its awe.

Canon Wynne

With grateful hearts the past we own;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to thy guardian care commit,
And peaceful leave before thy feet.

Philip Doddridge
Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable.  
Psalm 145:3

I AM NOT SO MUCH OF A FARMER AS SOME PEOPLE CLAIM, BUT I HAVE
observed the watermelon seed. It has the power of drawing from the
ground and through itself 200,000 times its weight. When you can tell me
how it takes this material and out of it colors an outside surface beyond
the imitation of art, and then forms inside of it a white rind and within
again a red heart, thickly inlaid with black seeds, each one of which in turn
is capable of drawing through itself 200,000 times its weight. When you
can explain to me the mystery of a watermelon, you can ask me to explain
the mystery of God.

William Jennings Bryan

We don’t know the millionth part of one percent about anything. We don’t
know what water is. We don’t know what light is. We don’t know what
gravitation is. We don’t know what heat is. But we do not let our ignorance
about these things deprive us of their use.

Thomas Alva Edison

Open to me the gates of righteousness:
I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:
I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me,
and art become my salvation.  
Psalm 118:19,21 (KJV)

Give me thy grace, good Lord,
To set the world at nought;
To set my mind fast upon thee,
And not to hang upon the blast of men’s mouths;
To be content to be solitary;
Not to long for worldly company;
To lean unto the comfort of God;
Busily to labour to love him;
To humble and meeken myself
Under the mighty hand of God.

Prayer of Thomas More

Thou art my God, and I will praise thee:
Thou art my God, I will exalt thee.  
Psalm 118:28 (KJV)
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES

Give love today. Love others. Love your family. Love God. He will see to it that you have sufficient love, and give you more in return than you can ever give away.

Mottos for Success

Building a home of hearts, my love, Is what we’ve got to do. Making a peaceful haven To shelter others, too.

Giving your heart to another Is making it a home, Where the heart can rest in safety With no more need to roam. The union of the family lies in love.

Beholding heart to heart, my love, Sharing secret dreams, Putting first the other, This is what it means.

Laughing with one another At the funniest things we do, Learning to be a family, Jesus, me and you.

—Esther David

Robert Hugh Benson

Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation.

Psalm 5:1

As the sun radiates, the day illuminates, the fountain irrigates, the shower sprinkles of its own accord spontaneously, so the spirit of God infuses itself into us. When the soul, gazing heavenward, has come to know its Maker, it is exalted far above all earthly principality and power, and begins already to be what it believes itself to be. There can be no poverty when the wealth of heaven has once satiated our heart. We speak with God and God with us. He instructs us. The house that he enriches, none can impoverish.

—Robert Milman, adapted

By meditation I can converse with God, solace myself in the arms of the Saviour, bathe myself in the rivers of divine pleasure, tread the paths of my rest, and view the mansions of eternity.

—Author unknown

He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.

Psalm 107:9
May 17

The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:45–46

The glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Proverbs 25:2

Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine; and jewels rich and rare are hidden in its mighty depths for every searcher there.

Edwin Hodder

Do not be content with swimming on the surface of divine truth; make it your element; dive into it.

William Howells

O Lord, you have given us your word for a light to shine upon our path; inspire us to meditate on that word, and to follow its teaching, that we may find in it the light that shines more and more until the perfect day, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jerome

May 18

God our Savior showed us how good and kind he is.

Titus 3:4 (CEV)

Dost thou not know that thy God loves thee in the midst of all this? Mountains, when in darkness hidden, are as real as in day, and God’s love is as true to thee now as it was in thy brightest moments.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

We may not climb the heavenly steeps
to bring the Lord Christ down;
in vain we search the lowest deeps,
for him no depths can drown;

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
a present help is he;
and faith has still its Olivet,
and love its Galilee.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.

Mark 5:19
Flowers are lovely;  
Love is flower-like;  
Friendship is a sheltering tree.  
*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

Faith, like light, shall always be simple, and unbending; while love, like warmth, should beam forth on every side, and bend to every necessity of our brethren.  
*Martin Luther*

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.  
*1 Corinthians 13:4–8*

Life is short. Be swift to love! Make haste to be kind!  
*Henri-Frédéric Amiel*

Peace comes not from the absence of trouble, but from the presence of God.  
*Author unknown*

The triumph of quietness is not ease. It is not absence of disturbing force. It is a triumph over all. In Christ there is the image of this quietness. Galilee’s lake in its stillest hour was never so restful as the heart of Jesus. This is the face we want to see. “When he was reviled, he reviled not again.” It is this quietness that has touched the world’s deepest heart.

It is true of our Saviour that he did possess a rest, a peace, a joy, such as the sons of earth and time have never known, and having manifested these on earth, he left us as his own dying legacy, what he calls “my joy,” “my peace.” In seeking him, we partake of this peace.  
*William M. Statham, adapted*

Be of good courage,  
And He shall strengthen your heart,  
All you who hope in the Lord.  
*Psalm 31:24*

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1 1 Peter 2:23 (KJV)
May 21

When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble? 

Job 34:29

Dear Jesus,

When I feel you near me, I have sweet peace and rest and I know that you will take care of everything. You dissolve all of my worries with your reassuring words. You give me all that I need. It’s just amazing how much you accomplish in my life, giving me peace when I know I’m such a worrywart, giving me good thoughts when I’m prone to negative thinking, making me feel so fulfilled and happy even when problems surround me. You’re truly amazing, Jesus. Only you can do that for me.

May 22

Do not fear, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard.

Daniel 10:12

Not one prayer ever goes unanswered; they’re all heard and answered the moment they’re spoken. But sometimes you have to wait awhile to see the answer; and sometimes the answer isn’t what you were expecting.

I answer right away, but if you’re not quite ready, or if it’s not the right time in your life, then the answer will wait until you are ready. But I have answered!

Even when it seems like I don’t answer, it’s still an answer, because I know that not giving you what you’ve asked for is what’s best for you. So that’s an answer in itself.

Jesus
When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well.

Matthew 14:34–36

From the watch of lonely mountain prayer, in gathering storm and blast—
From the path no mortal foot could tread, o'er waters wild and vast,
He came, the glorious Son of God, with healing, love and light,
To the land of far Gennesaret, that lay in shadowy night.

O Tender One, O Mighty One, who never sent away
The sinner or the sufferer, Thou art the same today!
The same in love, the same in power, and Thou art waiting still
To heal the multitudes that come, yea, ‘whosoever will!’

Frances Ridley Havergal

Let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:17

Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

James 1:4

Be like the farmer who has a thousand acres to plant. He just gets started. He doesn’t lament that he’s not finished at the end of the first day. He knew full well he wouldn’t be finished, so to be disappointed that he’s not would be unrealistic and silly. Instead, at the end of each day he feasts his eyes on the part of the field that has been worked, prepared and planted. And each day that portion of the field grows and grows. That’s where his inspiration comes from, by remembering and encouraging himself in how far he’s come—not by lamenting how far he’s still got to go.

Measure by the progress made, the victories won and how far you’ve come. Look at where you started, and celebrate the distance covered already.

Author unknown
May 25

In a factory, an elongated steel bar weighing 500 lbs (about 225 kg) was suspended by a chain. Near it, an average-size cork was suspended by a silk thread. “When we come back to this spot later,” a tour guide told a group of sightseers, “you will see something that is seemingly impossible. This cork will have set this steel bar in motion.” The guide set in motion a mechanism whereby the cork tapped gently and repeatedly against the steel bar, which remained motionless. The visitors watched for a minute or two as the cork struck the iron bar with pendulum-like regularity, then they moved on. Ten minutes later, the bar was vibrating slightly, and when the tour group returned at the end of an hour, the heavy bar was swinging like the pendulum of a clock.

So the next time you feel you aren’t exerting a feather’s weight of influence on others through your prayers, remember the cork. God hears and answers every prayer in His time and as He knows best, but sometimes you must be patient. Often people and situations don’t change overnight, even after we have prayed. But if you will be like the cork, your love and prayers will eventually prevail. Every prayer you pray is like another tap of the cork. It may not appear to make a difference, but over time it will all add up and bring the victory.

Keith Phillips

May 26

Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Luke 21:33

I consider the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for in them there is the effective reflection of a sublimity which emanated from the person of Christ, and this is as divine as ever the divine appeared on earth.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

You never get to the end of Christ’s words. There is something in them always behind. They pass into proverbs, into laws, into doctrines, into consolations; but they never pass away, and, after all the use that is made of them they are still not exhausted.

Arthur P. Stanley

These writings bring back to you the living image of that most holy mind, the very Christ himself speaking, healing, dying, rising, in fact so entirely present, that you would see less of him if you beheld him with your eyes.

Desiderius Erasmus

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

John 14:23
He calms the storm,
So that its waves are still.
Then they are glad because they are quiet;
So He guides them to their desired haven.

Psalm 107:29-30

Gliding o'er life's fitful waters,
Heavy surges sometimes roll;
And we sigh for yonder haven,
For the homeland of the soul.

'Tis the weary pilgrim's homeland,
Where each throbbing care shall cease,
And our longings and our yearnings,
Like a wave, be hushed to peace.

Fanny Crosby

In our heavenly homeland, peace flows as a river; joy springs as a fountain; love is boundless as an ocean. Our Saviour has gained us entrance to this haven of peace; our fears, our tears, our sorrows are erased in his embrace. Our loved ones wait patiently until they may take us into their arms once more. So far, yet so near! Heaven is but a prayer's breath away.

A. M.

Dear Lord,

In the Bible when Jabez called on you, saying, “Oh, that you would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that your hand would be with me, and that you would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain,” you granted him what he requested. Likewise I ask you to grant me my requests. Please be with me this day; help my thoughts to be centred on you, and my actions to be for the benefit of others.

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.

The second part of this prayer is attributed to St Patrick

1 1 Chronicles 4:10
As for me, I will call upon God,
And the LORD shall save me.
Evening and morning and at noon I will pray,
and cry aloud,
And He shall hear my voice.

Psalm 55:16–17

Meditating on Jesus and learning to stop and get calm before Him, no matter what else is going on in your life, no matter what else is going on around you, is what makes it possible to praise Him, even when you’re facing what seem like impossible situations. The fruits of praise grow from the roots of learning to rest in Jesus.

M. S. Fontaine

If you allow yourself to be constantly distracted, your heart will grow hard. Retire to pray when you can and live the rest of your day in love.

François de la Mothe-Fénelon

I have called, and he has answered,
Ever faithful does he prove!
He has shown me his salvation,
And a lifetime of his love.

Author unknown

Proverbs wisely says, “Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Rather, be like David, who said, “In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever.” That is the key. You can plan for tomorrow, but you know that tomorrow may never come. So praise God and enjoy the time that you have. “Tomorrow” might not just be the next day, but the principle can apply to the next hour or even the next minute. What you have is now. The future is not a given. So you may as well enjoy the moment, because in reality that is all you are assured of.

You are, therefore, free to enjoy the time you have right now. If you don’t enjoy it right now, you really don’t get another chance. You can reminisce about good times or regret bad times. You can remember with fondness how you did enjoy the moment, or lament that you didn’t. But the only actual time you can enjoy the moment is right now, at the moment. So seize the moment! Seize the day! Seize the joy!

Jesus

1 Proverbs 27:1 (kjv)
2 Psalm 44:8 (kjv)
You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy.

Psalm 16:11

In the secret of His presence how my soul delights to hide!
Oh, how precious are the lessons which I learn at Jesus’ side!
Earthly cares can never vex me, neither trials lay me low;
For when Satan comes to tempt me, to the secret place I go,
To the secret place I go.

When my soul is faint and thirsty, 'neath the shadow of His wing
There is cool and pleasant shelter, and a fresh and crystal spring;
And my Saviour rests beside me, as we hold communion sweet:
If I tried, I could not utter what He says when thus we meet,
What He says when thus we meet.

Would you like to know the sweetness of the secret of the Lord?
Go and hide beneath His shadow: this shall then be your reward;
And whene’er you leave the silence of that happy meeting place,
You must mind and bear the image of the Master in your face,
Of the Master in your face.

Ellen L. Goreh

I have set before you today life and good.

Deuteronomy 30:15

With God as your guide and coach, you’re sure to be successful
in the things that matter, the ones that will last beyond this life and
into eternity.

Mottos for Success

God is always there to give us a new chance, a fresh start, a way out of any
situation we find hopeless. He always believes in us, always knows our
greatest potential, and is always ready to help us achieve it. We do well
when we take full advantage of His opportunities to change for the better.

Chloe West

You had better live your best and act your best and think your best today;
for today is the sure preparation for tomorrow and all the other tomorrows
that follow.

Harriet Martineau
While they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.  
Acts 1:9

Because Christ lives I too shall live, oh glorious truth divine,  
To think that resurrection life was his and shall be mine.  
Because Christ lives I too shall live, I'll leave this lump of clay  
And lift my wings to higher heights on resurrection day.  
Because Christ lives I too shall live, with him I'll ever be,  
Rejoicing that he broke death's chains and set my spirit free.  
Author unknown

James S. Stewart is not overstating when he tells us, “God raised up Jesus, not simply to give credence to man’s immemorial hopes of life beyond the grave, but to shatter history and remake it by a cosmic, creative event, ushering in a new age and a new dimension of existence.”  
A. M.

Blessed [are] the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.  
Matthew 5:7

Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness—kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting. In the slums we are the light of God’s kindness to the poor.  
To children, to the poor, to all who suffer and are lonely, give always a happy smile. Give them not only your care but also your heart. Because of God’s goodness and love every moment of our life can be the beginning of great things. Be open, ready to receive and you will find Him everywhere. Every work of love brings a person face to face with God.  
Mother Teresa

Hail! Ye small sweet courtesies of life; for smooth do ye make the road of it, like grace and beauty, which beget inclinations to love at first sight; it is ye who open the door and let the stranger in.  
Laurence Sterne
June 4

Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning,
For in You do I trust;
Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,
For I lift up my soul to You.

Psalm 143:8

Walk boldly and wisely. There is a hand above that will help you on.

Philip James Bailey

The quieter the mind, the more powerful, the worthier, the deeper, the more telling and more perfect the prayer is.

Meister Eckhart

I can take my telescope and look millions of miles into space; but I can lay my telescope aside, go into my room and shut the door, and while in earnest prayer I see more of heaven and get closer to God than I can when assisted by all the telescopes and material agencies on earth.

Isaac Newton

Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.

1 Samuel 3:9

June 5

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our grateful hymn of praise.

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light,
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our grateful hymn of praise.

For each perfect gift of thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our grateful hymn of praise.

Francis Pierpoint
For thus says the High and Lofty One  
Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:  
“I dwell in the high and holy place,  
With him who has a contrite and humble spirit,  
To revive the spirit of the humble,  
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Isaiah 57:15

Happiness is made up of many things: It is the smile of a child,  
the golden glows of a sunrise, the warm hug of a loved one, health after  
sickness. But such happiness is also transitory: A child does not always  
smile, the sunrise may be overshadowed with dark clouds, a loved one  
may leave, sickness may not pass. There is another happiness, that is  
deeper and everlasting, and that is the happiness that comes into your  
soul when you realise the depth, breadth and height of God’s love for you,  
a love embodied in his Son, Jesus.

To find Jesus is to discover that no matter your weakness, no matter  
your inabilities, no matter your despair, there is a strength you can draw  
upon, a hope you can lean upon, a love you can dwell within. Truly,  
“Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.”

A. M.

Fear not, for I am with you;  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you,  
Yes, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

Jesus,  
Thank you for always holding on to me. All my life long, every day,  
you’ve been right there, holding my hand, and I love you for that. It’s such  
a secure feeling to know you’re there.

Sometimes I know I’ve let go. I’ve walked away and I’ve walked alone,  
and I’m sorry for that. But I love how you come after me and you take my  
hand and you keep holding on. You never let go. You never leave me.

And you not only hold my hand, but you speak to me and you love  
me and guide me. I love you for that. Thank you for sticking close, Jesus.  
Thank you for reminding me not to fear, because you are always right there  
beside me, watching out for me. I love you. Keep holding on to me, Jesus!
With God, there are no coincidences.

Mottos for Success

Coincidences? To me they are little signs, the footprints of a God who is walking right beside me.

Colin C. Bell

What men call accident is the doing of God’s providence.

Gamaliel Bailey

To everything there is a season, And a time to refrain from
A time for every purpose under embracing;
heaven: A time to gain,
A time to be born, And a time to lose;
And a time to die; A time to keep,
A time to plant, And a time to throw away;
And a time to pluck what is planted; A time to tear,
A time to weep, And a time to sew;
And a time to laugh; A time to keep silence,
A time to mourn, And a time to speak;
And a time to dance; A time to love,
A time to cast away stones, And a time to hate;
And a time to gather stones; A time of war,
A time to embrace, And a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1–2,4–8

When life is difficult, what should you do? Think about Me. Think about how much I love you. Think about My power. Think about all your blessings, and thank Me.

You can praise your way right out of a bad mood! If you thank Me for all the good things in your life, the negative feelings will dissipate.

You may sometimes find yourself in situations where there doesn’t seem to be anything at all good to thank Me for. Well, then thank Me for the good that will eventually come out of the bad, because if you love Me, sooner or later it will. That’s explained in the Bible, in Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good to those who love God.” For those who love Me, I can bring good out of anything.

Let Me change your difficult day into a happy one. You can always find something to thank Me for. Praise Me for one thing, and you’ll usually be reminded of another, and another. Happiness will find you as you focus on Me and on the positive.

Jesus
No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks.

Ambrose

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

Luke 17:12–19

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.

Psalm 106:1

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27

From the world’s “hot, restless gleam,” from its hopes and fears, joys, sorrows, sins and struggles, we turn to personal communion with him who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and knows our sorrows. Even as the dewy coolness and the soft twilight shades steal over the day, when the summer day melts into the summer evening, so the sense of pain and shame, anxiety, fatigue, and worry of mind all soften into childlike trust and peaceful confidence as we “cast our care upon him who cares for us.”

Canon Wynne, adapted

To re-create strength, rest. To re-create mind, repose. To re-create cheerfulness, hope in God.

Charles Simmons

1 1 Peter 5:7
While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:18 (KJV)

Our duty as Christians is always to keep heaven in our eye and earth under our feet.

Matthew Henry

He who has no vision of eternity will never get a true hold of time.

Thomas Carlyle

Holy Spirit of God, visit now this soul of mine, and tarry within it until the eventide. Inspire all my thoughts. Pervade all my imaginations. Suggest all my decisions. Lodge in my soul’s most inward citadel, and order all my doings. Be with me in silence and in my speech, in my haste and in my leisure, in company and in solitude, in the freshness of the morning and the weariness of the evening. Give me grace at all times to rejoice in thy mysterious companionship.

John Baillie

When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.

Isaiah 43:2

God doesn’t open paths for us in advance of our coming. He doesn’t promise help before help is needed. He doesn’t remove obstacles out of our way before we reach them. Yet when we are on the edge of our need, God’s hand is stretched out. Many people forget this and are forever worrying about difficulties that they foresee in the future. They expect that God is going to make the way plain and open before them miles and miles ahead, whereas he has promised to do it only step by step as they may need. You must get to the floodwaters before you can claim the promise.

Author unknown
Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

Matthew 22:37

My God, I love thee above all else and thee I desire as my last end. Always and in all things, with my whole heart and strength I seek thee. If thou give not thyself to me, thou givest nothing; if I find thee not, I find nothing. Grant to me, therefore, most loving God, that I may ever love thee for thyself above all things, and seek thee in all things in this life present, so that at last I may find thee and keep thee for ever in the world to come.

Prayer of Thomas Bradwardine

Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the [people] and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”

Exodus 3:13–14

Making tea or coffee requires boiling water. When I heat the water, it boils at 100 degrees centigrade. When my great-grandmother heated water for tea, the water boiled at 100 degrees centigrade. When the people of antiquity heated water, whether in Greece or Rome, China or India, the water boiled at 100 degrees centigrade. We can reasonably expect that our grandchildren will also find that water boils at 100 degrees centigrade.

Some things simply don’t change. Water boils; God is.

A. M.

The Lord shall endure forever.

Psalm 9:7
A righteous man may fall seven times
And rise again.

Proverbs 24:16

You are not a disappointment because you are not perfect, or because you didn’t do as well as someone else. It’s like when you have a child, and when that child starts walking, or learning to eat or talk, they fall, they make a mess, and sometimes they don’t make sense, but you don’t love them any less.

Life on earth is a mystery, just as walking is initially a mystery to a baby. Even though you eventually learn to take a step, and you learn something new about life, there’s always something new coming up ahead. Life is about continuing the journey, recognising that falling is a part of the journey, but that I am proud of you and I love you.

Jesus

Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen to life following his crucifixion; it took the actual sight of the Saviour for him to be convinced. Such privileges are rare in the walk of faith. It seems that more often we are expected to believe without seeing, which can be quite a struggle.

Part of the answer lies around us. The flowers that appear in springtime, the trees laden with fruit, and every rich crop of wheat, corn and rice grows from tiny seeds. Buried unseen in the dark earth, nurtured by the warmth of the sun, watered by the rain, the seeds undergo their transformation. In time they stand as full-grown plants.

That all these plants, with their beauty and usefulness, grow from a tiny seed is an illustration of faith. Jesus himself likened faith to a mustard seed. Faith doesn’t start as a majestic tree. It just needs to be a tiny seed. Plant it, believe, and it will grow.

A. M.

If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed...

Matthew 17:20
He has made everything beautiful in its time.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

Study nature as the countenance of God.

Charles Kingsley

The person who, in living union of the mind and heart, can converse with God through nature, finds in the material forms around him a source of power and happiness inexhaustible, and like the life of angels.

The highest life and glory of humanity is to be alive unto God; and when this grandeur of responsiveness to him, and this power of communion with him is carried, as the habit of the soul, into the forms of nature, then the walls of our world are as the gates of heaven.

George B. Cheever, adapted

There is a signature of wisdom and power impressed on the works of God.

... Not only the splendour of the sun, but the glimmering light of the glow-worm proclaims his glory.

John Newton

Let us love one another, for love is of God.

1 John 4:7

What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult to each other?

George Eliot

If, instead of a gem or even a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give.

George MacDonald

Eternal goodness,

You want me to gaze into you and see that you love me.

You love me freely, and you want me to love and serve my neighbours with the same love, offering them my prayers and my possessions, as far as in me lies.

O God, come to my assistance!

Catherine of Siena

He who is filled with love is filled with God himself.

Augustine of Hippo
June 21 Prayer

[S]he also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.

Luke 10:39

God only knows the love of God;
Oh that it now were shed abroad
   In this poor stony heart;
For love I sigh, for love I pine;
This only portion, Lord, be mine!
   Be mine this better part!

Oh that I could for ever sit,
With Mary, at the Master’s feet;
   Be this my happy choice!
My only care, delight and bliss,
My joy, my heaven on earth be this,
   To hear the Bridegroom’s voice!

Charles Wesley

Praise you, Lord! Praise your name!
I’m going to bless your name, Lord, from now and forever. From the rising of the sun to when it goes down, your name is to be praised.
You are high above all nations, your glory is above the heavens.
Who is like you, oh Lord my God? You dwell on high, yet you look down and pay attention to the things of this earth. You raise me up when I’m down; you lift me up out of the ash heap! You have given me a roof overhead, and much more.
I love you, Lord, because you have heard my voice and my supplications. Because you have inclined your ear to me, therefore I will call upon you as long as I live.
Praise you, Lord!

Based on Psalm 113 and 116:1–2

Come, O Christ my Light, and illumine my darkness.
Come, my Life, and revive me from death.
Come, my Physician, and heal my wounds.
Come, Flame of Divine Love, and burn up the thorns of my sins,
Kindling my heart with the flame of your love.
For you alone are my King and my Lord.

Dimitri of Rostov
Since the beginning of time, the sun has been rising and setting each and every day. Can you imagine how many different sunrises and sunsets I've painted since time began? And yet, there have never ever been two sunsets exactly alike in all the world—and there never will be. I'll never run out of incredible color schemes and far-out patterns to use.

And just as I'll never run out of sunsets, neither will I ever run out of things to say to you. As you learn to hear from Me, you'll discover that I have an endless stock of word pictures and visions to choose from; and I'll always have something left to show you. There'll never be a time when I won't have any new ideas to give you or interesting ways to explain things to you if you'll just ask Me to.

I'll never run out of love for you either. In fact, nothing about Me is ever going to run out or come to an end!

Jesus

Finally our hope and faith are strong and steady. Then, when that happens, we are able to hold our heads high no matter what happens and know that all is well, for we know how dearly God loves us.

Romans 5:4–5 (TLB)

Everything that is done in the world is done by hope.

Martin Luther

Union with Jesus Christ is the foundation of our hope.

Jean-Jacques Pictet

O Christ, our Morning Star, splendour of light eternal, shining with the glory of the rainbow, come and waken us from the greyness of our apathy and renew in us your gift of hope.

The Venerable Bede

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 (NIV)
Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.

Matthew 21:22

Prayer is connecting with God, uploading your love, requests and thanks, and downloading His love and answers.

Mottos for Success

Pray to God at the beginning of all thy works, that so thou mayest bring them all to a good ending.

Xenophon

Prayer touches the only spring that can ensure success. By speaking, we move man; but by prayer, we move God.

Robert Hall

Talk to him in prayer of all your wants, your troubles, even of the weariness you feel in serving him. You cannot speak too freely, too trustfully, of him.

François de la Mothe-Fénélon

Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:24

He said to them, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.”

Mark 6:31

Oh for a ‘desert place,’ with only the Master’s smile!

Oh for the ‘coming apart,’ with only His ‘rest awhile!’

Many are ‘coming and going’ with busy restless feet,

And the soul is hungering now, with ‘no leisure so much as to eat.’

Well! I will wait in the crowd till He shall call me apart,

Till the silence fall which shall waken the music of mind and heart;

Patiently wait till He give the work of my secret choice,

Blending the song of life with the thrill of the Master’s voice.

Frances Ridley Havergal

Good Jesus, strength of the weary, rest of the restless, by the weariness and unrest of your sacred cross, come to me who am weary that I may rest in you.

Edward Pusey
It is in giving that we receive,  
it is in loving that we are loved.  

Francis of Assisi

Kind words are the music of the world. They have a power which seems to be beyond natural causes, as though they were some angel’s sons which had lost their way and come to earth.  

Frederick William Faber

The cure for all the ills and wrongs, the cares, the sorrows and the crimes of humanity, all lie in that one word “love.” It is the divine vitality that everywhere produces and restores life. To each and every one of us, it gives the power of working miracles if we will.  

Lydia M. Child

The truly generous is the truly wise, and he who loves not others, lives unblest.  

Henry Home

Blessed is the influence of one true, loving human soul on another.  

George Eliot

Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.  

Isaiah 30:21

I want to be a very present companion, counsellor and help to you—not merely someone you know of, or someone you met once but rarely think about or talk to, or even an advisor that you consult from time to time when you have a problem or need to make an important decision. I want to be a constant, loving presence.  

I want to communicate with you personally and directly, and not in a distant, formal, or mental sort of way, but heart to heart. I want us to commune as intimates would, to talk things over, to reach decisions together and to sometimes communicate without saying a word. I want to develop a bond of love between us that you’ve never experienced with anyone else and can’t even imagine.  

Jesus
June 28

Revive me according to Your lovingkindness.
Psalm 119:88

God of our life, there are days when the burdens we carry chafe our shoulders and weigh us down; when the road seems dreary and endless, the skies gray and threatening; when our lives have no music in them, and our hearts are lonely, and our souls have lost their courage.

Flood the path with light; run our eyes to where the skies are full of promise; tune our hearts to brave music; give us the sense of comradeship with heroes and saints of every age; and so revive our spirits that we may be able to encourage the souls of all who journey with us on the road of life, to your honour and glory.

Prayer attributed to Augustine

June 29

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.
2 Timothy 3:16

In books I converse with men, in the Bible I converse with God.
William Romaine

After all, the Bible must be its own argument and defence. The power of it can never be proved unless it is felt. The authority of it can never be supported unless it is manifest. The light of it can never be demonstrated unless it shines.

Henry van Dyke

Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall keep it to the end.
Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law;
Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.
Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.

Psalm 119:33–35
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Matthew 5:6

We feed our minds daily with knowledge, yet let us not forget to feed our spirits daily with truth.

Mottos for Success

It is obvious that to be in earnest in seeking the truth is an indispensable requisite for finding it.

John Henry Newman

True wisdom is to know what is best worth knowing, and to do what is best worth doing.

Edward Porter Humphrey

The light which we have gained was given to us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge.

John Milton

The Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:6

Faith gives us courage to face the present with confidence and the future with expectancy.

Mottos for Success

A teacher took her primary school students to the assembly hall for a lesson with a difference. Standing at the foot of the steps leading up to the stage, she asked, “Is anybody good at jumping?”

Quite a few young hands shot up.

“Well,” she continued, “could any of you jump from the floor here up onto the stage?”

No hands went up this time.

“I can,” said the teacher, “and I’ll show you how.” Beginning at the foot of the steps leading up to the stage, she hopped onto the first step. From there she hopped onto the second, and so on until she reached the top.

Many things can only be accomplished little by little, step by step. When a task looks daunting or the way ahead too steep, just take it one step at a time.

A. M.

Does He not see my ways, And count all my steps?

Job 31:4
Peace rules the day when Christ rules the mind.

Author unknown

It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
In the [reverence] of the Lord there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.

Lamentations 3:26; Proverbs 14:26

Precious hiding place, In the shelter of His love; Not a doubt or fear, Since my Lord is near, And I’m sheltered in His love.

Avis Christiansen

O God, make us children of quietness, and heirs of peace.

Clement I of Rome

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts; and be thankful.

Colossians 3:15

For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12

Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Psalm 36:5

Skies to be perfectly beautiful must not be cloudless. The sunrise owes half its charms to the morning clouds that catch the glory of the coming day. They are the outriders of the king, heralding his grand approach. And when the giant has run his course and must depart, the evening clouds assist him. In purple robes and crimson vestments with silver lining and golden edgings, he bedecks them all. The moon, too, uses the clouds to good account. The silver queen appears to know that a thin veil becomes her well. Clouds are the river of God that is full of water.

Thomas Spurgeon

Life to be wonderful is not cloudless. An endless blue sky may represent drought; the appearance of clouds a welcome harbinger of needed rain. Rays of hope shine more brilliantly when reflected off the clouds of disappointment. Clouds, as well as sunshine, bring good things.

A. M.
God is a refuge for us.  

Psalm 62:8

**Picture the Grand Canyon.** Its many levels, from stark cliffs to lush inner sanctums, tell a story. The waters that created this seeming wound in the landscape also bring forth its most beautiful and abundant life deep within.

The same majesty and beauty is formed in your soul as the sometimes raging currents of battles, failures, tears and suffering create what at first glance may seem to be deep scars on your heart or life. I allow those waters of troubles to flow through your life to create a refuge where My most precious and treasured gifts can grow like rare flowers.

As you look beyond the surface into the depths of a heart reshaped by troubles that were carried to Me, you’ll find that hidden within those canyons are the most beautiful of blossoms. Soul blossoms are brilliant, and breathtaking in colour and fragrance. They are a source of inspiration and comfort to the heart that bears them, and to the spirits of others who venture there in search of comfort, solace and the waters of My love to slake their thirst. Everything there carries a distinctiveness that says: Jesus has been here.

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The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of singing has come,  
And the voice of the turtledove  
Is heard in our land.  
The fig tree puts forth her green figs,  
And the vines with the tender grapes  
Give a good smell.  

*Song of Solomon 2:12–13*

The little cares that fretted me,  
I lost them yesterday,  
Among the winds at play;  
Among the lowing of the herds,  
The rustling of the trees;  
Among the singing of the birds,  
The humming of the bees.  

The foolish fears of what might happen,  
I cast them all away  
Among the clover-scented grass,  
Among the new-mown hay;  
Among the husking of the corn,  
Where drowsy poppies nod,  
Where ill thoughts die and good are born—  
Out in the fields with God!  

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*
Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory.  
*Revelation 19:7*

If you want to really live, start off each day by finding something to be thankful for.

*Mottos for Success*

There are always flowers for those who want to see them.  
*Henri Matisse*

Happiness is what we make it. Some people are unbelievably cheerful in the midst of difficulty or obstacles; others bemoan the slightest inconvenience. Those who look for the upside of any trouble are the ones who come out ahead in quality of life, and the radiance of their positive attitude sheds light on the paths of others.  
*Chloe West*

‘Tis easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows along like a song,
But the man worthwhile
Is the one who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong.  
*Ella Wheeler Wilcox*

The best way to show my gratitude to God is to accept everything, even my problems, with joy.

*Mother Teresa*

Most high, most powerful, good Lord, to you belong praise, glory, honour and all blessing!

Praised be my Lord God with all his creatures, and especially our brother the sun, who brings us the day and brings us the light; fair is he and shines with a great splendour. O Lord, he signifies you.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon and for the stars, which he has set clear and lovely in the heavens.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calms and all weather, by which you uphold life in all creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable unto us and humble and precious and pure.

Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom you give light in the darkness, and he is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, who sustains us and keeps us, and brings forth various fruits and flowers of many colours.

Praise and bless the Lord, and give thanks unto him, and serve him with great humility.

*Prayer of Francis of Assisi*
When [Jesus] was in the house He asked them, “What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?” But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”

Mark 9:33–35

I used to think that God’s gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character the more easily we could reach them. I now find that God’s gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that it is not a question of growing taller but of stooping lower.

Frederick Brotherton Meyer

He that is down need fear no fall, he that is low no pride.

John Bunyan

All of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

1 Peter 5:5–6

[God has] given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4

What is the “divine nature”? It is the essence of God, how He thinks and how He acts. And through the promises He gives in His Word, we can be like He is. We can partake of those same attitudes, those same feelings, those same ways of looking at things by believing and putting into practice the principles and promises that are right there in the Bible.

M. S. Fontaine

My God, I pray that I may so know you and love you that I may rejoice in you. And if I may not do so fully in this life, let me go steadily on to the day when I come to fullness of life.

Meanwhile let my mind meditate on your eternal goodness,

let my tongue speak of it,
let my heart live it,
let my mouth speak it,
let my soul hunger for it,
and my whole being desire it, until I enter into your joy.

Anselm of Canterbury
As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Isaiah 32:2

Sooner or later, amidst the pleasures and the cares of ordinary life, the human spirit feels the need of a quiet, a comfort and a calm, beyond what anything in ordinary life can afford. In such seasons, there is one soft, restful shadow in the “weary land,” and one only. It is in close personal union with him who has said, “Come unto me all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

His pardon for our sins, his sympathy in our troubles, his divine promises to believe in and dwell upon, himself to love and trust and have as our portion forever—in this is our rest.

Canon Wynne, adapted

Oh how divinely sweet it is to come into the secret of his presence, and abide in his pavilion!

David Brainerd

I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.

Psalm 40:1–2

A rock, though beaten on by winds and waves, is immoveable; so faith, grounded on the rock Christ, holds out in all temptations.

John Chrysostom

Great tempest, great calm; God proportions the comfort to the affliction.

Pasquier Quesnel

As the beautiful, dew-covered rose rises from amongst its thorns, so may my heart be so full of love for you, my God, that I may rise above the storms and evils that assail me, and stand fast in trust and freedom of spirit.

Hadewijch of Brabant

Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Hebrews 3:6
Blessed [are] the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.  
*Matthew 5:9*

When you call on Me, you open a line of communication between us. When this happens, if you listen, I will speak to your heart and show you ways you can be a peacemaker. I will teach you how you can promote peace, using tools of faith, love and compassion, kind words and deeds.

Do not think that you can never make a difference in the world. Even one man or woman, when empowered by My love, can change the world. You can change your part of the world, the world around you, right now! Start by letting Me change your heart, and by making the decision to stand up for good over evil, for love over hate. Which will you choose?  
*Jesus*

The Word of God, Jesus Christ, out of his boundless love, became what we are, that he might make us what he is.  
*Irenaeus*

The love of Jesus is everlasting. It’s not something that will be here one day and gone the next. Jesus’ love will not expire or fade. It can’t be stolen or forfeited. It doesn’t get old with the times or go out of style. It’s traditional and historic, but also modern and current. It’s always. Even before we knew Him, He loved us. He has loved us from the very beginning of time, and He will love us throughout eternity.  
*M. S. Fontaine*

He loved us even to the death! May this love kindle ours; filling our souls with peace and joy; enabling us to resign grandeur, fame and pleasure; to count as nothing all that time shall destroy; to will the will of God, and to watch in unwearied and blissful expectation for the coming of the Lord.  
*François de la Mothe-Fénelon*
Yours, O LORD, is the greatness,
The power and the glory,
The victory and the majesty;
For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours;
Yours is the kingdom, O LORD,
And You are exalted as head over all.
1 Chronicles 29:11

Lord and Father, we thank you for the beauty of this place that you created. In all the uncertainties of our world, may the hills that stand steadfast and sure about us speak of the steadfastness of your love; may the sea around us with its eternal ebb and flow keep us aware of your ever-flowing grace; may the open sky above us remind us that your mercy is always offered to us. Help us to remember that we are part of your creation and that you cherish us and hold us in the palm of your hand.

Prayer found at St. Tudno's Church, Wales; author unknown

In the morning the word of the LORD came to me.
Ezekiel 12:8

I met God in the morning, When the day was at its best, And His presence came like sunrise, Like a glory in my breast.

All day long the presence lingered, All day long He stayed with me, And we sailed in perfect calmness O'er a very troubled sea.

Ralph Spaulding Cushman

My soul hath desired thee all night, O eternal wisdom! And in the early morning I turn to thee from the depths of my heart. May the holy presence remove all dangers from my soul and body. May thy many graces fill my heart, and inflame it with thy divine love. O most sweet Jesus! Turn thy face towards me, for this morning with all the powers of my soul I fly to thee.

Henry Suso
You are my hope, O Lord God.  
Psalm 71:5

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”  
John 14:6

The power of God is capable of finding hope where hope no longer exists, and a way where the way is impossible.

Gregory of Nyssa

Hope is a lover’s staff; walk hence with that, and manage it against despairing thoughts.

William Shakespeare

I would say to my soul, O my soul, this is not the place of despair; this is not the time to despair in. As long as mine eyes can find a promise in the Bible, as long as there is a moment left me of breath or life in this world, so long will I wait or look for mercy, so long will I fight against unbelief and despair.

John Bunyan

Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
And why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him,  
The help of my countenance and my God.  
Psalm 43:5

Christ is a free way; Christ is a near way; Christ is a firm way—there is no need of sinking; Christ is a pleasant way—“all thy ways are ways of pleasantness”; Christ is a safe way—there is a continual guard in that way; Christ is an easy way to hit—“wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein”; Christ is a spacious way—“thou hast set my feet in a large room.”

Tobias Crisp

The Word made flesh for us gives us the greatest hope that the murky night of darkness will not overwhelm us, but we shall see the daylight of eternity. Lord, let us receive your clear light; be for us such a mirror of light that we may be given grace to see you unendingly.

Hildegard of Bingen

1 Proverbs 3:17  
2 Isaiah 35:8  
3 Psalm 31:8
Look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.  

Luke 21:28

There was once a university professor who sprinkled his lectures with personal reflections that invariably began with, “As I was walking in my garden, it occurred to me that…” Over and over he passed on to his students thoughts that his garden had inspired.

One day he invited two of his most promising students to visit him at home, and over a cup of coffee the students asked to see his garden. To their amazement it was only a narrow strip, barely wider than the walkway, with the house on one side and a high wall on the other.

“Is this really the garden where you have all those inspiring thoughts, doctor?” one of the students asked.

“Yes,” came the professor’s reply.

“But it’s so small!” protested the student.

“Ah, yes,” said the professor, a twinkle in his eye as he gestured toward the sky, “but look how high it is!”

Retold by A. M.

Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite. He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name.

Psalm 147:5,4

If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

When the blazing sun is gone, When he nothing shines upon, Then you show your little light, Twinkle, twinkle, all the night. Then the traveller in the dark Thanks you for your tiny spark, How could he see where to go, If you did not twinkle so?

Jane Taylor

There they stand, the innumerable stars, shining in order like a living hymn, written in light.

Nathaniel Parker Willis
He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

*John 10:3*

**What an incomprehensible thought:** The Lord of the universe tells us, “I know you well and you are special to me. I know you by name.”

*A.M.*

The sun, which has all those planets revolving around it, is able to ripen the smallest bunch of grapes as though it had nothing else to do in the universe.

*Galileo Galilei*

There is not one life which the Life-Giver ever loses out of his sight; not one which sins so that he casts it away; not one which is not so near to him that whatever touches it touches him with sorrow or with joy.

*Phillips Brooks*

Sweet is the solace of Thy love,
My Heavenly Friend, to me,
While through the hidden way of faith
I journey home with Thee,
Learning by quiet thankfulness
As a dear child to be.

*Anna Laetitia Waring*

O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures for ever.

*Psalm 136:3 (RSV)*

Teach me your way, O Lord; I will walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness; make your way straight before my face. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; on you I wait all the day. For you are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for your name’s sake, lead me and guide me.

O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; you understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

*Based on Psalm 86:11; 5:8; 135:7; 139:7–4, 23–24; 143:10*

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1 Exodus 33:17 (the message)
Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us.

*Samuel Smiles*

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**When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.”**

And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”

The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.”

When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!”

Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

*Matthew 8:5–8,10,13*

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Though today may not fulfil
All your hopes, have patience still;
For perchance tomorrow’s sun
Sees your happier days begun.

*Author unknown*

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**The joy we look forward to in heaven can begin right now. In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus prays to God the Father, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”** And another time, when asked when the kingdom of God would come, He said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation, for indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” In other words, it’s already here in our hearts—or can be.

The 1828 edition of *Webster’s Dictionary* defined “life” as “The enjoyments or blessings of the present life; supreme felicity; eternal happiness in heaven.” Again, it’s both here and now, and there and then.

The apostle John makes it more personal by saying, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

To know Jesus personally is to have a taste of heaven.

*Curtis Peter van Gorder*

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1. Matthew 6:10
2. Luke 17:20–21
3. John 17:3
In the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.  
Mark 1:35

Before your day begins, take a few quiet minutes with Me. Try to block from your mind all of your plans and thoughts about the day ahead and spend those few minutes reading My Word, thinking about Me, thanking Me for all I’ve done for you in the past, and thanking Me in advance for My continued help and blessings. As you do these things, our minds and spirits will meet. Once you’ve made that connection, if you will continually turn your thoughts toward Me, My love, peace and power will carry you through the day, come what may.

Jesus

Let the weary, wandering soul bethink itself and retire to God. He will not mock thee with shadows as the world has done.

John Howe

Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”  
Mark 1:41

The Lord is my shepherd. Not was, not may be, nor will be. The Lord is my shepherd. He is on Sunday, is on Monday, and is through every day of the week; is in January, is in December, and every month of the year; is at home, and is in China; is in peace, and is in war; in abundance, and in penury.

James Hudson Taylor

I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk
Till travelling days are done.

Author unknown

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Jude 21

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1 Psalm 23:1
Exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 3:13

In a story from Native American folklore, a grandfather explains to his young grandson the inner struggle between good and evil.

“A battle goes on inside us all,” the grandfather begins. “It is a battle between two wolves. One wolf is the embodiment of everything evil, like hate, anger, jealousy, resentment, greed, arrogance, lying and selfishness. The other wolf is the embodiment of everything good, like love, joy, peace, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, compassion, truth and faith.”

The grandson thinks about those words and then asks, “Which wolf wins?”

The grandfather replies, “The one you feed.”

Keith Phillips

Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Matthew 26:41

Courage, brother! Do not stumble, Though thy path is dark as night; There’s a star to guide the humble, Trust in God and do the right.

Norman Macleod

Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Courage may be loud and vigorous, but more often it is the silent conviction to take one step in front of another. Quiet determination to try again tomorrow is courage at its best.

A. M.
I will give peace and quietness.

1 Chronicles 22:9

I praise you, my Lord, for your unconditional love.

Where else could I ever find such love?—Love that is always, love never ending, love without measure.

I can’t always understand with my finite mind or begin to fathom how you can love me so, but I know you do. I thank you that I don’t need to understand. I only have to reach out my hand and receive from you. You make everything so easy.

Sometimes when I feel so weak, so low, so muddled and lacking for words, not knowing how to express the innermost secrets of my heart, I stand in silent wonder, resting in the quiet assurance that only you can give, and I know you understand. You lift my worries and fears, and you kiss away my tears with your gentle care.

Thank you!

Always long and pray that the will of God may be fully realised in your life. You will find that the man who does this walks in the land of peace and quietness.

Thomas à Kempis

Christ is the Way; he is also the Truth and the Life. This power, this life, is within our reach each moment of our life; as near, as free, as abundant as the air we breathe. A breath of prayer in the morning, and the morning life is sure. A breath of prayer in the evening, and the evening blessing comes.

Henry Drummond

Dear restless heart, be still, for peace is God’s own smile, His love can every wrong and sorrow reconcile; Just love, and love, and love, and calmly wait awhile.

Edith Willis Linn

Therefore take heart, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

Acts 27:25
To cultivate the sense of the beautiful is one of the most effectual ways of cultivating an appreciation of the divine goodness.

Christian Nestell Bovee

Enjoy the little things, for they are the essence of life. Appreciate the senses I have given you; use them to their fullest. When you look, see. When you eat, taste. When you hear, listen. When you touch, feel. When you smell, let the scent fill your whole body. It is only when you take My blessings for granted that life loses its lustre.

Jesus

There you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.

Deuteronomy 12:7

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

Psalm 57:1

There is one only calm and sure tranquillity; one only solid, firm and lasting security; and this is ours when withdrawn from the whirlwinds of this unquiet life, and settled in the anchorage of the harbour of salvation, we lift our eyes from earth to heaven; and, admitted to the grace of the Lord, and made near to God in our mind, we rejoice.

How firm, how immovable a defence is ours! What a heavenly safeguard of unfading blessings, when we are loose from the snares of this entangling life, and purged from the dregs of earth into the light of immortality and eternity! There is no need of money, of the hand or work of man, to obtain this highest dignity and power. It is the free, gratuitous gift of God.

Robert Milman

The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23
You crown the year with Your goodness,
And Your paths drip with abundance.
They drop on the pastures of the wilderness,
And the little hills rejoice on every side.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered with grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing.  

Psalm 65:11–13

Think of the number of trees and blades of grass and flowers,
the extravagant wealth of beauty no one ever sees! Think of the sunrises
and sunsets we never look at! God is lavish in every degree.  

Oswald Chambers

We thank thee then, O Father,
For all things bright and good;
The seed-time and the harvest,
Our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer
For all thy love imparts,
But that which thou desirest,
Our humble, thankful hearts.  

Matthias Claudius

Then you shall go on forward from there.  

1 Samuel 10:3

God never puts any man in a space too small to grow in.  

Author unknown

Nothing ever built arose to touch the skies unless some man dreamed
that it should, some man believed that it could, and some man willed that
it must.

Charles F. Kettering

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in
what direction we are moving.  

Oliver Wendell Holmes

In activity we must find our joy as well as glory; and labour, like everything
else that is good, is its own reward.  

Edwin Percy Whipple

Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach
them but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them and try to
follow where they lead.  

Louisa May Alcott
The eternal God is your refuge,  
And underneath are the everlasting arms.  
Deuteronomy 33:27

Behold the love of God. In those years that have passed away, it never failed. When we fell, it raised us; when we wandered, it recalled us; when we fainted, it revived us; when we sinned, it pardoned us; when we wept, it comforted us. In those moments of agony and doubt and almost despair, which some can recall, it was all-sufficient.  
Rev Canon Money, adapted

O God, whose smile is in the sky,  
Whose path is in the sea,  
Once more from earth’s tumultuous strife  
We gladly turn to thee.  
We come as those with toil far spent  
Who crave thy rest and peace,  
And from the care and fret of life  
Would find in thee release.  
John H. Holmes

Think about the good things.  
Philippians 4:8, paraphrased

An unhappy woman, dissatisfied with her lot in life, was struck by an account of a would-be emigrant who sold everything he had on an internet auction site, including his house and all of its contents, his car, and even an invitation to meet his friends. Starting again sounded a good prospect, so she decided to follow suit.

She wrote a detailed advertisement, describing her flat and possessions, her circle of friends, and the nice places to visit in her neighbourhood.

“How does this sound?” she asked herself, hoping her advert would invite generous bids. As she read the draft aloud, it suddenly struck her that if she had seen an advertisement like this five years earlier, she would have jumped at the chance to have everything that this person described. But she already had it! Her advertisement was never posted.

As Bob Gass has wisely written, “Contentment isn’t getting what we want, but enjoying what we’ve got.”  
Retold by A. M.
Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands!
Serve the LORD with gladness;
Come before His presence with singing.
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.
Psalm 100:1–2,4

If you’re feeling down, just sing a song. If you can sing out loud, then sing out loud. There’s something about singing out loud, even if you don’t feel like it, that helps pull you out of the dumps. But even if circumstances don’t permit you to sing out loud, then sing in your heart, and I will lift those burdens and weights. Or if you don’t feel like singing, say some words of praise to Me, and the heaviness will lift.

Jesus

Trust the past to God’s mercy, the present to God’s love, and the future to God’s providence.

Augustine of Hippo

It happened, as [Jesus] was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging, and he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

And when [Jesus] had come near, He asked him, saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.”

And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God.

Luke 18:35–42

How often we look upon God as our last and feeblest resource! We go to him because we have nowhere else to go. And then we learn that the storms of life have driven us, not upon the rocks, but into the desired haven.

George MacDonald
Prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night.  
Jeremy Taylor

Dear Jesus, I want each day that comes  
To share some part with you,  
Where I can sit, receive your peace,  
And hear you speak to me.

A place where I can turn aside  
And leave the cares of life,  
Where I can get the strength I need  
To banish storm and strife.

A quiet, serene and trusting place  
Where you alone can give  
The very blessing that I need—  
Here would I rest and live.  
Author unknown

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.  
John 6:63

A man may read the figures on the sundial, but he cannot tell how the day goes unless the sun is shining on it; so we may read the Bible over, but we cannot learn its purpose till the spirit of God shines upon it and into our hearts.  
Thomas Watson

The Bible is the light of my understanding, the joy of my heart, the fullness of my hope, the clarifier of my affections, the mirror of my thoughts, the consoler of my sorrows, the guide of my soul through this gloomy labyrinth of time, the telescope sent from heaven to reveal to the eye of man the amazing glories of the far distant world.  
Sir William Jones

Lead me in Your truth and teach me,  
For You are the God of my salvation;  
On You I wait all the day.  
Psalm 25:5
Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out.

But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!”

Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.

Luke 8:22–24

Nothing does so much establish the mind amidst the rollings and turbulency of present things, as both a look above them, and a look beyond them; above them to the good and steady Hand by which they are ruled, and beyond them to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that Hand, they shall be brought.

Attributed to Jeremy Taylor

Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22–23

The manifestations of the power of God, like His mercies, are “new every morning” and fresh every moment.

Daniel Webster

There's a wideness in God's mercy, For the love of God is broader
Like the wideness of the sea; Than the measure of our mind;
There's a kindness in His justice, And the heart of the Eternal
Which is more than liberty. Is most wonderfully kind.

Frederick William Faber

Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works
Which You have done;
And Your thoughts toward us
Cannot be recounted to You in order;
If I would declare and speak of them,
They are more than can be numbered.

Psalm 40:5
August 12

The just shall live by his faith.

Habakkuk 2:4

Faith is to believe what you do not yet see: the reward for this faith is to see what you believe.

Augustine of Hippo

Faith is the foot of the soul by which it can march along the road of the commandments. Love can make the feet move more swiftly, but faith is the foot that carries the soul. With faith I can do all things; without faith I shall neither have the inclination nor the power to do anything in the service of God. If you would find the men who serve God the best, you must look for the men of the most faith. Little faith will save a man, but little faith cannot do great things for God.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Faith is the eye that sees him, the hand that clings to him, the receiving power that appropriates him.

John E. Woodbridge

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

Then said I:

“Ah, Lord God!
Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.”

But the Lord said to me:

“Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’
For you shall go to all to whom I send you,
And whatever I command you, you shall speak.
Do not be afraid of their faces,
For I am with you to deliver you,” says the Lord.

Jeremiah 1:6–8

Finding meaning and fullness of life has nothing to do with age. Fulfilling God’s purpose has nothing to do with age. God is not limited by age or experience, not limited by many or by few.’ Gideon won a major battle with only 300 men and some motley weapons: torches, trumpets and empty clay jars. Jesus fed the multitude with a boy’s lunch.

Never allow yourself to be intimidated; go forward with God’s support and there will be no stopping you.

A. M.

1 1 Samuel 14:6
2 Judges 6 and 7
3 John 6:5–13
I spoke great truths, profound words that changed lives and continue to do so. But I also spoke to the children. I was simple, I was clear and I didn’t lose My appreciation of little things. I stopped to enjoy the flowers. I cooked for My disciples.¹

It’s when you can’t find joy in the everyday things of life that you become complicated and lose the human touch. You exchange depth of character for a labyrinth of complex thinking, a heart that is sensitive to the things of the spirit for mere head knowledge.

Simplicity is a gift. Everyone starts out with it, but as some people grow up they discount this gift because they associate it with ignorance, naïveté, immaturity and a lack of sophistication. They prefer to weave a web of complexity to cover it. But did I not say that unless you have childlike simplicity to believe in the “impossible” and the unseen—Me, the one who died for you and rose to life again so you could have the wonderful but simple gift of eternal life—you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven?² The gift of simplicity remains for those who have the humility and wisdom to value it and claim it as their own.

There is much to discover throughout life and even more in heaven, but you will always find that the most profound truths, the greatest beauty and the most outstanding wisdom are all expressed simply.

Jesus

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¹ John 21:9, 12
² Matthew 18:3

Give me, good Lord, a humble, lowly, quiet, peaceable, patient, charitable, kind, tender and pitiful mind, in all my works and all my words and all my thoughts, to have a taste of your holy, blessed Spirit.

Give me, good Lord, a full faith, a firm hope and a fervent charity, a love of you incommensurably above the love of myself.

Give me, good Lord, a longing to be with you, not to void the calamities of this world, nor so much to attain the joys of heaven, as simply for love of you.

And give me, good Lord, your love and favour, which my love of you, however great it might be, could not deserve were it not for your great goodness.

These things, good Lord, that I pray for, give me your grace to labour for.

Prayer of Thomas More
Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.

John 18:9

There can be no such thing as losing with God. God cannot tolerate the loss of what really belongs to him. This is a truth we cannot explain, and yet, it helps us to keep silence in the presence of some of the riddles of life.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”\(^1\) The lost sheep, and the lost piece of money, and the lost son of the parables, were only lost for a time: “I have found my sheep... I have found the piece... This my son was lost, and is found.” This is a precious thought, assuring us that in all that God does, there is a meaning and a purpose. He takes care that “nothing be lost.”

P. F. Eliot

You can never lose God’s unconditional love; and because of his unfailing love, you will never be lost.

Mottos for Success

These things I command you, that you love one another.

John 15:17

The more you love, the more love you are given to love with.

Lucian Price

Kind words are the flowers in life’s garden, bringing scent and colour to the landscape.

A. M.

Love is the shortest and swiftest way to God.

Johannes Tauler

O God of love, we ask you to give us love;
Love in our thinking, love in our speaking,
And love in our doing,
And love in the hidden places of our souls;
Love of those with whom we find it hard to bear,
And love of those who find it hard to bear with us;
Love of those with whom we work,
And love of those with whom we take our ease;
That so at length we may be worthy to dwell with you,
Who are eternal love.

William Temple

\(^1\) Matthew 18:11 (kjv)
At the house] he saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. He said to them, “Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.” When He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying. Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” Immediately the girl arose and walked.

Mark 5:38–42, abridged

If we let God’s thoughts, as they are revealed in the Word, come in and fill the chamber of our minds, our views and feelings regarding both God and ourselves will be so different! If we let God’s thoughts in, it will be like Jesus coming into the midst of the mourners and saying, “Why are you making such a commotion, and weeping? The damsel is not dead, but sleeping.”

As the minstrels and other mourners were put out of the house by Jesus, so must our thoughts be put out of our hearts by God’s thoughts. Then, all being still, the sweet voice of the Redeemer will be heard, “Maid, arise!”

William Hepburn Hewitson, adapted

O Lord God, You are God, and Your words are true.

2 Samuel 7:28

There is abundant evidence that the Bible, though written by men, is not the product of the human mind. By countless multitudes it has always been revered as a communication to us from the Creator of the universe.

Sir Ambrose Fleming

For me, the Bible is the Book. I cannot see how anybody can live without it.

Gabriela Mistral

The Bible is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit; a chart by which the Christian sails to eternity; the map by which he daily walks; the sundial by which he sets his life; the balance in which he weighs his actions.

Thomas Watson

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

Proverbs 30:5
Whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.  
\textit{John 15:16}

\textbf{Just as you would expect a child to ask for your help when he's trying to lift an object that's too heavy for him, or trying to reach something too high for him, so I expect you to ask Me to help you when the burdens are too heavy and the obstacles are too difficult for you to navigate. As a loving parent, I will do everything within My power to make things easier for you; you have but to ask.}

\textit{Jesus}

What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then ... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!  
\textit{Matthew 7:9–11}

Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.  
\textit{Galatians 6:9}

Success is like a buried treasure: Only the most believing and persevering find it.  
\textit{Mottos for Success}

A single stroke of an axe won't bring down an oak, but many will.  
\textit{Spanish proverb}

All that I have accomplished, or expect or hope to accomplish, has been and will be by that plodding, patient, persevering process of accumulation that builds the ant-heap, particle by particle, thought by thought, fact by fact.  
\textit{Elihu Burritt}

Here is the great secret of success: Work with all your might, but never trust in your work. Pray with all your might for the blessing in God, but work at the same time with all diligence, with all patience, with all perseverance. Pray and work. Work and pray.  
\textit{George Müller}
Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; 
Lord, hear my voice!

Psalm 130:1–2

He who has seen Me has seen the Father.
John 14:9

Jesus, I was nothing, yet you came and died for me so that you might always have me with you. You reached down to the depths for me, and I took hold of your hand. Sometimes, though, I get so caught up in the cares of this life and the things around me that I forget you. But even when I do, you understand, and keep loving me and encouraging me. You keep reminding me that you’re always there, waiting for me to come to you and be refreshed and renewed. When I turn my attention to you, your love reaches down and touches my heart, and I am renewed. Thank you!

Kedleston Hall in the rolling green hills of England was the work of craftsmen in centuries past; visitors today admire the panelled walls and exquisite paintings. The elaborate patterns on the high-domed plaster ceiling in the saloon can best be examined by gazing into mirrors placed strategically on the floor. The mirrors reflect and bring into plain view the intricate designs that would otherwise be too distant to appreciate.

God is too great for our sight; we cannot focus upon him. He is too high. Jesus is like the mirror; in him we see God’s reflection.

A. M.

Jesus brings God into our world and within our reach. He enables us to know what God is like. God is in heaven, but we see his reflection in Jesus.

John MacBeath
You are my hiding place;
You shall preserve me from trouble;
You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.

Psalm 32:7

The Lord is always a sanctuary or hiding place to his children; in every place, in every company, they may hide in the secret of his presence from the strife of tongues about them. Better never enter into society, even into that of Christians, than go without taking our hiding place within us.

Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck

I put aside my weighty cares and leave my wearisome toils for a while. I abandon myself to you, O God, and rest for a little in you.

I enter the inner chamber of my soul, and seek only God and the things that can help me in my quest for you.

Come then, Lord my God, teach my heart where and how to look for you, where and how to find you.

Anselm of Canterbury

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18 (av)

Christian, why weepest thou? Look up! Heaven is smiling above you! Look around! Heaven is opening before you! Let your tears, if they must fall, be as the drops of rain which fall in the sunshine and reflect the colours of the rainbow. The last year of earth will soon be wiped away, amid the first smile of heaven; and that smile will be eternal.

John Angell James

O Lord,
The help of the helpless,
The hope of the hopeless,
The saviour of the storm-tossed,
The harbour of voyagers,
The physician of the sick;
We pray to you.

O Lord,
You know each of us and our petitions;
You know each house and its needs;
Receive us all into your kingdom;
Make us children of light,
And bestow your peace and love upon us.

Basil of Caesarea
Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.  

Matthew 5:15–16

How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world. 

William Shakespeare

Happiness is a sunbeam which may pass through a thousand [hearts] without losing a particle of its original ray; nay, when it strikes on a kindred heart, like the converged light on a mirror, it reflects itself with redoubled brightness.—It is not perfected till it is shared. 

Jane Porter

For You will light my lamp; 
The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness. 

Psalm 18:28

[Martha] had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” 


Start your day off with sweet time with Me, and then let that time and My presence linger throughout the day. Before your day begins, lock Martha and her busy mind and many duties out for the time being, and commune with Me in quietness and confidence, like Mary. There you will find your strength, your peace, your power and love and anointing for the day.

Jesus
While I live I will praise the Lord;
I will sing praises to my God
while I have my being.

Psalms 146:2

I know nothing more constant to expel the sadness of the world
than to sound out the praises of God as with a trumpet; and when the
heart is cast down, this will make it rebound from earth to heaven.

Jeremy Taylor

When thankfulness o'erflows the swelling heart, and breathes in free and
uncorrupted praise for benefits received, propitious heaven takes such
acknowledgement as fragrant incense, and doubles all its blessings.

George Lillo

Joy is the echo of God's life within us.

Joseph Marmion

I'll lift my hands, I'll raise my voice,
While I have breath to pray or praise;
This work shall make my heart rejoice
And spend the remnant of my days.

Isaac Watts

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch
cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in
the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in
Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He
who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much
fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

John 15:4-5

Lord, be within me
To strengthen me; without me
To preserve me; over me
To shelter me; beneath me
To support me; before me
To direct me; behind me
To bring me back; around me
To fortify me.

Prayer of Lancelot Andrews
[But God has] raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:6–7

O Jesus, Friend unfailing,
How dear you are to me!
Are cares or fears assailing?
I find my strength in thee!

For every tribulation,
For every sore distress,
In Christ I’ve full salvation,
Sure help and quiet rest.

No fear of foes prevailing,
I triumph, Lord, in thee!
O Jesus, Friend unfailing,
How dear you are to me!

Samuel C.G. Kaester, adapted

Enter this wild wood and view the haunts of nature. The calm shade shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze that makes the green leaves dance shall waft a balm to thy sick heart.

William Cullen Bryant

In returning and rest you shall be saved.

Isaiah 30:15

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature.

Anne Frank

Lonely woods with paths dim and silent,
A haunt of peace for weary hearted.
There’s healing in your shade,
And in your stillness balm.
Here seek repose
From the world’s strife and glamour,
Find a haven calm and secure
And go forward strengthened and renewed.

Jean-Baptiste de Lully

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God will shine forth.

Psalm 50:2

You will find him an unfading flower in a fading world.

James Harrington Evans
I want to make a strong connection with you first thing in the morning, and then I want to keep that connection strong all day long as we enjoy each other’s company, talk things over, and work things out together.

You’re in the habit of launching right into your day without making that connection, and when situations or problems arise you try to sort them out on your own, as best you can. By the time you remember to pray—if you remember at all—you’ve usually already decided what to do, based on your experience or what seems reasonable. Because I can see things more clearly and completely than you can, I often have a better plan, but it’s hard for Me to get through to you because your own thoughts get in the way. You mean well, but things would go smoother and turn out better if you were in closer communication with Me.

As things come up don’t just ask yourself, “What should I do now?” or “What should I say?” but ask Me. When you have a problem or feel frustrated or hurried or worried or confused or discouraged, tell Me about it. Come to Me and I’ll give you exactly what you need at the time, whether it’s solutions or help or comfort or reassurance or encouragement. You’ll find overcoming power in My presence.

Jesus

Our heart has not turned back;  
Nor have our steps departed from Your way.  
Psalm 44:18

I try to avoid looking forward or backward, and try to keep looking upward.  
Charlotte Brontë

Don’t look at the rough road, but at the bright rainbow up ahead; not at the mud at your feet, but at the next milestone; not at the rocks in the way, but at the flowers by the wayside. Don’t dwell on the sores and calluses, but on the strength you’ve gained through toil; not at the pain, but at the joy that springs up afterward.  
Mottos for Success

By perseverance the snail reached the ark.  
Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Then the Lord appointed a set time, saying, “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.”  
Exodus 9:5
In all hard work there is profit.
Proverbs 14:23 (WEB)

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. When he told his boss his plans, the contractor was sorry to see such a good worker go, and he asked the carpenter to build just one more house as a personal favour.

The carpenter agreed, but his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials.

When he had finished, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. “This is your house,” he said. “It is my gift to you.”

The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with a shock we realise we have to live in the house we have built.

If we could do it over, we’d do it much differently. But we cannot go back.

You are the carpenter of your life. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Your attitudes and the choices you make today build your “house” for tomorrow. Build wisely!

Author unknown

I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

Jeremiah 18:3-4

This world is God’s workshop for making men in.
Henry Ward Beecher

You are surprised at your imperfections—why? Surely, you might rather be astonished that you do not fall into more frequent and more grievous faults, and thank God for His upholding grace.
Jean Nicolas Grou

Without imperfections, there would be no mistakes. Without mistakes there would be no way to learn and grow. Without learning and growing, life would have no purpose.
Mottos for Success

It is the nature of God to make something out of nothing; therefore, when anyone is nothing, God may yet make something of him.
Martin Luther
Struggling to start your day? Perhaps it’s not coffee you need but something else: “The very moment you wake up each morning ... all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in.”—So advises C. S. Lewis.

I will begin here also with the beginning of time, the morning; so soon as you wake, retire your mind into a pure silence from all thoughts and ideas of worldly things, and in that frame wait upon God to feel his good presence, to lift up your hearts to him, and commit your whole self into his blessed care and protection.

O secret Christ,
Lord of the rose of dawn,
hide me within thy silent peace,
that, throughout the turmoil of the day,
I may abide within the quiet of the daybreak.

Used in the chapel at Launde Abbey, author unknown.
The heavens declare the glory of God, 
And the sky proclaims the work of His hands. 

Psalm 19:1 (csb)

Look up at the sky. During the day you have the sun to light your way and give you warmth. At night you have the moon and the stars that come out and shine for you. And at the beginning and end of every day, you have the sunrises and sunsets that are symbols of My love for you. I create a unique, one-of-a-kind masterpiece on the canvas of the sky each morning and evening, because I love you.

Jesus

A star-filled sky is a picture of hope; twinkles of light in dark distant space remind us that we are never alone.

A. M.

God of the earth, the sky, the sea! 
Maker of all above, below! 
Creation lives and moves in Thee, 
Thy present life in all doth flow. 

Samuel Longfellow

We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.

2 Corinthians 4:8–9

Thank you, Jesus, for your unfailing love. No matter what, I can always count on that. When things are going great for me, I am certain that’s because you’re looking out for me, answering my prayers, and blessing me in more ways than I probably even realise. And when things aren’t going my way, it helps me keep things in perspective so that I appreciate you and your love all the more. Through all life’s ups and downs, you’re always there for me. What more could I ask?
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

When they had read it,
they rejoiced over its encouragement.

Acts 15:31

Literacy gives the reader access to the mind and thoughts of people the world over, from the past to the present. It opens a universe of knowledge. What’s more, literacy gives us access to God’s thoughts, as revealed through the Bible and the inspired writers of all time.

The Bible abounds with literacy events, ranging from public readings, such as Moses reading the book of the Covenant aloud to the people1 and Jesus reading from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue,2 to admonitions to quiet, meditative reading.3 According to Revelation 20:12, there are apparently even books in heaven itself: “Books were opened.” Literacy lasts forever!

A. M.

Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people. ... So [the leaders] read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.

Nehemiah 8:5,8

1 Exodus 24:7
2 Luke 4:17
3 Deuteronomy 17:19

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

John 1:29

Rest of the weary,
Joy of the sad,
Hope of the dreary,
Light of the glad;
Home of the stranger,
Strength to the end,
Refuge from danger,
Saviour and Friend!

Author unknown

Christ willed to become what man is, in order that man might become what Christ is.

Cyprian of Carthage

To me, Jesus is the Life I want to live, the Light I want to reflect, the Way to the Father, the Love I want to express, the Joy I want to share, the Peace I want to sow around me. Jesus is everything to me.

Mother Teresa

Fashion in me, Lord, eyes within my eyes, so that, with new eyes, I may contemplate your divine sacrifice.
Create in me a pure heart, so that, through the power of your Spirit, I may inhale your salvation.

Joseph the Visionary
For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes.

James 1:11

It is fair, that lily dressed by God, but it fades. He only intended its beauty to be for a day; all our earthly joy he intends for a similar short duration. Its earthly part, like the petals of the flower, must droop and disappear.

This is not our home, nor our rest. But underneath, growing and strengthening in the Christian's daily life, there is a joy that will never fade and a beauty that will never be dimmed. His life is “hid with Christ in God.”

The joy he has in his Saviour's love, the joy he shares—that joy no one can take away. It is not an earthly but a celestial flower, and it will bloom hereafter in the paradise of God with a splendour and fragrance that it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Canon Wynne, adapted

Let all those rejoice who put their trust in You;
Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them;
Let those also who love Your name
Be joyful in You.

Psalm 5:11

As sure as ever God puts his children in the furnace, he will be in the furnace with them.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?”

They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”

“Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

Daniel 3:23–25

Troubles are an inevitable part of the fabric of life. At times we may wonder if God has forgotten us. Perhaps the three young men, captives of a hostile nation, threatened with execution if they would not renounce their faith, wondered the same. Yet they held firm, and the Lord not only did not fail them, but stood with them in the midst of their trouble.

What greater comfort than to realise that God is with us, no matter the heat of our trial.

A. M.
Life is very much like sailing. I am your Captain and I know the seas of life. Many are content to just sail around in the safe harbours and not really go anywhere with their life; whereas others set their sails toward the horizon and head out into the open sea. It takes faith to set out into the unknown, to believe that My Word is true and that I will keep you safe and lead you on a true course. This type of faith is learned through difficult situations where you do what I show you to do and you find that it works out.

With each test comes stronger faith. The shores of My blessings are not visible to those who stay in the harbour and never venture out; it takes faith to set sail and find them. Don’t believe the doubter who has never ventured out of the safety of his harbour and who says, “There are no new shores, no new challenges, nothing new to learn.” Be the first to venture out, to let Me set the course of your life!

Abide in Me, and I in you.

John 15:4

In its archaic meaning, to abide is to reside or to live. Edward M. Blaiklock described abiding in Christ with these words: “Experience God’s presence by an unbroken attitude of mind; visualise God within; remember that he is the hearer of all speech, the monitor of all thoughts, the judge of all actions. Then you will precisely ‘abide in Christ.’”

It takes faith as well as practical effort to live in Christ, but the reward is peace.

A. M.

O my God, Trinity whom I adore, let me entirely forget myself that I may abide in you, still and peaceful as if my soul were already in eternity; let nothing disturb my peace nor separate me from you, O my unchanging God, but that each moment may take me further into the depths of your mystery.

Elizabeth of the Trinity
September 14

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
In the joy of what thou art;
I am finding out the greatness
Of thy loving heart.

Jean Sophia Pigott

One thing I have desired of you, that will I seek: that I may dwell in your house all the days of my life, to behold your beauty, and to inquire in your temple. For in the time of trouble you shall hide me in your pavilion; in the secret place of your tabernacle you shall hide me; you will set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in your presence; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to you.

Prayer adapted from Psalm 27:4–6

September 15

The salvation of the righteous is from the L O R D;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.

Psalm 37:39

There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God.

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us who wait before Thee
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of comfort sweet,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where we our Saviour meet,
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of full release,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God.

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;
For You alone, O L O R D, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 4:8

Cleland Boyd McAfee
A certain centurion’s servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. The centurion sent friends to [Jesus], saying to Him,

“Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. But say the word, and my servant will be healed.”

When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him. And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

Luke 7:2–10, abridged

I am not worthy, Master and Lord, that you should come beneath the roof of my soul; yet since in your love towards all, you wish to dwell in me, in boldness I come. You command; open the gates, which you alone have made. And you will come in, and enlighten my darkened reasoning.

I believe that you will do this; for you did not send away the harlot who came to you with tears, nor cast out the repenting tax-collector, nor reject the thief who acknowledged your kingdom. But you counted all of these as members of your band of friends. You are blessed for evermore.

John Chrysostom

“Be strong, all you people of the land,” says the LORD, “and work; for I am with you.”

Haggai 2:4

Your life is like a river that travels through many places and takes on many forms. At times it is a peaceful stream that winds through the meadow, glimmering in the sun for all to see and enjoy. At other times it is like a raging torrent, cascading down the mountain with fury and great noise, and everyone is in awe. At other times the river vanishes underground out of the sight of everyone, and many wonder if it has disappeared altogether. But it is still there, hidden. It is still flowing, still carrying life and nutrients, and it will eventually come out in the open again as a beautiful current of clean, pure water.

So it is with your life sometimes. It can be glorious and beautiful for all to see, and at other times, hidden, quiet, and unnoticed. But that doesn’t take away your usefulness or role, and it certainly doesn’t diminish My love for you. I am always there by your side, always helping you to flow and move on, even if at times no one sees it.

Jesus
By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 11:8–10

Faith must go before, and then feeling will follow. Though you feel not as you would, yet doubt not, but hope beyond all hope, as Abraham did; for always, faith goes before feeling.

John Bradford

Like legs, faith and works should travel side-by-side, step answering to step, like the legs of men walking. First faith, and then works; and then faith again, and then works again—until they can scarcely distinguish which is the one and which is the other.

William Booth

We walk by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.

Isaiah 63:9

Think back to yesterday. Before your day even started, Jesus was with you as you slept, watching over you. Morning came, and just as sure as the sun rose, he was there. When you thought about the day ahead, he was there, just waiting for you to ask his help in planning and carrying out that plan. On your way to work, he was right beside you. Every time you encountered a problem, he was waiting with the answer you needed, hoping you would ask him for it. When you heard some good news, he was happy along with you. When the day took a difficult turn, he was there to comfort you.

Today is a new day. Just as he was there beside you yesterday, he is with you now.

A. M.

My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.

Exodus 33:14
Jesus prayed, “Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.”

John 17:11

If I only possessed the grace, good Jesus, to be utterly at one with you! Amidst all the variety of worldly things around me, Lord, the only thing I crave is unity with you. You are all my soul needs. Unite, dear Friend of my heart, this unique little soul of mine to your perfect goodness. You are all mine; when shall I be yours? Lord Jesus, my beloved, be the magnet of my heart; clasp, press, unite me forever to your sacred heart. You have made me for yourself; make me one with you. Absorb this tiny drop of life into the ocean of goodness whence it came.

Prayer of Francis de Sales

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

Seek peace and pursue it.

Psalm 34:14

All men desire peace, but very few desire those things that make for peace.

Thomas à Kempis

Peace is not a relationship of nations. It is a condition of mind brought about by a serenity of soul. Peace is not merely an absence of war. It is also a state of mind. Lasting peace can come only to peaceful people.

Jawaharlal Nehru

All works of love are works of peace. ... Peace begins with a smile.

Mother Teresa

We look forward to the time when the power of love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.

William E. Gladstone

Christ is the fountain of peace and life.

Tobías Crisp

Live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 13:11
Oh, that I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest.  

Psalm 55:6

The spot the little bird had chosen for his playground that morning happened to be a busy parking lot. I watched nervously as he hopped between the cars. Everyone, it seemed, was in too big of a hurry or too preoccupied by cares of the day to notice him.

“You’re on your own, little fellow,” I muttered in what was half statement and half prayer.

A moment later panic gripped me as the little bird nonchalantly pranced out in front of oncoming traffic. Panic was soon replaced by relief as the bird took flight and climbed into the sky. I had been so focused on all the potential dangers that I had forgotten the bird had wings, a way of escape.

And so it is with us. When our happiness or well-being is threatened, we can escape to heavenly places on the wings of prayer.  

Tomoko Matsuoka

The testing of your faith produces patience.  

James 1:3

Patience is accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it.  

Mottos for Success

Never think that God’s delays are God’s denials. Hold on; hold fast; hold out. Patience is genius.  

Georges Louis Buffon

God is infinitely patient. He waits for the perfect ripening of things; he waits for the coming of things in their own proper time and order. He has ever an unbroken eternity to work in, and, therefore, he has not the need for haste that the shortness and uncertainty of our life seems to urge upon us at all time. He waits to be gracious.  

Hugh Macmillan, adapted

Hope anticipates, faith believes, and patience quietly waits.  

Mottos for Success

By your patience possess your souls.  

Luke 21:19
The eyes of all look expectantly to You.

Psalm 145:15

Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my Wisdom, and thou my true Word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my Battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be thou my Dignity, thou my Delight;
Thou my Soul’s Shelter, thou my high Tower:
Raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Irish hymn of the 8th century

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and
the glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 6:9–13

What deep mysteries, my dearest brothers, are contained in the
Lord’s Prayer! How many and great they are! They are expressed in a few
words but they are rich in spiritual powers so that nothing is left out; every
petition and prayer we have to make is included. It is a compendium of
heavenly doctrine.

Cyprian of Carthage

Whatever else we say when we pray, if we pray as we should, we are only
saying what is already contained in the Lord’s Prayer.

Augustine of Hippo
I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38–39

You are holy, Lord, the only God,
And your deeds are wonderful.
You are love, you are wisdom.
You are humility, you are endurance.
You are rest, you are peace.
You are joy and gladness.
You are all our riches, and you suffice for us.
You are beauty, you are gentleness.
You are our protector,
You are our guardian and defender.
You are courage,
You are our haven and hope.
You are our faith, our great consolation.
You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord,
God almighty, merciful Saviour.

Francis of Assisi, abridged

From there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 4:29

Make the most of your day.

Number one, talk to Me first thing or even the night before about what you need or want to do. It doesn’t have to take long—just long enough to get your bearings on the day and to let Me remind you of anything you may have forgotten.

Number two, each time you are about to start a new task, ask Me if you’re on the right track. It may seem like the logical thing to do, or you may have done it a thousand times before, but perhaps I see factors you don’t see or want to show you a better way to do it. When you make an effort to check your plans with Me, it’s much easier for Me to help you get it right. Nothing is too small to ask Me about.

Number three, when new factors arise, ask Me what to do. I see the big picture, and I can help you see things more clearly too. The quickest and surest route isn’t always a straight line. Sometimes you need to sidestep or even backtrack. I know the way, but I can only lead you step by step if you ask Me step by step.

Jesus
Dear Lord,
You have given me the shield of Your salvation;
Your right hand has held me up,
Your gentleness has made me great.
You enlarged my path under me,
So my feet did not slip.

Psalm 18:35–36

I thank you for your boundless love, which has never let me
down nor forsaken me. I thank you even for my imperfections and my
weaknesses and for the failures which I experience, because they show
me my own limits and drive me to you. I thank you, O my God, for all that
you do in my life, for all the wonderful things that you do for me. Most
of all I thank you for the warmth and the reassurance and the joy of your
presence, for how you are with me every step and how you uphold me with
your strong right hand.

Receive, please, instruction from His mouth,
And lay up His words in your heart.

Job 22:22

The Bible is God’s chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the
bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbour is, and how to
reach it without running on rocks and bars.

Henry Ward Beecher

By studying God’s Word, you will come to understand His loving ways.
This will give you faith that whatever your circumstances may be, He is
in control and has your best interests at heart. When disappointments,
obstacles and setbacks wear on you, taking a little time to read from God’s
Word will put things back in proper perspective.

Jason Rae and Shannon Shayler

He that takes truth for his guide, and duty for his end, may safely trust to
God’s providence to lead him aright.

Blaise Pascal

You will guide me with Your counsel.

Psalm 73:24
Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.  
\textit{Matthew 7:12}

Love has a thousand varied notes to move the human heart.  
\textit{George Crabbe}

I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow-creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.  
\textit{Stephen Grellet}

Is life not full of opportunities for learning Love? Every man and woman every day has a thousand of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is \textit{how better we can love}. ... To love abundantly, and to love forever is to live forever.  
\textit{Henry Drummond}

The spirit of a person’s life is ever shedding some power, just as a flower is steadily bestowing fragrance upon the air.  
\textit{Thomas Starr King}

If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.  
\textit{1 John 4:12}

\begin{quote}
\textbf{ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS}

Wisdom is with aged men,  
And with length of days, understanding.  
\textit{Job 12:12}

A man’s age is something impressive; it sums up his life: maturity reached slowly and against many obstacles, illnesses cured, griefs and despairs overcome, and unconscious risks taken; maturity formed through so many desires, hopes, regrets, forgotten things, loves. A man’s age represents a fine cargo of experiences and memories.  
\textit{Antoine de Saint-Exupéry}

Age is opportunity no less  
Than youth itself, though in another dress;  
And as the evening twilight fades away,  
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.  
\textit{Henry Wadsworth Longfellow}

Those who love deeply never grow old; they may die of old age, but they die young.  
\textit{Arthur Wing Pinero}

I have created you and cared for you since you were born. I will be your God through all your lifetime, Yes, even when your hair is white with age. I made you and I will care for you.  
\textit{Isaiah 46:3–4 (Living Bible)}
\end{quote}
In the eye of the hurricane, there is peace.

Author unknown

There is still peace to be found in a troubled world. It resides in that quiet place of rest in My arms, which you can travel to in spirit any time, no matter what’s happening around you. If you find yourself having a hard time finding that special place, take some time to practice going there. Get familiar with the route that takes you there, and the more you go there, the easier it becomes, and it can be a blessed way to escape when things get too intense or your spirit needs respite.

Jesus

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast.
Here no fears alarm me,
Here can my soul find rest.

Fanny Crosby

Truly the light is sweet,
And a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.

Ecclesiastes 11:7

And lo! In a flash of crimson splendour, with blazing, scarlet clouds running before his chariot and heralding his majestic approach, God’s sun rises upon the world.

William Makepeace Thackeray

The sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world’s joy. So God sits ... in heaven, not for a favoured few, but for the universe of life.

Henry Ward Beecher

O God of love,
true light and radiance of our world,
shine into our hearts like the rising sun,
and banish the darkness of sin and the mists of error.

May we, this day and all our life,
walk without stumbling
along the way which you have set before us;
through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Desiderius Erasmus
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is doubt, let me sow faith;
Where there is injury, let me sow pardon;
Where there is discord, let me sow unity;
Where there is error, let me sow the truth;
Where there is despair, let me sow hope;
Where there is sadness, let me sow joy;
Where there is darkness, let me sow the light.

O Lord, make of me an instrument of your peace.
O Master, that I may not seek
To be consoled, but to console;
Not to be understood, but to understand;
Not to be loved, but rather to love;
For it is in giving that we will receive;
And in forsaking that we truly gain;
By forgiving, that we are forgiven;
And in dying, that we are born again to eternal life.

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE WORLD TEACHER’S DAY

He has put in his heart the ability to teach.
Exodus 35:34

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.
Henry Brooks Adams

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.
Author unknown

If we work marble, it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds and instill into them just principles, we are then engraving that upon tables which no time will efface, but will brighten and brighten to all eternity.
Daniel Webster

These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.
Deuteronomy 6:6–7
October 6

Dear God, be good to me;
the sea is so large,
and my boat is so small.

Traditional prayer of a Breton fisherman

October 7

That rushing flood I had no strength to meet,
   No power to flee: my present, future, past,
My self, my sorrow, and my sin I cast
In utter helplessness at Jesu’s feet;
   Then bent me to the storm, if such His will.
He saw the winds and waves, and whispered, ‘Peace, be still.’

AND THERE WAS CALM! O Saviour, I HAVE PROVED
That Thou to help and save art really near!
How else this quiet rest from grief, and fear,
And all distress? The cross is not removed;
   I must go forth to bear it as before,
But, leaning on Thine arm, I dread its weight no more.

Frances Ridley Havergal

I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand,
Saying to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”

Isaiah 41:13

Have you not known?
   Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, the LORD,
The Creator of the ends of the earth,
Neither faints nor is weary.
His understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the weak,
And to those who have no might He increases strength.
Even the youths shall faint and be weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall,
But those who wait on the LORD
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:28–31

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry.

Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.

Prayer of Robert Louis Stevenson
He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

Matthew 13:52

I have found in the Bible words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs and pleadings for my shame and feebleness.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The highest earthly enjoyments are but a shadow of the joy I find in reading God’s word.

Lady Jane Grey

The best evidence that the Bible is the inspired word of God is to be found within its covers.—It proves itself.

Charles Hodge

The book of books, the storehouse, and magazine of life and comfort, the Holy Scriptures.

George Herbert

The Bible is a window in this prison-world, through which we may look into eternity.

Timothy Dwight

Thanks be to the Gospel, by means of which we also, who did not see Christ when he came into this world, seem to be with him when we read his deeds.

Ambrose

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me.

Psalm 138:7

I journey through a desert drear and wild, Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts beguiled, Of him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay, I can forget the sorrows of the way.

Author unknown

A rule I have had for years is: to treat the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal friend. His is not a creed, a mere doctrine, but it is he himself we have.

Dwight L. Moody

I am the thought in your mind. I am the deep dream in your heart. I am your constant companion, going with you wherever you go. You don’t see Me, but sometimes you feel Me. And when you don’t, I still see you and I feel you.

Jesus

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:7
I will go in the strength of the Lord God.

Psalm 71:16

The story has often been retold: A father watches as his child struggles to lift a heavy object.

“You’re not using all your strength,” he remarks gently.

“But I’m doing the best I can!” insists his son.

“Not quite. You haven’t asked me to help you,” replies his father.

How often we struggle with the heavy burdens of life, when our Father stands by, willing and ready to help lift the load.

A. M.

He that takes his cares on himself loads himself in vain with an uneasy burden. I will cast my cares on God; he has bidden me; they cannot burden him.

Joseph Hall

Give me a task too big,
Too hard for human hands.
Then shall I come at length
To lean on You;
And leaning, find my strength.

Wilbur Humphrey Fowler

Lift up your hearts in praise and jubilation to Me, as King David of old did in the Psalms. His love was great and his praises were powerful, and he didn’t hold back. He even got so enthusiastic that he danced before Me in abandon; this proved how joyful and praiseful he was. When you are happy, praiseful, and excited in prayer, it touches My heart in a very deep way. I dwell in the praises of My people. Praise draws down My power and answers without restraint, and I can’t help but come to your rescue when you delight Me in this way.

Jesus

Oh come, let us sing to the Lord!
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.

Psalm 95:1–2

Then David danced before the Lord with all his might.

2 Samuel 6:14
Out of weakness made strong. Hebrews 11:34

Beethoven was stone deaf when he composed some of the most beautiful music ever written, and Thomas Edison was deaf when he invented the phonograph. Alexander the Great was a hunchback. Homer was a blind minstrel. Renoir painted some of his finest masterpieces when his fingers were so twisted by rheumatism that his artist’s brush had to be strapped to his hand. Handel’s right side was paralysed when he composed his greatest work, “The Hallelujah Chorus.”

Very often it’s the people who have overcome difficulties who are in turn able to help others have the courage and faith to overcome theirs. Their personal examples are proof that it is possible to rise above seemingly impossible situations.

M. S. Fontaine

Troubles are often the tools by which God fashions us for better things.

Henry Ward Beecher

Jesus lay in the boat sleeping. The waves rose, the wind blew and the storm battered about the small vessel. His disciples were afraid: afraid of the wind, afraid of the waves and fearful for their lives. They came to Jesus, woke him up, begging for his help. The answer lay in his power. He said, “Peace, be still,” and there was peace. The wind ceased, and there was a great calm.¹ No matter the turmoil of our life, we too can find peace if we turn to Jesus for his help.

A. M.

Peace, peace!
Look for its bright increase,
Deepening, widening, year by year,
Like a sunlit river, strong, calm, and clear;
Lean on His love through this earthly vale,
For His word and His work shall never fail,
And ‘He is our peace.’

Frances Ridley Havergal

¹ Mark 4:35–41
Thank you, Jesus, for your love. Thank you for the wonderful cool breeze of your Spirit. When I stop and take time with you, I’m just like a little bird spreading her wings to the wind and soaring up into the sky. You pick me up, and I can fly up and away from all of the problems and cares that hold me down.

It’s so beautiful to be up above everything, up with you and to see things as you see them. Everything is so much clearer and makes so much more sense when I am with you. I can even have peace about the things that I don’t understand, because at least I know that they’re all in your care, and you are in control. I love these times together, sailing on your breeze and being kissed with your wind. It feels so good and is so refreshing!

He rode upon a cherub, and flew;  
He flew upon the wings of the wind.  
Psalm 18:10

Among the attributes of God, although they are all equal, mercy shines with even more brilliancy than justice.  
Miguel de Cervantes

Justice is getting what we deserve. Mercy is another matter.

There is a story of a woman who came before Napoleon begging the pardon of her son. It was his second offence, and according to justice, the penalty was death.

“I don’t ask for justice,” said the mother, “I plead for mercy.”
“But,” said the emperor, “he does not deserve mercy.”
“Sir,” cried the mother, “it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask.”
“Well, then,” said the emperor, “I will have mercy.”
Her son was saved.  
Retold by A. M.

Mercy triumphs over judgment.  
James 2:13
Surely the **Lord** our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet He still lives.

*Deuteronomy 5:24*

If you would speak or hear of God aright, leave the body and your bodily senses, quit earth, quit sea, set air beneath you, outstrip the boundaries of time, the ordinances of the seasons, outsoar the stars, and all their wonders, their order, their harmony, their splendour, their relations and their motions. Overpass all with your mind.

Pass on! Let your mind mount up above every creature. Exalting your spirit higher still, consider the Divine Nature abiding, unalterable, unchangeable, impassable, simple, uncompounded, indivisible, light inaccessible, power unspeakable, greatness illimitable, glory exceeding, goodness most amiable, beauty inconceivable, enrapturing with mighty strength the wounded soul, but which words are inadequate even to shadow forth. There is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Nature uncreate, the Royal Majesty, the substantial Goodness.

*Basil of Caesarea, adapted*

A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge.

*Thomas Carlyle*

Flowers leave some of their fragrance in the hand that bestows them.

*Chinese proverb*

It pays to show courtesy to others, because it builds friendship, encourages loving interaction, strengthens unity, brings harmony, shows others appreciation and helps to lift their load. It makes life so much more beautiful.

*Mottos for Success*

All the love you give comes back to you an hundredfold. It doesn't always feel like it, and sometimes it seems that more is taken from you than given to you, but you'll see in the end that everything will settle just right, and you won't regret any giving you've ever done.

*Jesus*
Call upon Me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.  
Psalm 50:15

It’s wonderful when you come to Me for My help in time of trial.  
It’s so beautiful to see you depend on Me. It makes Me want to come  
through for you like never before because you are leaning so fully on Me.  
This is just where I want you to be—totally dependent on Me for strength,  
focus and inspiration for your tasks. Keep looking to Me and I will keep  
working through you all the more, to make your way clear and the path  
ahead beautiful and glorious.

Jesus

My dearest Lord,  
be now a bright flame to enlighten me,  
a guiding star to lead me,  
a smooth path beneath my feet,  
and a kindly shepherd along my way,  
today and for evermore.

Columba

Although we may need to make practical  
preparations for the future, we should not  
carry such preparations as weights, lest they  
turn into worries. “Be anxious for nothing,” the Bible teaches.

A.M.

Let us then think only of the present, and not even permit our  
minds to wander with curiosity into the future. This future is not yet ours;  
perhaps it never will be. It is exposing ourselves to temptation to wish  
to anticipate God, and to prepare ourselves for things which he may not  
destine for us. If such things should come to pass, he will give us light  
and strength according to the need. Let us give heed to the present,  
whose duties are pressing; it is fidelity to the present which prepares us  
for fidelity in the future.

François de la Mothe-Fénelon

Every day is a gift I receive from heaven; let us enjoy today that which it  
bestows upon me.

Marie de Mancroix

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1 Philippians 4:6
Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.  

Ephesians 4:32

Loving-kindness is twice blessed; it blesses him who gives and him who receives.  

Author unknown

The power to be a force for good lies within everyone, even if it is only in little ways. Make your part of the world a bit more heavenly by bringing a touch of heaven in the way of love and kindness to those around you.  

Scott MacGregor

If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God.  

George MacDonald

By cultivating the beautiful we scatter the seeds of heavenly flowers, as by doing good we cultivate those that belong to humanity.  

John Howard

There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God.  

Psalm 46:4

Move my heart with the calm, smooth flow of your grace. Let the river of your love run through my soul. May my soul be carried by the current of your love towards the wide, infinite ocean of heaven.

Stretch out my heart with your strength, as you stretch out the sky above the earth. Smooth out any wrinkles of hatred or resentment. Enlarge my soul that it may know more fully your truth.  

Prayer of Gilbert of Hoyland

By cultivating the beautiful we scatter the seeds of heavenly flowers, as by doing good we cultivate those that belong to humanity.  

John Howard
Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face evermore.

1 Chronicles 16:11

Prayer is the wing wherewith the soul flies to heaven, and meditation the eye wherewith we see God.

Ambrose

All the troubles of life come upon us because we refuse to sit quietly for a while each day in our room.

Blaise Pascal

Prayer is a haven to the shipwrecked man, an anchor to them that are sinking in the waves, a staff to the limbs that totter, a mine of jewels to the poor, a healer of diseases and a guardian of health.

John Chrysostom

Lord Jesus Christ, you said that you are the Way, the Truth, and the Life; let us never stray from you, who are the Way; nor distrust you, who are the Truth; nor rest in any other but you, who are the Life, beyond whom there is nothing to be desired, either in heaven or on earth. We ask it for your name’s sake.

Desiderius Erasmus

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God is a guest that requires the upper rooms, that is, the head and the heart.

Edmund Calamy

I long to hold your heart in My loving hands. I long to show you My infinite care in little and big ways throughout your day. And all I ask in return is that you love Me too, that you recognise My loving hand and accept it. It will make you happier and your life will be richer. Let My love come into your life every day and warm your heart and soul.

As you go further into your day now, look for Me and My love for you and you’ll find Me everywhere. I’m here for you, to make you happy and whole, and warmed and loved.

Jesus

You in Your mercy have led forth
The people whom You have redeemed;
You have guided them in Your strength
To Your holy habitation.

Exodus 15:13
Bless the **Lord**, O my soul,  
And forget not all His benefits.  

Psalm 103:2

If one should give me a dish of sand, and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my eyes, and search for them with my clumsy fingers, and be unable to detect them; but let me take a magnet and sweep through it, and how would it draw to itself the almost invisible particles by the mere power of attraction.  

The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day, and as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings, only the iron in God’s sand is gold!  

Henry Ward Beecher

The worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart.  

Plutarch

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.  

Romans 5:1

A person may go to heaven without health, without riches, without honours, without learning, without friends; but he can never go there without Christ.  

John Dyer

Ah, Christians, ring the bells of your hearts, tire the salute of your most joyous songs, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.”  

Dance, O my heart, and ring out peals of gladness! Ye drops of blood within my veins dance every one of you! Oh! All my nerves become harp strings, and let gratitude touch you with angelic fingers! And thou, my tongue, shout—shout to his praise who hath said to thee—“Unto thee a child is born, unto thee a Son is given.”  

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.  

Ephesians 1:3

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1 Isaiah 9:6
Better is a little with the fear of the LORD,
Than great treasure with trouble.  
Proverbs 15:16

Wealth is like a viper, which is harmless if you know how to take
hold of it; but, if you do not, it will twine round your hand and bite you.
Clement of Alexandria

“Simplicity is a very rare thing in our age” was perhaps surprisingly
spoken not in the twenty-first century, but in the first, by Publius Ovidius
Naso, better known as Ovid.

A. M.

Grant me, O Lord, to know what is worth knowing,
to love what is worth loving,
to praise what delights you most,
to value what is precious to you,
and to reject whatever is evil in your eyes.

Give me true discernment,
so that I may judge rightly between things that differ.

Above all, may I search out and do
what is pleasing to you;
through Jesus Christ my Lord.

Thomas à Kempis

What a comfort to know that we have a
great Physician who is both able and willing
to heal us!
Charles Haddon Spurgeon

They brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in
his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.

And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his
ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He
sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”

Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue
was loosed, and he spoke plainly. And [the people] were astonished
beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the
defaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

Mark 7:32–35,37

There is healing in the Promise,
There is healing in the Blood,
There is strength for all our weakness
In the Risen Son of God.

And the feeblest of His children
All His glorious life may share,
He has better balm in Gilead;
He’s the Great Physician there.

Albert Benjamin Simpson
Dear Lord,

Keep me from having my life so full of good things that I don’t have time for the best. Help me not to be so pressured that I put off my time with you. Help me to bask in your spiritual sunshine, rest in your arms, drink deeply of your Word, and inhale of your Spirit. Help me to seek you most of all—more than any of the other things I enjoy. Help me to remember how you said that without you, I can do nothing,1 so that I won’t have misplaced priorities, but I will have you, your love and your values in the right place—first.

1 John 15:5

WE ARE TOLD THAT DANIEL, THE HEBREW CAPTIVE WHO BECAME ADVISOR to the Babylonian king, stopped to pray three times a day. Surely if Daniel could do this, as busy as he was, with as many responsibilities as he held, and with as many crises as he faced, we should likewise make time for God each day.

A. M.

A Christian will find his parenthesis for prayer, even through his busiest hours.

Richard Cecil

Lord, help me today to realise that you will be speaking to me through the events of the day, through people, through things, and through all creation.

Give me ears, eyes and heart to perceive you, however veiled your presence may be.

Give me insight to see through the exterior of things to the interior truth.

Give me your spirit of discernment.

O Lord, you know how busy I must be this day. If I forget you, do not forget me.

Jacob Astley, before the battle of Edgehill, 1642
Take a look at nature and the passing of the seasons. When winter comes, it seems like all plant life is dying out and all that is left is a cold wind blowing and a grey sky. But life is still present, only hidden in the warmth of the earth while the cold passes over. You can do the same when trials and difficulties arise. Come snuggle close to Me, bury yourself in My love and warmth, and let the problems and hardships of the moment pass over you. I will be like the warm earth all around you, protecting you and keeping you from all harm.

Jesus

While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease.

*Genesis 8:22*

When [the shepherd] brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

*John 10:4*

**Run the straight race through God's good grace,**
Lift up thine eyes, and seek his face;
Life with its way before us lies,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

**Cast care aside, upon thy Guide**
Lean, and his mercy will provide;
Lean, and the trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

**Faint not nor fear, his arms are near,**
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

*John Samuel Bewley Monsell*

The more the soul looks upon Christ, the more it loves; and still, the more it loves, the more it delights to look upon him.

*Robert Leighton*
ON THIS DAY... WE CELEBRATE ALL SAINTS

Since you were precious in My sight, 
You have been honored, 
And I have loved you. 

Isaiah 43:4

What is precious to God? We may value possessions and wealth, but it is people, not things, that are most precious to him—so precious indeed that he calls us saints. We may not feel like saints, ever conscious of our failings, but it is our very dependence on him that makes us those “in whom he delights.”

A. M.

The saints are God’s jewels, highly esteemed by and dear to him; they are a royal diadem in his hand.

Matthew Henry

A saint is a human creature devoured and transformed by love.

Evelyn Underhill

God creates out of nothing. Wonderful, you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners.

Søren Kierkegaard

The past cannot be changed, but the future is still in your power.

Mottos for Success

The world is a book and every step turns a new page.

Alphonse de Lamartine

A story is told of an elderly woman who slipped and fell on a busy street. Several people quickly went to assist her, but she was already struggling to hoist herself up. “I’m all right,” she assured them. “I always fall forwards, never backwards.”

When we’ve “taken a fall,” instead of dwelling on the mistake or hurt, we need to make it a fall forward by learning from it and looking to the future.

A. M.

I am willing to go anywhere, anywhere, anywhere—so long as it’s forward.

David Livingstone

In every country the sun rises in the morning.

Traditional proverb
See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

James 5:7

God is teaching you by His great picture book of nature to wait, to sow your seed, and wait for the slow ripening of the harvest under the patient heavens. He does not give you perfect and full-formed things at once. He sows the seeds of things that will gradually grow and ripen and bear fruit. He gives buds first, and then full unfolded blossoms, and then perfect fruit. “Everything comes to him that has patience to wait for it” is a proverb the truth of which has often been proved.

Let your apple blossoms remain ungathered on the tree, and they will grow into apples in their own good time.

Hugh Macmillan, adapted

Though today may not fulfil
All your hopes, have patience still;
For perchance tomorrow’s sun
Sees your happier days begun.

Unknown

The poor and needy seek water, but there is none,
Their tongues fail for thirst.
I, the Lord, will hear them;
I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.
I will open rivers in desolate heights,
And fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
And the dry land springs of water.

Isaiah 41:17–18

Faith lights the way through the darkest night, directs us through the fiercest storm, and sustains us when we falter or are weak.

Mottos for Success

Faith hath this privilege, never to be ashamed; it takes sanctuary in God, and sits and sings under the shadow of his wings.

Robert Leighton

Ever shine Thy face upon me
As I work and wait on Thee;
Resting beneath Thy smile, Lord Jesus,
Earth’s dark shadows flee.

Jean Sophia Pigott

He comforts us in all our tribulation.

2 Corinthians 1:4
November 5

If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. 
2 Timothy 2:13

I KNOW THAT LIFE CAN BE PRETTY ROUGH, ESPECIALLY WHEN THINGS HAVE gone wrong, or you are discouraged and low. I know that it’s not always easy to understand why things happen, and it’s natural to question My love. It’s hard to have faith that I am taking care of you, and it’s difficult to fully trust that I’m going to work things out okay in the end. My love is what will give you strength to make it through the tough times. Unconditional love in its purest form comes from Me. Even when you question My love for you, I still love you and I’m not going to give up on you. Even when you are blaming Me for something, I love you and do not condemn you. I’ll continue walking with you, talking with you, waiting for you to come to Me when you are ready. I’m still going to be right there beside you when you need counsel, when you need some company, when you are desperate for a listening ear, or when you need a friend to relax with.

Jesus

November 6

To get an idea of what heaven will be like, take the happiest moment of your life and multiply it by a million.

Mottos for Success

Christ has manifested most amazing love to believers, in preparing for their eternal abode, mansions of glory, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heaven is a prepared place for believers; prepared by Christ in his infinite love. The love of Christ will make heaven a glorious, happy abode indeed.

Octavius Winslow

Heaven is a place where all joy is enjoyed!

In heaven, there will be: mirth without sadness, light without darkness, sweetness without bitterness, life without death, rest without labour, plenty without poverty!

Oh, what joy enters into the believer—when the believer enters into the joy of his Lord!

William Dyer

His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”

Matthew 25:21
November 7

I bless thee for thy peace, O God, Deep as the unfathomed sea. Which falls like sunshine on the road Of those who trust in thee. 

Author unknown

You have promised that you will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you. I need to focus my thoughts on you! The peace I'm seeking comes from trust in you; I won't get upset by bad news if I have my heart fixed. It all seems so simple! Help me to trust you. Amen.

Prayer based on Isaiah 26:3 and Psalm 112:7

November 8

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

2 Corinthians 4:17

The Bible says that God is near to the brokenhearted1 and a very present help in times of trouble.2 He’s more than a shoulder to cry on or a hand to hold. He can reach into the deepest places of your heart. He can soothe the pain and suffering, and replace it with His love, peace, comfort, and yes, even joy. He can do all this through His word. When He shines the light of His word on your tears, they turn to rainbow hues. It’s sunshine after the rain, light at the end of the tunnel.

Rafael Holding

In the hour of adversity be not without hope, for crystal rain falls from black clouds.

Persian proverb

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1. Psalm 34:18
2. Psalm 46:1
Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.

Luke 6:38

**Make it a rule ... never, if possible, to lie down at night without being able to say, “I have made one human being at least a little wiser, a little happier, or a little better this day.”**

Charles Kingsley

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.

Charles Dickens

Look up and not down; look forward and not back; look out and not in; and lend a hand.

Edward Everett Hale

Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.

Lao-tzu

The door to happiness swings outward.

Søren Kierkegaard

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him.

Psalm 37:7

**What exactly does it mean to “rest in Jesus”? It means trusting that once you have asked Jesus to provide solutions to your problems or to help you with the work at hand, He will take charge and do just that. It means trusting that He will show you what you can do to help the situation, that He will empower you to do your part, and that He will do the rest, whatever you can’t do. It means stepping back from your problems or work, shutting out the world around you, and letting your spirit be strengthened through communion with Him.**

In short, resting in Jesus means turning matters over to Him and then trusting Him for the outcome. That way, you’re not under such pressure because He is carrying the weight, not you. You’re still busy, but most of your “work”—and your most important work—is the spiritual part, the praying, believing, and trusting. When you focus on that, you set wheels in motion in the spiritual realm that have the potential to bring about far greater results in the physical realm than would be humanly possible—miraculous results.

M. S. Fontaine
Listen for My still, small voice throughout the day. Remember the lesson I taught My servant Elijah in days of old. I was not in the tempest and winds as he stood on the mountain, nor in the earthquake and the fire, but in the still, small voice. Although you may feel as if you are going through tempests or earthquakes or fires on some days, or all three, you can listen for the still, small voice that follows—My voice—advising you how to calm the storm, ride out the earthquake, and quench the fire.

Jesus

Great discoveries and grand journeys of exploration are stories of dedication and passion, determination and perseverance. The search goes on for cures and solutions; for hidden places above the stars, to hidden wonders of the deep.

There is another search, closer to home: The search within the self for peace of mind, contentment of heart, purpose for living, hope for eternity. Happy indeed are those who discover Christ, for he fills the gaping space in the human heart.

It has been said that discovering Christ is the greatest adventure of life.—And it is not a one-time discovery. Each day can bring another precious find. Getting to know him through prayer, reading and meditation can become our greatest treasure, as Paul wrote, “For me, indeed, to live is Christ.”

A. M.

I remember two things; that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour.

John Newton

1 John 5:11

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John Newton

1 Philippians 1:21
Put your trust in the Lord.

Psalm 4:5

Be happy in a moment, that’s enough. Each moment is all we need, no more.

Mother Teresa

Live in peace without worrying about the future. Unnecessary worrying and imagining the worst possible scenario will strangle your faith. ... The future is not yet yours—perhaps it never will be. And when tomorrow comes it will probably be different from what you had imagined. ... Above all, live in the present moment and God will give you all the grace you need.

François de la Mothe-Fénelon

Anticipated sorrows are harder to bear than real ones, because Christ does not support us under them.

Edward Payson

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory in great joy, to God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

Jude 24–25 (WEB)

Dear Lord,

Let my mouth be filled with your praise
And with your glory all the day.
Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!
They walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance.
In your name they rejoice all day long,
And in your righteousness they are exalted.
For you are the glory of their strength.

I will hope continually,
And will praise you yet more and more.
My mouth shall tell of your righteousness
And your salvation all the day,
For I do not know their limits.
My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing to you,
And my soul, which you have redeemed.
I give thanks to you, O God, I give thanks!
For your wondrous works declare that your name is near.

Prayer adapted from Psalm 71:8; 89:15–17; 71:14–15, 23; 75:1
It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Galatians 2:20

Take heed, dear friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life. Bring the whole of your life under the ordering of the spirit of Christ. Are you open to the healing power of God's love? Cherish that which is of God within you, so that this love may grow in you and guide you. Let your worship and your daily life enrich each other. Treasure your experience of God, however it comes to you. Remember that Christianity is not a notion but a way.

"Advice and Queries," the Society of Friends

God's thoughts, his will, his love, his judgments are all man's home. To think his thoughts, to choose his will, to love his loves, to judge his judgments, and thus to know that he is in us, is to be at home.

George MacDonald

Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

This book [the Bible] had to be written by one of three people: good men, bad men, or God. It couldn't have been written by good men because they said it was inspired by the revelation of God. Good men don't lie and deceive. It couldn't have been written by bad men because bad men would not write something that would condemn themselves. It leaves only one conclusion. It was given by divine inspiration of God.

John Wesley

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:13
God is Spirit.  

John 4:24

God is like the air we breathe—all around us, invisible and vital to our health and happiness. Just as we need to breathe clean, fresh air to be strong and healthy physically, we need to partake of God’s Spirit to be strong and healthy spiritually. Under normal circumstances, breathing is an unconscious, involuntary act. God would like our relationship with him to be that natural, and he created us with all the necessary equipment. But unlike breathing, for most of us making that connection with God doesn’t come so easily; it requires a conscious effort on our part. It is an effort that is worthwhile.

A. M.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what Thou dost love,  
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
Blend all my soul with Thine,  
Until this earthly part of me  
Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
So shall I never die,  
But live with Thee the perfect life  
Of Thine eternity.

Edwin Hatch

The two disciples heard [John] speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Teacher, where are You staying?” He said to them, “Come and see.”  

John 1:37–39

Life is a mysterious journey; we don’t always know exactly what we’re looking for. Within our hearts we search and do not find; yet there comes a moment when, looking up, we see him. He beckons. We can ignore his gentle invitation and carry on our journey alone, or we can heed his call, come and see him, come and receive what he offers.

A. M.

It is the invitation of Christ that gives you the right to approach him.  

William Howells

Him therefore we accompany; him we follow; him have we for guide of our journey; source of light; author of salvation, who promises heaven and the Father to them that believe.

Cyprian of Carthage
If you would have God hear you when you pray, you must hear him when he speaks.

Thomas Brooks

Talk to Me and I will talk to you. It’s that simple. I’m here. I’m always with you. If you want to talk to Me, I’m available anytime and anywhere. I don’t have office hours or office fees. I don’t even have an office. I am available for you whenever you need Me. If you will stop, acknowledge Me, speak to Me, and wait, I will answer. I will never leave you comfortless. I will never leave you without an answer. I will never walk away from you. I am here for you.

Jesus

O Lord, to be turned from you is to fall, to turn to you is to rise, and to stand in your presence is to live for ever. Grant us in all our duties your help, in all our perplexities your guidance, in all our dangers your protection, and in all our sorrows your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Augustine of Hippo

ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE UNIVERSAL CHILDREN’S DAY

Children are a blessing and a gift from the Lord.

Psalm 127:3 (CEV)

They brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.

Mark 10:13–16

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still.

William Blake
Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!

Luke 19:38

Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king.”

John 18:37

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the Saviour, reigns, the God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains He took His seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, He rules o’er earth and heav’n,
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus giv’n;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Charles Wesley

I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God;
Incline Your ear to me, and hear my speech.
Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand,
O You who save those who trust in You
From those who rise up against them.
Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
Hide me under the shadow of Your wings.

Psalm 17:6–8

O Lord our God, who has called us to serve you in the midst of the world’s affairs,
When we stumble, hold us; when we fall, lift us up.
When we are hard pressed with evil, deliver us.
When we turn from what is good, turn us back and bring us at last to your glory.

Prayer of Alcuin

Uphold my steps in Your paths,
That my footsteps may not slip.

Psalm 17:5
He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen.

Deuteronomy 10:21

Part of meditating on Jesus involves praise. We learn His majesty by praising Him, and His power by connecting with Him in spirit. And praise is something that lifts us into His presence, that connects us to Him, that puts us fully under His protection, and His blessing, and His anointing, where we can feel His love and more easily see things the way He sees them.

M. S. Fontaine

Giving God praise is a vital element in our prayers, as Merlin Carothers describes: “Any form of sincere prayer opens the door for God’s power to move into our lives, but the prayer of praise releases more of God’s power than any other form of petition.”

A. M.

How sweet is his smile in whose countenance heaven lies.

Robert Fleming

[HANNAH] was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish [because she was childless]. Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli [the priest] thought she was drunk.

And Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.”

Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

1 Samuel 1:10–18, abridged

When Hannah had prayed, she had peace; she was no more troubled. The soul tossed with a tempest prays, and puts into the will of God, as to a harbour. Here she lies sheltered from every storm. The spirit that rides by prayer into the haven of God’s will is fenced from violent blasts by the power and wisdom of God, as high and protective rocks on each side.

Peter Sterry, adapted
November 25

Life is a flower of which love is the honey.  
Victor Hugo

Two are better than one,  
Because they have a good reward for their labor.  
For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.  
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,  
For he has no one to help him up.  
Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;  
But how can one be warm alone?  
Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.  
And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.  

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

A solitary blessing few can find;  
Our joys with those we love are intertwined;  
And he, whose wakeful tenderness removes  
Th’ obstructing thorn which wounds  
the friend he loves,  
Smoothes not another’s rugged path alone,  
But scatters roses to adorn his own.  

Hannah More

For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.  

1 John 3:11

November 26

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.  

Hebrews 12:1 (kjv)

Patience. You need patience for many things in this life, and one very important thing that you need patience for is for resting in Me. Yes, it takes patience to allow yourself to rest fully in Me. It takes patience to let your worries and fears go, to place them in My hands, and then to let Me handle them fully in My time and in My way. I don’t always give you the solutions instantly, so have patience. I don’t always heal you the instant that you ask, so have patience. I don’t always pour down My full blessing from heaven the very first time you ask, so have patience. Your patience in Me is a sign of your faith that you know I am in control. So have patience, and in the end you will see results greater than you ever even imagined.  

Jesus
Can you remember a time when you were a child and you wanted something so badly that it seemed that special something would never come?—And then when it finally did come, it wasn’t what you had expected at all, but something far better? That’s what our heavenly Father did with Christmas.

Since the beginning of time, people had longed for a special something to make their lives truly happy and complete. Who would have ever thought that that would come in the form of a tiny baby born in a barn in some faraway land? But that’s exactly what happened.

God looked at every human heart He had created and every heart to come, and He knew just what each one needed. So He took a part of His own heart and fashioned the perfect answer. Then He sent the answer into the world. And He called the answer “Jesus.”

Keith Phillips

Let this season be an advent of the heart. The best way to prepare for the coming of Christ is never to forget the presence of Christ.

A. M.

Help me to be still, Lord. Teach me to get still, and not only to get still, but also to stay still. To stay still for long enough that I can hear your voice. To stay still for long enough to meditate on what you tell me. To stay still for long enough to know how to weave your counsel into the fabric of my daily life.

Show me why it’s good to be still. Convince me that there’s more value in sitting quietly, in praying, in reaching out to touch you, in loving you, in praising you, in adoring you, than there is in trying to change the world with my own two hands. Help me learn this important lesson.

Don’t let me get away with not being still. Tie me closely to you, and reshape my spirit so that I absolutely have to make time to be still. Reward me with your presence, and change my life in your stillness.
It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning.
Psalm 92:1–2

In the morning, prayer is the key that opens to us the treasure of God’s mercies and blessings; in the evening, it is the key that shuts us up under his protection and safeguard. Prayer, as the first, second and third element of the Christian life, should open, prolong and conclude each day.

The first act of the soul in early morning should be a draught at the heavenly fountain. It will sweeten the taste for the day. A few moments with God at that calm and tranquil season, are of more value than much fine gold. And if you tarry long so sweetly at the throne, you will come out of the closet ... suffused all over with the heavenly fragrance of that communion.

Henry Ward Beecher

An offering ... a sweet aroma to the LORD.
Leviticus 1:9

We see as fine risings of the sun as ever Adam saw; and its risings are as much a miracle now as they were in his day—and, I think, a good deal more, because it is now a part of the miracle, that for thousands and thousands of years he has come to his appointed time, without the variation of a millionth part of a second.

Daniel Webster

A star is beautiful; it affords pleasure, not from what it is to do, or to give, but simply by being what it is. It befits the heavens; it has congruity with the mighty space in which it dwells. It has repose; no force disturbs its eternal peace. It has freedom; no obstruction lies between it and infinity.

Thomas Carlyle

Taking time to observe the sky above
Reminds us of our Father’s love;
He shines his light upon our way,
In night time just as well as day.

A. M.
December 1

Don’t let mistakes of the past blur your vision for the future. Focus on the good to come.

Mottos for Success

The wheels of nature are not made to roll backward; everything presses on towards eternity; from the birth of time an impetuous current has set in, which bears all the sons of man to that interminable ocean.

Robert Hall

Lord, when you call us to live and work for you, give us the wisdom to remember that it is not the beginning but the faithful continuing of the task that is most important in your eyes, until we have completed it to the best of our ability; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who laid down his life for us in order to finish your work.

Sir Francis Drake

I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

December 2

Blessed be the LORD . . . . There has not failed one word of all His good promise.

1 Kings 8:56

My Word contains hundreds of promises that are yours to claim. As you read, absorb, and claim them, you will see answers to your prayers that will thrill your soul and cause your faith to grow. And as you continue to read and absorb and claim, I will continue to answer and inspire and provide.

That is not to say that your faith will never ebb or that you will never again go through difficult times. As long as you are in this present world you will experience good times and hard times. Problems are a necessary part of life, but your connection with Me and your faith in My love and promises can make all the difference in the world!

Jesus
ON THIS DAY WE REMEMBER THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PERSONS

I pleaded with the Lord three times that [this affliction] might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:8–10

We may not have the strength we would like; our sight may be dimmed, or our hearing impaired; physical or mental challenges may impose very real limitations. But there is no design flaw. God, in his great love, has equipped each of us for our own particular life’s journey. It was a deaf Beethoven who composed some of our greatest music; a disabled Walter Scott and a blind Milton who gave us some of our greatest literature; the deaf Goya some of our greatest art. If one ability eludes us, let us seek another.

A. M.

To see God in everything makes life the greatest adventure there is.

Author unknown

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:14–21
Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls—
Yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Habakkuk 3:17–18

Jonah was the man who ran away from God and ended up in the belly of a whale or great fish. This part of the Bible story is well known, along with his subsequent escape and arrival in Nineveh, but we must turn our attention to Jonah while he was inside the fish’s belly in order to grasp one of the key lessons: Jonah was not delivered as soon as he prayed. It took more than pleading with God to escape from this hell. It required praise. It was only when he declared, “I’ll call out in thanksgiving!” that the God of salvation brought him out. Praising God in the midst of trouble is the surest route to deliverance.

Nicholas of Myra, in present-day Turkey, was born in the fourth century to wealthy parents who died when he was a child. As a young man, Nicholas dedicated his life to God, obeyed Jesus’ admonition to “sell what you have and give to the poor,” and used his inheritance to assist the needy and the suffering. He was eventually promoted to the office of bishop, and became known for his love and generosity.

His story is a reminder that love means going out of our way to help others; helping others in practical ways and showing kindness are our responsibilities to those we pass by on the road of life.

During a long life I have proved that not one kind word ever spoken, not one kind deed ever done, but sooner or later returns to bless the giver, and becomes a chain binding men with golden bands to the throne of God.

Lord Shaftesbury
December 7

I will remember the works of the LORD;
Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.
I will also meditate on all Your work,
And talk of Your deeds.

Psalm 77:11–12

Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary;
Who is so great a God as our God?
You are the God who does wonders;
You have declared Your strength among the peoples.
You have with Your arm redeemed Your people.
When I remember these things,
I pour out my soul in me.
My heart rejoices in the LORD.

Psalm 77:13–15; 42:4; 1 Samuel 2:1

Thank you for always working everything out for my good, because I love you and you love me, and because you promised to. Help me to see your hand in everything, and help me to hold tight to your hand through everything, knowing that you know best and want only the best for me.

December 8

Seek the LORD while He may be found,
Call upon Him while He is near.

Isaiah 55:6

Eternal Trinity, you are a deep sea,
into which the more I enter the more I find,
and the more I find the more I seek.

The soul ever hungers in your abyss, Eternal Trinity,
longing to see you with the light of your light,
and as the deer yearns for the springs of water,
so my soul yearns to see you in truth.

Catherine of Siena

Two men please God—who serves him with all his heart because he knows him, who seeks him with all his heart because he knows him not.

Nikita Ivanovich Panin

If you seek Christ, carry nothing with you. All you need in life, in death, and for eternity, is to be found in him.

William Howells
Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.  
**Colossians 3:2**

The world is but a great inn, where we are to stay a night or two, and be gone; what madness is it so to set our heart upon our inn, as to forget our home?  
**Thomas Watson**

The only way to get our values right is to see, not the beginning, but the end of the way, to see things, not in the light of time, but in the light of eternity.  
**William Barclay**

Leave behind what is simply good in exchange for the eternal.  
**Spanish proverb**

The love of heaven makes one heavenly.  
**William Shakespeare**

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.  
**John 6:27**

Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!  
**1 Chronicles 16:10**

God is great, and therefore he will be sought; he is good, and therefore he will be found.  
**John Jay**

Blessed Saviour, let me find you,  
Keep me close to you,  
Cast me not behind you.  
Life of life, my heart you still  
Calm I rest upon your breast  
All the void you fill.  
**Paul Gerhardt**

None but God can satisfy the longing of the immortal soul; as the heart was made for him, he only can fill it.  
**Richard Chenevix Trench**

How can you expect God to speak in that gentle and inward voice which melts the soul, when you are making so much noise with your rapid reflections? Be silent, and God will speak again.  
**François de la Mothe-Fénélon**

I will meditate on Your precepts,  
And contemplate Your ways.  
**Psalm 119:15**
The rugged climb doesn’t dissuade the determined mountain climber; he revels in the challenge. Nothing can stop him from pressing on until he reaches his goal. No adversity can cause him to turn back. When he looks at the steep cliffs ahead, he doesn’t focus on the danger but on the toeholds and narrow rock ledges that will take him to the peak. He isn’t held back by the harshness of his surroundings or the toll the climb is taking on his body; he is propelled onward and upward by the thought of triumph.

There are many obstacles to surmount in life, but each one you conquer is another one behind you. When the going gets tough, lean on Me. Let Me lead the way and guide you up the rugged cliffs. I know all the danger spots and how to get past them. Together we will surmount each obstacle, together we will reach the summit, and together we will plant the flag of victory!

Jesus

Let your great Physician heal you in his own way. Only follow his directions, and take the medicine which he prescribes, and then quietly leave the result with him.

Edward Payson

The Son of God came, as the great Physician of the soul, to heal all who were diseased, to bind up the brokenhearted, to give sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bruised, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

My soul, do you know Jesus as your physician? Has he examined you in your illness and told you his diagnosis? And are you, through his mercy, restored to health? Have you heard him ask the tender question, “Will you be made whole?” And have you rejoiced to come under his care?

What is more, has Jesus freely given you his remedies, without payment, without money and without price? Tell every poor soul, Jesus is the beloved Physician, who visits the poor and the needy, and heals every kind of sickness and all types of disease among the people, and he has healed me.

Robert Hawker, adapted

1 Isaiah 61:1–2
2 John 5:6
The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

Mark 4:39

We have a Friend and Protector, from whom, if we do not ourselves depart from him, no power nor spirit can separate us. In his strength let us proceed on our journey, through the storms, and troubles, and dangers of the world. However they may rage and swell, though the mountains shake at the tempests, our rock will not be moved:1 we have one friend who will never forsake us;2 one refuge, where we may rest in peace and stand in our lot at the end of the days.3

Reginald Heber

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

Helen H. Lemmel

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease:
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier

1 Psalm 46:2
2 Hebrews 13:5
3 Psalm 46:1; Daniel 12:13
When you’ve got questions, the Lord has answers, and when you have problems, He has solutions—and they’re all in His Word. By reading God’s recorded Word or hearing Him speak to your heart personally when you pray for guidance—His spoken Word—you can find the answer to every question and every problem you will ever have. Once you become familiar with the spiritual principles, divine wisdom, and practical counsel in the written Word, you will find that the Lord will show you how to apply it to questions and problems that come up in your own life. His Word will be like a light, illuminating the path ahead of you.

Jason Rae and Shannon Shayler

I will give you the treasures of darkness
And hidden riches of secret places,
That you may know that I, the LORD,
Who call you by your name,
Am the God of Israel.

Isaiah 45:3

Blessed [are] the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.

Matthew 5:5

The meek man will attain a place of soul rest. As he walks on in meekness he will be happy to let God defend him. The old struggle to defend himself is over. He has found the peace which meekness brings.

Aiden Wilson Tozer

The meek have a special place in the Lord’s heart and He makes special promises to them.

Author unknown

The meek shall eat and be satisfied. For the Lord takes pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation.

Psalm 22:26, 149:4, adapted

Lord, teach me the silence of love, the silence of wisdom, the silence of humility, the silence of faith, the silence that speaks without words.
O Saviour, teach me to silence my heart that I may listen to the gentle movement of the Holy Spirit within me, and sense the depths that are God, today and always.

Frankfurt, sixteenth century
Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 6:34

If you’re fearful for tomorrow, you lose sight of the goal for today, and it makes today a double struggle, because you’re carrying the cares of tomorrow as well as those of today. You cannot remedy tomorrow’s difficulties today, so concerning yourself with them today is futile. Leave them for tomorrow, when they become the present and the challenge at hand. By doing that, you’ll find that whatever it is you need to persevere through that day, it will be yours, for I always give you what you need to fight each battle. If you find that you don’t have it in you to fight the next battle, perhaps it’s because you’re not in that battle yet and you need to stop fretting about it and face the obstacle that is in front of you now—not what awaits you up ahead.

Jesus

We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Cold winds have whipped through the trees, stripping them of their autumn foliage. Bare branches stand silhouetted against the grey sky; the outlook is bleak. But although “weeping may last all night ... joy comes in the morning.” Despite outward appearances, life still remains in the heart of the tree; in the morning of springtime the sap will flow up through the branches, leaves will grow again. Even so, on occasions of disappointment when all seems lost, keep hope; in time, good things will come again.

A. M.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk:
No bud nor greenness can I see,
Yet rise it shall—the sap of spring,
O Jesus, rise in me.

Christina Rossetti

1 Psalm 30:5
My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the Lord;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
I lie awake,
And am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.
Psalm 84:2; 102:7

Calm my troubled heart; give me peace.
O Lord, calm the waves of this heart, calm its tempests!
Calm thyself, O my soul, so that the divine can act in thee!
Calm thyself, O my soul, so that God is able to repose in thee,
so that His peace may cover thee!
Yes, Father in heaven, often have we found that the world cannot give us peace, but make us feel that thou art able to give peace; let us know the truth of thy promise: that the whole world may not be able to take away thy peace.
Søren Kierkegaard

Peace be with you; do not fear.
Judges 6:23

If you fear, cast all your fear on God;
that anchor holds.
Lord Alfred Tennyson

The fact that the early Christians often used the symbol of the fish to signal their faith to fellow-believers is common knowledge; their use of an anchor is less well known. From ancient times, the anchor was viewed as a symbol of safety. For Christians, the anchor symbolised their hope in Christ, who would bring them to the safe harbour of his heavenly kingdom. Anchors adorn numerous tombs of early Christians buried in the catacombs beneath Rome.

We have hope in Christ; we can rest secure in the knowledge that he will hold us steady in the storms of life.
A. M.

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.
John 16:33
December 21

God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though its waters roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its swelling.

Psalm 46:1–3

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, Lord, in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last.

Attributed to John Henry Newman

December 22

Like valleys that stretch out,
Like gardens by the riverside,
Like aloes planted by the Lord,
Like cedars beside the waters.

Numbers 24:6

Surely there is something in the unruffled calm of nature that overawes our little anxieties and doubts: the sight of the deep-blue sky, and the clustering stars above, seem to impart a quiet to the mind.

Jonathan Edwards

Nature is the living, visible garment of God.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Earth with her thousand voices praises God.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Nature is man’s teacher. She unfolds her treasures to his search, unseals his eye, illumes his mind, and purifies his heart; an influence breathes from all the sights and sounds of her existence.

Alfred Billings Street

Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

Franz Kafka

Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God.

Job 37:14
Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.  
1 Chronicles 16:34

Thank Me for everything that happened to you this past year. Thank Me for the blessings, and thank Me for the tests and challenges that strengthened your character. Thank Me for the love that you received from others, and praise Me for opportunities to show love to others. Thank Me for everything.

It brings Me joy to hear your thankful praises. They bond your heart with Mine and draw us closer, and they can make this Christmas the best you’ve yet experienced. And it doesn’t have to stop after Christmas. Whenever something happens that makes you happy or makes you feel loved, thank Me for that gift. Then it will be a personal gift exchange between you and Me. I give you blessings to make you happy, and you make Me happy by giving Me thanks. As you continue to thank Me for everything, I’ll give you more, and every day will be like Christmas.

Jesus

**On this day**

**On this day we celebrate Christmas Eve**

Let us adore Him, and praise His great love;
To save us poor sinners He came from above.

Henry Ramsden Bramley

Joseph went up [to] Bethlehem, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them [and] said,

“Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

So it was, that the shepherds came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Luke 2:1–16, abridged
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Loving God, help us to remember the birth of Jesus that we may share in the songs of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings. May our minds be filled with grateful thoughts and our hearts with forgiveness, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Phillip Brooks

What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.

Agnes M. Pharo

There is a lot going on this Christmas. But it is not in the shops and the parties and the pulsating lights. To be part of it you need to find time to be quiet, to be silent and still, to contemplate his presence in your hearts and in your minds. He is there. He wants to embrace you. Let him.

And having discovered what is really going on at Christmas we cannot, in the end, keep quiet about it. We cannot live in a world that, in spite of the tragedies and sorrows, is still a world full of gifts, without saying “thank you.” We cannot be part of what Christmas is really about without praising and glorifying God as Mary did. We cannot be fully human unless we let ourselves sing along with her those words of heaven-filled gratitude: “My soul glorifies the Lord. My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour. He who is mighty has done great things for me and holy is his name.”

Cormac Murphy-O’Connor

1 Luke 1:46-47, 49
December 27

Dear Jesus,

You are God and man, king and servant. You left your throne of immortality and encased yourself in human flesh. You became one of us, so that you could save us. Joy floods my heart when I think of how you quietly and humbly came into our world and changed it forever. Who could have imagined the transformation that would come through a little baby, born to commoners, wrapped in rags, sleeping in a feeding trough?

Thank you for making the choice to experience both the joys and sorrows of our earthly life. Thank you for enduring the tears, pain, frustration, loneliness, exhaustion and finally death so that you could truly understand us. Never has there been a more perfect love than yours!

Please forgive my mistakes and shortcomings. You are the Saviour of the world—I want you to be my personal Saviour too. I invite you into my heart. Walk beside me all the days of my life, and when my time here draws to its close, please bring me to heaven to live forever with you.

Amen.

December 28

Grow in grace.

2 Peter 3:18

We are given a fresh start not only at the beginning of the year, but every morning when we wake up. We have the chance to start anew and make things right.

Mottos for Success

To improve the golden moment of opportunity and catch the good that is within our reach, is the great art of life.

Samuel Johnson

Look upon every day as the whole of life, not merely as a section; and enjoy and improve the present without wishing, through haste, to rush on to another.

Jean Paul Richter

Let us labour to be like unto angels, “strengthened with all might,” walking about the world as conquerors, able to do all things through Christ which strengthens us.¹

John Trapp

¹ Philippians 4:13
There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.

_Hebrews 4:9–11_

All work and no rest takes the spring and bound out of the most vigorous life.—Time spent in judicious resting is not time wasted, but time gained.

_M. B. Grier_

Through the week we go down into the valleys of care and shadow.—Our Sabbaths should be hills of light and joy in God’s presence; and so as time rolls by we shall go on from mountain top to mountain top, till at last we catch the glory of the gate, and enter in to go no more out forever.

_Henry Ward Beecher_

Go in peace. The presence of the Lord be with you on your way.

_Judges 18:6_

Love—this is My special gift for you. Love that knows no boundaries. Love that does not judge you by the colour of your skin, the way you look, or how you speak. Love that gives. Love that shares. Love that cares. Love that is vibrant, warm and kind. Love that is unconditional and forever.

My love is always there for you—any place, any time, day or night. My love will descend to any depth to save, go any length to rescue. It knows no stopping place, no limit. I give you My love, infinite and true.

My love brings peace of mind when you are confused, rest when you are weary, and strength when you feel you cannot go on. My love will calm your fears and give you courage in the face of despair. My love can heal when your body is broken; it can soothe your heartaches and pain. My love will ease your mind when it is troubled and weary; it will melt away tension, worry and strain.

My love is My gift for you.

_Jesus_
ON THIS DAY WE CELEBRATE THE PROMISE OF A NEW YEAR

Here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Hebrews 13:14

The only way to get our values right is to see, not the beginning, but the end of the way, to see things, not in the light of time, but in the light of eternity.

William Barclay

Jesus is “the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” He is “the same, yesterday, today, and forever.” And he assures us he is with us always. On such a foundation we can stake our future with confidence.

A. M.

O Lord, as the years change, may we find rest in your eternal changelessness. Help us to meet this coming year bravely, in the faith that, while life changes all around us, you are always the same, guiding us with your wisdom and protecting us with your love; through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

William Temple, adapted

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1  Revelation 22:13
2  Hebrews 13:8
3  Matthew 28:20

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SPECIAL DAYS, RECOGNISED INTERNATIONALLY

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PRINCIPAL EVENTS ON THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR

This is a guide to readings for events on the Christian calendar. (The dates of some of these are consistent, but others differ year by year and/or by denomination.)

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1 Revelation 22:13
2 Hebrews 13:8
3 Matthew 28:20
THE EASTER STORY

[Jesus] was buried, and He rose again
the third day.

1 Corinthians 15:4

Lift your voices in triumph on high
For Jesus is risen and man cannot die.

Henry Ware

The simple message that changed the world forever was this one: “He is not here. He is risen.”

Linda Bowles

Jesus departed from our sight that we might return to our heart and there find him. For he departed and, behold, he is here.

Augustine of Hippo

Easter means hope prevails over despair. Jesus reigns as Lord of lords and King of kings. ... Easter says to us that despite everything to the contrary, His will for us will prevail, love will prevail over hate, justice over injustice and oppression, peace over exploitation and bitterness.

Desmond Tutu

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”

John 11:25–26

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another,

“Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?—We hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Acts 2:1–4, 6–11, 41
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You can’t do much about yesterday—it’s already past—and tomorrow is still out of reach. But you have today: roughly sixteen waking hours stretching before you, new and spotless. How better to begin your daily journey than by pausing for a few moments of spiritual inspiration?

*Moments in the Morning* is a unique anthology drawn from a range of sources, including both contemporary and classical writings. Each selection provides a spiritual boost to start your day. You will find anecdotes and proverbs, Bible passages, inspirational insights, prophetic messages, poems and prayers combined to create this uplifting devotional volume.