Lamp Unto My Feet

Samuel H. Sutherland
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Daily devotional messages as featured on the Bible Institute Hour

by Dr. Samuel H. Sutherland
This book is dedicated to all the many faithful listeners and prayer warriors of the BIBLE INSTITUTE HOUR who have constantly upheld this ministry.

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." (I Thess. 1:3)

While he was born in Santa Rosa, California and she in Toronto, Canada, Dr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Sutherland first met at a Harvard-Princeton football game in 1925. Being introduced by Mrs. Sutherland's cousin, who was then attending Princeton Seminary with Dr. Sutherland, the Sutherlands were married in Toronto in 1927. Following this, he was called as pastor of the Grace Presbyterian Church of Highland Park, California. From 1931 to 1935, Dr. Sutherland was Field Secretary for the University Bible Clubs with several thousand college young people participating in weekly spiritual meetings. He was also pastor of the University Bible Church located near the UCLA campus. Dr. Sutherland joined the BIOLA family in 1936 as Director of the Extension Department, and two years later became the Director of Christian Service. In 1942, he was appointed Dean of the Bible Institute, and ten years later assumed the duties of President. Degrees held by him include D.D. and LL.D.

In 1947, Dr. Sutherland was one of the founders and first president of the National Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges. He serves actively on the boards of several Christian organizations, among which are Christ for Greater Los Angeles and the Sudan Interior Mission West Coast Examining committee. The Sutherlands have two children, both of whom have graduated from BIOLA. Mary, the elder, is a pastor's wife, and Phil is planning to continue his studies at the Talbot Theological Seminary. All of the BIOLA family praise the Lord for the spiritual leadership of our President and his tireless energy in the expansion of the world-wide ministry for this Gospel Lighthouse of evangelism.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah 26:3)
Your Daily Guide

With a desire to present material which will help strengthen the family altar, develop a constant study of the Word of God, and offer devotional helps in preparing special messages, this booklet was formed. By using one of the readings each day for any month of the year, you will find suggestions concerning salvation, Christian growth in grace, victory over trials, prayer and other great themes taken from the Bible. It is our sincere prayer that the blessings which hundreds of thousands of radio listeners have received from these messages may be given similar realization in the heart of each reader.

"And this I pray, that... ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."

(Phil. 1:9, 10)

1st Day

Years ago, so legend tells us, the glass makers of Italy found a problem because of some shrewd and unscrupulous merchants. The process of making delicate dishes consisted of subjecting the substance to a severe heat, and because of this oftentimes the piece of China came out of the oven with cracks and could not be sold as perfect. But many of the businessmen who wanted to make extra money, used an invisible vessel of honor, meet for the Master's service.

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2nd Day

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

(John 10:27)

For the traveler in the Holy Land, the sight of the flocks of sheep at the ancient water hole during mid-day, is one of breath-taking interest. Here the animals of many shepherds gather together and one immediately begins to wonder how it is possible for them to know which shepherd they should follow. Then, watching this scene, one notices that a certain shepherd going off to one side, and cupping his hands to his mouth, shouting the cry: "Menah! Menah!" which means "Follow me! Follow me!" Then from here and there, sheep break away from the water hole and head in the direction of the guide's voice. In this manner, each of the animals knows the unmistakable voice of its leader. What a beautiful illustration this gives us of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, who calls to His sheep in this life to follow Him, to forsake the cares, companionship and riches of this world, and to walk the path of divine guidance. Many of us, however, are so busy standing at the noonday water hole, in the marts and affairs of this life, that we do not recognize His clear voice, and so fail to find true peace in His redemptive work. May we listen for the call of the Good Shepherd, and trust all to Him.

3rd Day

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

(1 John 4:10)

Volumes have been written on the subject of the love of God, and yet we still cannot fathom the true degree or measure of His love for us, who are but sinful creatures. Many years ago, over in the Scottish highlands, a widow was faced with a very grave problem. Her small son was critically ill. Hours snatched away from his crib, and medical aid was many miles from her home. All day she carefully watched his temperature, until in the evening she realized that the only hope of saving him would be to try to make a trip to a nearby village.

Setting out, she moved rapidly, but then snow began to fall and as the intensity of the flurries became greater, her steps faltered, and she slowed down, finally dropping to the ground.

The next day, some hunters found her dead body with scarcely any clothes covering her. They understood why when nearby they found the tiny baby, wrapped up warmly and snugly in the mother's garments. She had sacrificed her life for her son.

Years later, the son of the minister who had conducted the widow's funeral, was preaching in Glasgow and was led to tell the story of the Highland woman's supreme love. Several days later, he received an emergency call from a man in a nearby hospital. Hurrying to his bedside, the man whispered weakly, "I have never attended church before, but passing by one the other day, the weather was so cold, and the music so appealing, that I stepped inside and heard you tell the story of the Highland widow woman who gave her life for her boy. Preacher, I'm that boy. I've never forgotten my mother's sacrifice, but I never realized the great love of God in giving His Son to die for me. Thank God, my mother's prayers have been answered, and now I will see her, and my blessed Saviour face to face." Let us remember the wonderful truth, that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, or enemies apart from His truth. Praise His holy name for such a great redemption.
"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

(11 Timothy 4:7)

In many of our lives, we bear just enough fruit for the Lord that others may get a vague idea that we are Christians, but still we do not see souls saved through our testimonies because we have lost the depth of our devotion to Christ. Some years ago, there was a very serious accident on a railroad in the East. A train, carrying a load of children coming home from school had made a stop at a siding, and was just ready to go on when it was discovered that the switch was tampered and could not be moved. This meant that unless a warning was sent to the oncoming limited train, it would plunge into the back of the train with all of the oblivious young people. Quickly a flagman ran down the tracks and waved the warning signal to the engineer of the limited, but unfortunately all to no avail. For while he slowed down, he couldn't stop; and many lives were lost in the ensuing crash. Realizing that the train would be wrecked, the engineer of the limited jumped from the cab before the impact, and as soon as he had sufficiently recovered, an inquiry was held to determine who was at fault. The engineer of the limited said that he did not see a red flag, and the flagman of the express argued that he had indeed waved one. The engineer claimed that while a flag had been waved, it certainly was not red, but rather yellow. The courtroom was filled with angry words, and so to determine who was correct, the judge ordered that the flag be brought into the courtroom and placed as evidence in the record. The next day when court was opened the flag was presented, and the people in the audience were greatly shocked to note that while the flag originally had been red, it had long since turned a dirty yellow, having been subjected to the cares of this world. This meant that unless a warning was sent to the oncoming limited train, it would plunge into the back of the train with all of the oblivious young people. Quickly a flagman ran down the tracks and waved the warning signal to the engineer of the limited, but unfortunately all to no avail. For while he slowed down, he couldn't stop; and many lives were lost in the ensuing crash. Realizing that the train would be wrecked, the engineer of the limited jumped from the cab before the impact, and as soon as he had sufficiently recovered, an inquiry was held to determine who was at fault. The engineer of the limited said that he did not see a red flag, and the flagman of the express argued that he had indeed waved one. The engineer claimed that while a flag had been waved, it certainly was not red, but rather yellow. The courtroom was filled with angry words, and so to determine who was correct, the judge ordered that the flag be brought into the courtroom and placed as evidence in the record. The next day when court was opened the flag was presented, and the people in the audience were greatly shocked to note that while the flag originally had been red, it had long since turned a dirty yellow, having been subjected to the cares of this world.

Most men and women today are greatly interested in building up bank accounts here on earth to provide for future security and assure social prominence. But how vastly different this idea is from the one which is presented in the Word of God where we are instructed to lay up for ourselves in heaven, the riches which we will want to use through all eternity. An interesting experiment has been described by a noted scientist who suggests that one take a flat piece of paper and then ignite it. The burning paper is then placed down flat on a level piece of metal, and the result will seem amazing for the fire will soon go out. The reason for this is in the fact that metal absorbs heat and the fire is extinguished. Too many of us have lost our first love or "fire" for the Lord Jesus Christ because money has been placed next to our hearts, and our burning zeal for Him has been dampened until it is no more. The word "steward" gives us the implication that we do not own anything of ourselves, but that we are merely entrusted with someone else's goods. Even so, we are stewards of God, entrust with the substance of this world. May we be faithful in giving back to Him for His work these tokens of His manifold love and grace!

"This is the way I find out in which direction I should go. I throw the stick up in the air, and then whichever way it points, I just go in that direction." "If that's true, then why do you keep throwing it up into the air? Can't you take what it tells you the first time?" "Oh, that's easy," she said, "It keeps pointing this way, but I want to go that way." Isn't that true of many of us? We talk a great deal about letting the Lord have His way in our lives, but deep down in our hearts we still want to go in our own direction, not giving Him complete sway. To find the true joy in our service, let us look to the Lord Jesus Christ for His perfect guidance for our lives.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

These are days of sounds, noises and attractions of the world. How important it is for us as children of God to keep our hearts full of His love and trust in His divine promise of guidance as we commit our paths to Him. Many years ago in an Oriental court, a young guard was accused of living a riotous life. Brought before his king, he was asked if the charges of drunken revels were true, and quickly he admitted that they were. The king sternly announced: "Because of setting such a very poor example of your monarch's guards, you are hereby sentenced to death." The pronouncement fell like a stinging blow to the young man's ears. He begged for mercy to no avail. He confessed that he had been wrong and promised that it would never happen again, if only his life might be saved. The king was touched this time by his sincerity, and gave him one small chance of escaping the sentence. The ruler called for a shell, and then for a cuise of oil. His servant was instructed to pour the oil into the shell, until it would hold no more. After this was done, the young man walked carefully, slowly, deliberately. Then as the sun was the same response. "Now take this and walk through the city streets today. If you can come back this evening, without having spilled a single drop, your life will be spared. On the other hand, if a drop does fall, these two guards, who will go along with you, are to be instructed to kill you on the spot." All through the day, the young man walked carefully, slowly, deliberately. Then as the sun began to set, he made his way back to the king's chambers. His life was spared! The king then said, "Before you go, I would ask two questions. What did you see today?" "Nothing," replied the guard. "And what did you hear today?" again asked the ruler. "Nothing," was the same response. "You mean you walked through the streets of our city on this the market day, the busiest time, and yet you saw nothing and heard nothing. Why?" Quietly, the broken man replied: "Because my eyes were fixed upon this shell. My very life depended upon it." Are we eyes so fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we looking to Him moment by moment? Let us not listen to the voices of the world, but redeem the time, for the days are evil.
"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

These days when all of us are looking for some reality to life, when amid the crumbling foundations of this world's existence, we seek for a truth to which we may hold fast. While traveling in the midwest, a certain minister was waiting for a train in a small town. Pacing back and forth on the platform, he noticed a huge cliff behind the station, and at the bottom of it an excited crowd of people. Thinking he had time to investigate, he pressed into the center of the group. There he saw the body of a man who had lost his life a few minutes before in a disastrous fall over the precipice. As he studied the figure of the man, he noticed that his fist was tightly clenched in death. What was astonishing was the fact that in his fist he had grasped a few pieces of straw. Evidently, aware that he was falling over the cliff, he reached out for a rock, or a branch, or a stump to which he might cling and save himself. All he could find were just a few pieces of straw! How many people today are seeking for something to which they may cling during the time of death, sorrow, financial loss or sickness! Without the Lord Jesus Christ, all that they have to group are just a few pieces of straw! Trust in Christ, who has said: "I am the TRUTH, and find that strength which alone can buoy you up during the storms and adversities of life.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12)

While it seems scarcely possible, yet there are many people who think that they are on the right way to heaven, but are entirely wrong. The Lord Jesus Christ has told us that He is the way, and the ONLY way to get to the Father. But then, there are many Christians who are on the way, but who are making it difficult for themselves because they are not following the Lord each step of the journey.

Sometime ago, our newspapers carried a very interesting and amusing story of a group of people who decided to scale one of the highest peaks in Colorado. They thought that it had not been climbed for many years, and so they began making very elaborate plans for the ascent to the rugged top, spending many hours in preparation. Then on a morning that was clear and crisp, they started their climb. Soon they had left the grassy slopes of the highlands, and the ropes, picks and other implements of mountain climbing were brought into use. Over the crags, past chasms, up past rugged precipices they climbed, until finally with much strain and exhaustion, they reached the summit. With a great sense of achievement, they began to take the packs off their backs, and to sit down, basking in their new glories. But just as they were about to do this, a very strange sight met their eyes. Much to their disappointment, they observed some bits of paper, old tin cans, and other rubbish which bore testimony that a certain traveler once made a visit. After listening to all the complaints of the people, he made the suggestion that all of them take their burdens and wrap them in a bundle, writing on the outside of the package the list of what the trials were contained inside. Each was to take his own, place it on the hillside, and then look at each other's. After doing so, he could select the very one which he felt would be lighter than his own. All afternoon the people looked through the packages, and at the setting of the sun, without exception, each person went home with his own burden, and the important realization that to him his own lot was much less difficult than his neighbour's. How many Christians today bear long faces and are known for their continual grumbling. To meet them is to be confronted with the proverbial East wind in March. We are to be a "sweet savour of Christ" balm in them, that are saved and in them that perish. So, may we take up our cross and follow Christ, realizing that the pathway we walk He has already victoriously trod, and awaits to give us complete power and strength.

8th Day

10th Day

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." (Mark 1:35)

Fellowship with God was certainly the keynote in the all-powerful life of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten of the Father. As He has set the example, so we need a much closer communion with the Father as well.

A little girl and her father had been in the habit of taking regular walks together each night, and if raining, they would gather around a warm fire and he would tell her a story. Then, one night, the child said: "Daddy, I don't think that I'll be able to go with you tonight." And the following evening she simply said: "Not tonight, Daddy." The next night there was nothing said, and the same the next, until finally the entire week went by without any companionship whatsoever. Two weeks passed, a month, two months and then three. Finally, on the morning that the father sat down to his birthday breakfast, the little girl ran into the room and throwing her arms around him with cries of "Happy Birthday," she gave him a special present. Immediately he opened it, and found inside a pair of crudely-made slippers. The little girl quickly explained: "I made them, Daddy; I hope you like them." "Like them?" the father patted her, "why, they're wonderful! But, I think I'm beginning to understand something now. All the nights that we haven't been going for walks, you've been making me these slippers. My darling, they're very lovely, and I shall cherish them for the years to come, but never forget that I would much rather just have you and to be with you; that is all the gift that I could ever ask or desire." How many of us are busy in the service of the church, have special activities and important committees and yet we miss that time of fellowship with the Lord. Let us remember that first of all He wants just us—not our time, our talent, our tithe, but our whole hearts beating in close fellowship with Him.

11th Day

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)

How wonderful it is for us to cast all of our burdens upon the Lord and to realize that He has promised to sustain us through them all. How many times we bear people complaining about the trials and hardships which they have to bear and that they can barely stand it. The story is told about the legendary "Valley of Discontentment" to which a certain traveler once made a visit. After listening to all the complaints of the people, he made the suggestion that all of them take their burdens and wrap them in a bundle, writing on the outside of the package the list of what the trials were contained inside. Each was to take his own, place it on the hillside, and then look at each other's. After doing so, he could select the very one which he felt would be lighter than his own. All afternoon the people looked through the packages, and at the setting of the sun, without exception, each person went home with his own burden, and the important realization that to him his own lot was much less difficult than his neighbour's. How many Christians today bear long faces and are known for their continual grumbling. To meet them is to be confronted with the proverbial East wind in March. We are to be a "sweet savour of Christ" balm in them, that are saved and in them that perish. So, may we take up our cross and follow Christ, realizing that the pathway we walk He has already victoriously trod, and awaits to give us complete power and strength.
"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (John 15:16)

We are called of God, elect before the foundation of the earth. How blessed is this thought! A young boy had spent many, many weeks building a toy sailboat which turned out to be a masterpiece of workmanship for a lad. Taking it down to the river to sail it one day, he became so excited with his achievement that he let go of the string and much to his dismay, the little craft went sailing away. When he arrived home, nothing could dry his tears; he was inconsolable. His father gave him a dollar to buy a new boat downtown, but somehow it could not buy a toy as precious as the one he had actually made. The next day he went to the store, and passing by the window, he saw his very own boat. Someone had recognized the worth of it and brought it to the store for sale. Hurriedly and with excited pulse beat, he went inside and exchanged his money for his very own handiwork. The storekeeper reported that as the lad left the shop, he was heard to say: "Now, little boat, you are twice mine; I made you and I bought you." In like manner, we are twice the Lord's, for not only did He make us, but He paid the price for us by His death on Calvary's cross. This great truth should spur us on in consistent living for His divine glory.

"But who may abide the day of his coming? . . . He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." (Malachi 3:2,3)

A Sunday School teacher had as her lesson the above verse and wanted to find out for sure whether or not a silversmith actually sits while in the process of removing the dross from the metal. Entering the establishment of a certain tradesman, she inquired if it were true that during the refining he would always sit. The metalworker replied that it was certainly so since he had to make sure that the heat was just the right temperature. "I can ruin an entire cauldron full by giving it too much heat, or not enough. That's why I sit right by it throughout the entire process to make sure that it has just the right amount," he said.

Happy with this answer, the woman thanked him, and was just leaving the shop when he called to her and asked: "Say, would you like to know how I can tell when the metal is just right?" Of course the woman was very much interested and eagerly asked him how he could tell. "I can know for a certainty that the metal has had the dross removed," he said, "when I can see my face reflected in the molten substance."

How true this is in the life of the child of God! While we have been subjected to trials and testsings, the Lord will make a way to escape. He knows just that right time when all of the dross of self and this world has been taken away from our lives. That is that moment when His image is reflected in our beings, and in everything we do and say. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," he knows our melting point and will not let us suffer above that we are able to bear or that is necessary for our purification. May we commit our testings to Him, confident that He doeth all things well, and knoweth the end even from the beginning.

14th Day

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

One of the greatest dangers to the growth of the Christian life is spiritual pride. We forget the depths of degradation from which Christ has saved us, and the awful price which He paid for our redemption on Calvary's cross. Satan would like for us to forget these truths, but the Word of God would continually place them before us for our admonition.

In a certain home of a small Eastern town, a severe fire broke out, and the first thing the father could think of when he awakened to the sight of the flames, was to rush to his baby's room, and snatch her from her crib to safety outside. This he did with all of his power, and his little girl came through without a singe. However, in trying to get out the front door, his right hand was severely burned, leaving terrible scars which he would have to bear throughout all of life. In meeting people, he would always extend his left hand, but quickly his little girl would proudly draw forth from behind his back the scarred right one and then tell of her father's bravery.

When the man died, the funeral director saw to it that the good hand was left out and placed upon his chest. But when his daughter saw this, she gave immediate orders that the scarred hand be given the place of prominence, saying, "I want people to remember always that this was the hand that was wounded for me." This beautiful story portrays graphically the truth that we should keep constantly before ourselves the great redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ in giving His life for us on Calvary's cross. May we look anew at the nail prints and remind ourselves: "These are the hands that were wounded for me."

15th Day

"I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9)

In speaking of the truths of eternal life, the Lord Jesus Christ always used familiar illustrations which anyone could clearly understand. When He called Himself the door, He employed one of the humblest forms of entrance. He referred to a door to the sheepfold. How blessed it is for us to realize that the Lord Jesus Christ is not "a" door, or "one of many" doors, but He Himself is THE Door. In the Orient, the shepherd takes every precaution for the protection of his sheep. At night, he checks to see that every one of the animals is inside the fold, and then he himself lies down in the opening and actually becomes the door. Therefore, not one of the sheep can get out without passing over him, and likewise, not a single wild animal can get inside without first disturbing the shepherd. What a beautiful picture this is of the Lord Jesus Christ who Himself is our door to salvation. We cannot come into the fold of Christ's protection without first coming through Him. Nor can anyone or anything come into the fold to harm or hurt us, for Christ Himself is our protection. There are those today who would try to find peace and satisfaction in life by some other means, but only as we come through the Saviour are we given the assurance of being in His fold. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:28)
16th Day

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

I Peter 1:8

The idea of loving something which we cannot see or handle is not the type of postulate which the world would set down. Those who have not taken the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour cannot understand our great love for Him since we have never beheld His face. However, in a very real sense, we have seen Him through the complete revelation which we are afforded in the study of His Holy Word.

Some time ago, medical science had just cause to be jubilant over the way in which, through surgery and corneal transplanting, a young girl was made to see. The story behind the story, however, reveals that the child had never before seen the light of day. She didn't know the depth of blue of the mighty oceans, or the restful green of a field of alfalfa, or the bright red of a fire truck. People had tried to explain to her what the colors really were, but of course it was impossible for her to understand, since she had never before seen and had no basis of comparison. Then, on the day selected for the bandages to be removed, she became very excited and could hardly wait for the last piece of gauze to be taken away. Looking about in amazement, she made one touching remark: "Why didn't you tell me of the beauties of earth before?"

Of course her parents and loved ones had endeavored to do so, but she couldn't understand. Even so, we remind those who walk in darkness of the great joy of having selected for the bandages to be removed, she became very excited and could hardly wait for the last piece of gauze to be taken away. Looking about in amazement, she had to confess, "Why, she had fallen in love with the author! Too many people have no interest in the Word of God, and cast it aside as an uninteresting volume, but the truth of the matter is that they do not personally know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. They have never given Him their first love and therefore do not have the Holy Spirit of God as their Divine Illuminator through the sacred pages. May we turn to Christ, and give Him our whole hearts and lives.

17th Day

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Samuel 16:7)

Everyone knows someone else on whom he can usually depend to constantly complain or gossip. These people are not always a joy to be around, for their grumbling attitude dampens one's spirit. One lady in a certain neighborhood was always complaining about the people that lived near her. No one ever did anything right, and she could never be satisfied or happy with her existence. One day, a lady called on her, and no sooner had she been shown inside than the tale-bearer began to go to work. She complained about a Mrs. So-and-so who didn't know much about anything. At that point she went to her window and declared, "See that clothesline out there. She has all of her laundry on it and talk about things being tattle-tale grey! Why, her things are positively dirty!" The visitor arose and walked to the window to view the distressing situation she had been told about. Then, with quick action, she lifted the window and told the perplexed grumbler to look out and tell her what she saw. Looking with amazement, she had to confess, "Why her laundry isn't dirty; it's my window." What volumes of truth are spoken in just those few lines.

As she looked out, she found out that he had written the very book which she had never taken the time to read. That night when she got home, with the glow of first love still warm in her heart, she took the book from the shelf, and blowing the dust from its pages, she sat down and began to read. She did not put down the book until she had read it from cover to cover, and the sun was beginning to show in the morning sky. What had made the difference? Why, she had fallen in love with the author! Too many people have no interest in the Word of God, and cast it aside as an uninteresting volume, but the truth of the matter is that they do not personally know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. They have never given Him their first love and therefore do not have the Holy Spirit of God as their Divine Illuminator through the sacred pages. May we turn to Christ, and give Him our whole hearts and lives.

18th Day

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:14)

The difficulty many people have in comprehending the truth of the Word of God, is not in the Bible, but in them. They have never fallen in love with the very One who gave the words of eternal life.

A young lady was once given a copy of a certain book for Christmas. As she looked through it, she found it to be very dull and read only a few of the chapter titles in the index. The book found its place in her library shelves where it only gathered dust. Then one day, the girl fell in love with a certain young man, and in the course of one of their conversations, she discovered that he was an author. By further questioning, she found out that he had written the very book which she had never taken the time to read. That night when she got home, with the glow of first love still warm in her heart, she took the book from the shelf, and blowing the dust from its pages, she sat down and began to read. She did not put down the book until she had read it from cover to cover, and the sun was beginning to show in the morning sky. What had made the difference? Why, she had fallen in love with the author! Too many people have no interest in the Word of God, and cast it aside as an uninteresting volume, but the truth of the matter is that they do not personally know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. They have never given Him their first love and therefore do not have the Holy Spirit of God as their Divine Illuminator through the sacred pages. May we turn to Christ, and give Him our whole hearts and lives.

19th Day

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?" (I Samuel 15:22)

The great sin of Saul was that he failed to obey completely the Word of the Lord. He had been told to destroy utterly the wicked Amalekites and their ruler Agag, along with all their livestock. But Saul spared the best with which he declared he would make a special sacrifice to the Lord. God wants first our obedience, and then our sacrifice of love.

A young girl was once sent to a boarding school and the first thing that happened when she walked in was that she received a copy of the rules. Reading them over, she declared that not only were they impossible to keep, but also that she was of no mind to keep them even if she could. Then that night at dinner, she met one of the loveliest ladies she had ever seen, to whom she was strangely attracted. In the days to come, the girl tried to spend many hours with this woman who turned out to be the superintendent of the home. A week went by, and then two, until the first month had passed and the girl came to the realization that because of her great love for the superintendent, she had been keeping automatically without thinking, the stringent rules. This very graphically reminds us of the fact that as we draw nigh to the Lord Jesus Christ in a study of His Holy Word we will find that we are following His desires for our lives, simply because we love Him. The little boy in Sunday school put it so fittingly, when he gave the song title as, "Trust and Okay!"
"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21)

20th Day

Do we ever take the time to stop and ask ourselves the question: "What does life mean to me?" If we did, some of us would have to answer, "Life to me is money, success, pleasure, education, personal gain, social prominence." Paul could easily say, with a heart of dedication and devotion, "Christ is very life to me."

Years ago, a young missionary went to a certain station in China, and no sooner had he arrived than he began talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. This bothered one of the natives, who came to him in a very disturbed frame of mind one day saying, "You've only been here a short time, and yet all you've been able to talk about is Christ. Don't you ever get tired of it?" Instead of answering his question, the missionary asked one of his own: "What did you have for breakfast this morning?"

The native in astonishment at this turn of the conversation said: "Rice." "And what did you have for lunch?" "Rice and rice, and rice!" "And dinner, three times a day, rice, rice, rice?" Instead of answering his question, the missionary had made his point, and followed it by saying, "Even so, Christ is very life to us, and we live Him throughout the day, never tiring of His presence, but delighting more and more in His all-availing shed blood.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

21st Day

On a bridge which leads to one of the cities of Belgium, there stands the statue of two men, a father and his son who were heroes in the eyes of their countrymen. Wicked rulers had condemned the two to death for supposed sedition acts, but because of their extreme popularity, no one was found willing to perform the execution. So, the accusers made them an offer that if one killed the other his life would be spared. The son wanted the father to execute him, for he had just begun his life, and was not held in as much esteem by the people as his father. But the father charged the son with the duty of carrying on his crusading efforts in his place, and declared that his boy must surely be the executioner. On the appointed day, the city square was jammed with a milling throng waiting to see the grim spectacle take place. As the younger man lifted the axe above his head, the crowd became silent, and no one moved. Then, just as he was about to bring it down on the block, he threw it away, and fell to his father's side, shouting. "No, we die together! We die together!" The people pressed forward, and the guards were forced to free them both. This story of a father and son's love for one another cannot even begin to compare with the great love of Christ who gave His life for us, even while we were yet sinners, enemies of His love. Such devotion and affection cannot be told in mere human words. As the sinner yields himself to the Saviour he will find in Him divine love with attending hope, joy and abounding peace.

22nd Day

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)

In the Word of God, we are instructed to give Christ the pre-eminence in all things, but sometimes, we in our selfish nature, cling tenaciously to our own desires and because of this do not yield everything in complete dedication.

Some three hundred and fifty years ago in the land of Scotland, the farmers pursued a foolish custom of tilling all of their acreage with the exception of one tiny portion. They called "the Goodman's Croft." It was thought that by dedicating this little unworked land to the forces of evil, the gods would be satisfied and so would not harm the rest of the land. Of course what actually happened was that the crops grew and the seeds from this small plot were blown onto the remainder of the farm, and soon the entire crop was ruined.

There is a challenging application of a great truth in this thought. Many of us have reserved a space in our hearts which we might well call "Goodman's Croft." We have said to the Lord, in essence: "You can have all of my life, but..." Then we reserve some selfish desire, some unconfessed sin, some purpose outside of His will, which we will not turn over to Him. Then this small portion of our hearts grows like a cancer, and ruins our entire joy and testimony for the Lord. May we break down every idol, cast out every fear, so that we may be washed whiter than snow in His all-availing shed blood.

23rd Day

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...which hath begotten us again...to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Peter 1:3,4)

One of the greatest joys in this life is to look forward to that blessed hour when Christ shall call us to be with Him. Then all these earthly shadows will flee away.

The happiness of a certain home was greatly marred and practically destroyed completely by the death of the beloved mother. To try to cheer up his daughter, the father took his little girl on a long vacation. While they were gone he gave instructions to workmen to build a new house with many rooms. After they had toured a number of different lands, the little girl became impatient and wanted to get back to her home. When they arrived in the new house, the father showed his little girl through the impressive new structure. There were rooms of every size and for every purpose. A great deal of time was taken going from room to room, surveying what had been done. Finally they came to the last one, and the father told his little girl that there were no more. Then he asked his daughter how she liked them, and, with tears flowing down her cheeks, she looked up into his face, sobbing, "Oh, Daddy, home won't be home without Mommy." The tragic human picture of this story can be transferred to eternal things. How wonderful it is to realize that in heaven we will be occupied with the adoration of our Saviour. Heaven could possibly be Heaven without Him. Are we looking forward to that time of complete joy when He shall call us to be with Him, or have the issues of life with their multiplied trials and problems clouded over the thoughts of glory land?
"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

(II Peter 3:18)

Peter does not tell us that grace is to grow, for the Lord's bestowment of this mercy upon us is as complete as His love and His justification through Christ. But what the Apostle does say is now that we are in grace, we should steadily grow. Spiritual growth cannot be measured by physical age. Just because we are getting a few years older does not indicate that we are growing in the things of Christ. When a child, a record of our height was kept by markings on a door post; we could easily and quickly look back to those indications and see just exactly how tall we were at three years of age, or six, or eight. How wonderful it would be if we could have such a standard for spiritual growth! For too many people are still dwarfs in scriptural development. No attainment of age guarantees maturity in the things of Christ.

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A little boy was once working the pedals on his brother's bicycle while it was up on a stand. In childish glee, he cried out: "Look how fast I'm going!" But the truth of the matter was that he wasn't going at all. The wheels were moving around very fast, but there was absolutely no forward motion. So again, our growth cannot be determined by mere outward service, for no matter how many fine things we are doing for the church or any other group, service is empty without a day-by-day personal experience with Christ. As we put the Saviour in the center of our lives, we will find that the circumference will take care of itself.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

(John 12:32)

Christians have the one supreme and consuming purpose here on earth to point lost men and women, and boys and girls, to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything that stands in the way to mar that testimony should be done away with, men and women, and boys and girls, to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:13)

How little power we experience in our daily lives, simply because we spend so little time alone with the Lord! In New York City recently, a massive new organ was to be dedicated in a certain church. Everyone had come out to hear a great musician play the familiar songs of the sanctuary on the huge console. The service began, and as the organist pressed his fingers to the keys, he was horrified to find that not one single musical note would come forth. He pressed the "start" button, but still nothing happened. Then the custodian, sensing that the electricity had not been turned on, wrote a hasty note and handed it to the organist, telling him that after the invocation, the generator would be on and he could proceed with the service. The note read: "After the prayer, the power will be on." What great words of wisdom this man wrote without realizing the depth of this meaning! For, in our own lives, if we want power with men, and a testimony that rings true and clear, we must find that time of personal power with God in prayer. The secret which Jesus followed was to depart into the secret place and there meet with His Heavenly Father. How we need to cultivate the daily habit of communion with God, bringing to Him those things which burden us. "After the prayer, the power will be on!"

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(1 John 1:9)

One of the prime requisites for prayer is that we have no known unconfessed sins in our hearts, for if we do God will not hear us because of our iniquity. Years ago, archeologists were endeavoring to uncover the historic "Fountain of the Maiden," which according to legend had poured forth its refreshing waters in the Roman Forum for all to share. The scientists had almost decided to give up the job, declaring that the spring did not exist, until one young enterprising worker asked permission to dig deeper in one particular spot. As he industriously worked with a crew of helpers, his efforts were finally rewarded, for the waters gushed forth again with all of their ancient splendor. A supply of refreshment that had been held captive for centuries was now unleashed because of the uncovering of debris and trash which had accumulated for years.

How true this is in our own lives! Many of us, because of a failure to confess the sins of our hearts, have our souls covered over with sin and we find that our prayers are hindered and our testimonies for the Lord of little effect. Let us remember that we have an Advocate with the Father, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will cleanse our impure hearts with His all-availing shed blood, if we confess our sins to Him.
"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost . . . looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 20, 21)

Have you ever stopped to think that when we utter our prayers in Jesus' name that we have an Interpreter? Is it a blessed reality that the Holy Spirit takes our petitions of praise and prayer and makes them meaningful in the courts of heaven. A little girl wanted to do something nice for her father who soon would be coming home from work. So she went out into the back yard and filled her arms with blooms. Then, bringing them inside, she asked: "Mommy, will you arrange these for Daddy? He'll be here pretty soon. I picked them myself." The mother smiled as she agreed and sent her little girl out to play. As she started to place them in a vase, the mother quickly realized that she would have to do some careful sorting. There were many weeds among the flowers, for the tiny daughter didn't know the difference between the two. In our lives of prayer ministry before God, the Holy Spirit acts in much the same way, and sorts those prayers which we breathe into the presence of our heavenly Father. He knows the things that matter. "For we know not what we should pray, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Let us always remember that we have a divine Interpreter who delights in giving the true meaning to our prayers. May we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ unto the Holy Ghost.

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." (1 Corinthians 15:34)

It has been well stated that a church that is not a "missionary" church is a "missing" church. The life's blood of any group of people is their outreach with the gospel to lands and people where Christ has never before been named. An artist was once commissioned to draw a picture of a dying church. He studied many structures before he actually put anything down on canvas. After the work was finally completed, many people were greatly astonished with the result. He had not portrayed a muddle-down ill-kept house of worship, but rather a large imposing edifice, furnished with the softest pews, the largest organ and the finest carpeting. But in the back the artist had placed a table on which was a small box with a slot in it, over which were written the words: "For foreign missions." The appalling thing was that the box and sign were covered over with spider webs, indicating the fact that the people for some time had not been encouraged to give to missions. When our interests become so centered on ourselves that we forget the challenging commission of our Lord to go into all the world and preach the gospel, we can be sure that the joy in service will soon be missing, and we will grow cold in our first love for the Saviour. May each of us be keenly aware of the great need of the mission fields today, realizing the pertinent fact that there is a mighty "GO" in the word "gospel.

28th Day

29th Day

30th Day

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:7)

Years ago in Switzerland, the Christians were persecuted because of their stand for Christ, and many of them suffered martyrdom. One man, who had been sentenced to death by burning at the stake, exhibited such peace that his testimony still moves each of us to a deeper walk with God. As was the custom, the person who was to die was allowed one last request of the judge who previously had passed sentence. The arena was filled with spectators, and the funeral pyre stacked high with wood.

Quietness gripped the audience as they listened to the Christian's request of the judge.

"Place your right hand on your heart," he spoke firmly, "and now your left on my heart." Having done this, the people wondered what strange thing the martyr might desire. "Now," he continued, "tell this people which one of our hearts beats with the greater calm." Immediately the judge pulled his hand aside, and ordered that the fire be started at once. He realized that the Swiss servant of Christ had the greater peace of heart. I wonder, as we come in contact with the problems, trials, and hardships of everyday life, do our hearts beat with a steady pace because of absolute and complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? Can others tell that the Saviour is resident in our souls and that no matter what may come to pass that He guides and directs us into all peace and joy? May God help each of us today to rest in Him so that in nothing we shall be confounded.

31st Day

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." (Proverbs 4:23)

Have you ever noticed that whenever anything is physically wrong with you, whether it be an arm, or a leg, or your back, the doctor will always check your heart first? This is because that organ controls the entire life, and everything flows from its center. The Hebrews used the word "heart" when they made reference to anything that was central or of great importance. We need to set a seal over our hearts to make sure that they are kept focused upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Over in Segovia, an old province in Northern Spain, there stood a large reservoir which workmen centuries before had constructed out of plain adobe clay. Years later, those who governed the area decided that such a monumental effort should certainly be preserved for posterity, and so they ordered that all of the water was to be removed from the basin and that the bottom be cemented so that it would last much longer. But the difficulty came when after the liquid supply was removed, the blazing sun beat down upon the reservoir. Soon the bottom and the sides, which previously had been dampened with the refreshing water for centuries, cracked and crumbled, until the entire structure was reduced to only ruins. How needful it is for us as Christians to keep our hearts filled with the pure refreshment of the Word of God, for only as they are may we find true peace and joy through our daily life!
After more than two years of fervent prayer and concentrated planning, the Board of Directors of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles has announced the purchase of 50 acres of ground in La Mirada, California, situated 22 miles southeast of Los Angeles. The location of the BIOLA Campus will be on the site within the next two or three years, as the Lord leads.

Realizing that, in a few short years, many more hundreds of young people will be desiring preparation for Christ's service, the leaders of this nearly half-century old Christian institution of higher learning have been asking God for His perfect wisdom in letting others know so that they might have a share in building the adequate facilities necessary to train these Christian leaders of tomorrow!

Our Chancellor, Dr. Louis T. Talbot has said: "God's hand is so clearly seen in every development of this much needed campus, that we must continue to look to Him for the future. This forward step for Christ can only be accomplished through faithful and consistent prayer by all. May God burden each heart with these vital needs."