

Miller's Year Book - July to December

by J.R. Miller

God's restorative power is available to us through faith in Christ's atonement and the healing and comfort that comes from His wounds.

Scripture: 1 Kings 8:56, 2 Kings 13:18-19, Ezra 6:21-22, Psalm 40:3, Joel 2:25, Mark 4:11, John 4:14, John 13:35, Romans 15:1-3, Hebrews 12:11

Topics: "Faithfulness", "Transformative Power of Scripture"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the transformative power of Scripture in daily life, illustrating how a single verse can guide, comfort, and inspire throughout the day. He discusses the importance of faithfulness in small tasks, the joy of salvation, and the necessity of love in Christian character. Miller also highlights God's promises and the significance of living a life that reflects Christ's love and service to others. He encourages believers to seek spiritual growth and to be a source of encouragement and support to one another, especially in times of struggle.

Transcript

Miller's Year Book--a Year's Daily Readings

J. R. Miller, 1895

JULY to DECEMBER

A verse of Scripture in the morning, may become a blessing for all the day. It may sing in the heart as a sweet song, from morning until evening. It may become a liturgy of prayer in which the soul shall voice its deepest needs and hungers--amid toils, struggles, and cares. It may be a guide through perplexing tangles, 'God's voice' whispering cheer, a comforter breathing peace in sorrow.

JULY

July 1.

The LORD says, "I will restore what you lost to the stripping locusts, the cutting locusts, the swarming locusts, and the hopping locusts. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you!" Joel 2:25

It is God who says, "I will restore." Only the divine hand can do it. Christ is the restorer, for he has made atonement for us.

Wherever there is a Christian who is hurt by sin or sorrow--the face of the Christ on the cross, beams on it with healing in its beams. "By his stripes--we are healed." By his wounding--our wounds are cured. His visage was marred--that the marring of sin in our faces might be changed to beauty. By his sorrows--our sorrows are comforted.

July 2.

"Then he said, "Take the arrows," and the king took them. Elisha told him, "Strike the ground." He struck it three times and stopped. The man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck the ground five or six times; then you would have defeated Aram and completely destroyed it. But now you will defeat it only three times." 2 Kings 13:18-19

Character comes out in little things. It seemed a small matter, there in the prophet's dying chamber, whether the king shot three arrows or six--yet the future successes of his army depended on it. Unconsciously, he was undergoing a critical test. His lack of energy in shooting the arrows, betrayed a fatal weakness of character. And when the test was over the measure of his success in life was unalterably fixed. No doubt he would have given large sums for a repetition of the testing, now that, he knew what depended on it; but it was too late.

Every life is full of just such testings. Destinies are forever turning on events too trivial for record. Our characters are ever being put to proof in the smallest things, and the result settles important matters for our future. He who improves his one talent, receives more. He who is faithful in things that are least, is entrusted with greater things. On the other hand, unfaithfulness in the smallest things, is forever keeping men out of greater trusts. The picking up of a pin in a merchant's office, has made a great destiny for a boy. There is not a lad who may not make or unmake his fortune any day, by some unconscious acts.

God also is continually putting us to the test to see how we do this or that little thing; and he determines thereby whether or not he can entrust great things to us.

July 3.

"He has put a new song in my mouth!" Psalm 40:3

The ancient statue of Memnon was fabled to become musical, when the sun rose and the beams of morning light fell upon it. Just so, when the light of the gospel falls upon a darkened heart, it begins to sing. No wonder salvation gives joy! Only think of what we are saved from--the horrible pit of sin; and of what we are saved to--childship in God's family. Can we but rejoice, if we realize our full deliverance?

Every Christian should be a singer. If we cannot acquire the vocal art, we should at least sing and make melody in our heart unto the Lord. God wants to put a song into the mouth of every child of his. Our song should be one that nothing can check. Paul sang in prison with his feet fast in the stocks, and his back gashed with stripes. No trouble or pain should have power to hush the song in a Christian's heart.

Then, our lives themselves should be songs. We cannot all be poets, to write glad hymns of praise for others to sing; or singers, to thrill hearts by the sweetness of our voice; but we can live hymns and songs, and that is just as pleasing to God!

July 4.

"For seven days they celebrated with joy the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the LORD had filled them with joy." Ezra 6:21-22

The Lord is always doing things to make us joyful, if only we will accept the love he sends us in them, and rejoice. Christian life ought to be one of joy. Christ said he wished his disciples to have his joy in them, and wished their joy to be full. There are a great many reasons why we should be joyous Christians. The greatest is that we are saved from sin and are in God's family. Our privileges, blessings, and hopes--are enough to fill our hearts with gladness.

We ought to show our joy in gratitude. Some people take all God gives them, accept all he does for them, and yet go through life grumbling and complaining all the time! Every little trial or care counts for more with them, than all the multitude of God's goodnesses. There is never any sunshine in their faces, for they can always find something that is not satisfactory, to make a cloud of, and to give them excuse for being unhappy. This is a poor, miserable way to live. These people are neither joyful themselves, nor do they help to make the world brighter. We ought to be ashamed to live so unworthily and unbeautifully. God wants us to be burning and shining lights, and to scatter happiness and good cheer wherever we go. Instead of being croakers, he wants us to be sweet singers. It is a sin not to live cheerfully!

July 5.

"Praise be to the Lord! Not one word has failed, of all the wonderful promises He gave!" 1 Kings 8:56

It is nearly three thousand years since Solomon uttered this testimony; but we can say now, just as confidently as the king did that day, that in all these centuries since not one word of all God's good promise has failed any one of his people. No one has ever trusted a promise of God--and had that word fail of fulfillment.

The most real and sure things in this world--are the words of God. In every one of them, God's own almighty hand is gloved. We clutch them--and find ourselves clutched in turn by divinity, out of whose clasp we never can fall, nor be torn away. We lean upon these words--and find ourselves encircled and upborne by the everlasting arms. We pillow our head in weariness or sorrow upon God's words of love and comfort--and find ourselves drawn close to our Father's heart, held in his warm bosom, and soothed by his tenderness, which is gentler than a mother's.

So all through life, in every experience, we may trust the promises of God, and commit all our interests to them, and be assured in our heart that not one of them will ever fail us. We may trust them, too, in death, and we shall find everything just as God has said: the divine presence with us in the valley, dying but a going to be at home, absent from the body at home with the Lord, in eternal blessedness. Not one Word of God can fail.

July 6.

"This became a great sin!" 1 Kings 12:30

The king's plan was successful. The people did not go back to the temple at Jerusalem--but bowed down before the calves. The separation was thus made complete. No only so--but the false leading of the king, turned the ten tribes into a path that took them farther and farther away from God.

Twenty times the Scripture records that "Jeroboam made Israel to sin." The name of Jeroboam is held up to execration through all the after history--as a man who made others sin!

Sin grows from small beginnings--until it attains giant proportions. The man who starts an error, knows not what moral ruin will come from it. To teach one child falsely, may be to blight thousands of lives. Those who begin new enterprises set in motion streams of influence, good or bad, which may continue to flow forever. Jeroboam gave character to this new kingdom, and all the nineteen kings who followed him walked in his wicked steps.

There is a story of an abbot who coveted a piece of ground. The owner consented to lease it to the abbot for one crop only. The abbot sowed acorns, a crop which took three hundred years to ripen. Jeroboam's one sowing of sin, burdened the new kingdom with evil through all its history. Satan begs for one crop only, and then sows seeds whose harvest will fill all the life to the end. We do not know what we are doing--when we start a wrong thing.

July 7.

"Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a well of water welling up to eternal life!" John 4:14

If you are a true believer in Christ, your new life will become a spring of water in you. Wherever you go, into the driest desert, into the hottest plain, far away from the means of grace and from spiritual privileges, into the dark paths of sorrow--your life shall not waste nor fail, for its fountain is within you. It is not fed from without, nor is it dependent upon ordinances and 'means of grace' as sources of nourishment along the way. The fountain of your life, your comfort, your joy, your strength--is fed from the mountains of heaven, from the fullness of Christ; hence it can never waste. Thus from this well of water in the heart of the Christian, flows out a perpetual stream of life, with blessing for the world.

If you can be only a little spring, with but water enough to fill a pilgrim's cup, do not be discouraged; be the sweet blessing that you can be, and thank God for the privilege. Yet Jesus says that "rivers of living water" shall flow from this well in him who believes--not a mere trickling rill--but large rivers, to bless a whole community. We should not be satisfied with any small measure of usefulness. We should seek to bear much fruit. We should always abound in the work of the Lord. We should seek to be the largest blessing we can be.

July 8.

"The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables." Mark 4:11

It is astonishing how differently the truth of Christ looks from within and from without. It is like the stained-glass windows in a church. One who stands outside and looks at them sees none of their rich beauty. They seem dull, opaque, and without meaning. But let one stand within the building and look at the rich windows, and all is transformed. The lines and figures appear in all their rich loveliness.

It is the same with the truths of God's Word. They are not attractive to those who are without. People sometimes sneer at the faith of Christians, as they find them leaning upon an unseen God, and clinging to intangible hopes. But when one becomes a Christian, all is changed. Where there was no loveliness, there now appears the loftiest beauty. What was laughed at before, is now seen to be worthy of highest

admiration. Only those who have received Christ, can really understand the wonderful things of his love.

July 9.

"The LORD upholds all those who fall--and lifts up all who are bowed down." Psalm 145:14

God never gets tired helping us learn our lessons. No matter how often we fail, he is ready to give us another chance. When we fail to have our lesson learned, he does not give us up, putting us out of his school--but tells us to take the lesson over again and try to get it better. Only think how often we have to try--before we do things as he wants us to do them, how often we fall in trying to walk, before we learn to walk. If our great Teacher were not patient with us--we would never become like Christ; but he never wearies of our slowness. He is pleased with our efforts, however faulty they are, and has for us always an encouraging word.

July 10.

"By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another." John 13:35

There is one unfailing mark of Christian character, wherever it is found: Love is always in it. Whatever else may be or may not be in the new life of the Christian--the scarlet thread of love is always woven into the character. God is love, and the believer in Christ, is in a measure, like God. To be a Christian is to have Christ in the heart; and Christ is love. Not to have love--is not to be a Christian.

The first effect of faith in Christ--is the springing up of love in the heart of him who believes. This love does not lie hidden--but is revealed in the life. It shows itself in love for God; but there is no love for God--which does not also make the heart warm toward man. He who loves not his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

Christian love is not a mere beautiful sentiment, glowing like a radiant vision in the soul--but fading the moment we meet our brothers in actual life; it is a love that becomes the very mainspring of all action, the burning heart of all ambition. It is a love that makes us pitiful toward all human sorrow, gentle toward human infirmity, helpful toward human need, patient under human unkindness and injury, and ready at every call to do and suffer and sacrifice.

July 11.

"We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak--and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself." Romans 15:1-3

There are some people who are anointed to be helpers of others--to build them up. Those who have questions or perplexities, those who are seeking light or guidance, turn to them instinctively, with confidence, sure of finding what they seek.

There is need for such helpers. There are questions which books or sermons do not answer; it is a friend that is needed, one who can understand and sympathize. No other ministry to which men are ordained in this world, is so sacred as this, which comes into lives in their deepest experiences, at times when, without wise help, they may be wrecked. There is not one of us who may not be such a helper.

July 12.

"I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen." John 3:11

The things that Christ teaches are certainties. Very much human science is only guessing; we cannot be sure of it. Every now and then some new discovery is made, which sweeps away whole volumes of boasted theories. We have to be all the time buying new books--just to keep up with the times; and we are afraid to quote from any but the newest editions, lest there has been some recent discovery which contradicts the older.

But Christ's teachings are certainties. He came down from heaven, where from all eternity he had dwelt, and he knew the things he taught. We may accept his words without the slightest doubt, and may build our soul's hopes upon them. What he said about God, about God's love, about heaven, about the judgment, about the future life, about the way of salvation, is all certainty! As we go on into the future, we shall find everything just as he has described it.

This fact should give us deep and strong confidence--if we are reposing upon Christ's promises for salvation and life. It should drive us speedily to his cross for refuge--if we are still unsheltered, for he has told us of condemnation abiding upon all who do not believe on him. We may not disregard a single word that Christ spoke, for all his words are all true and eternal. Not one of them can ever fail him who leans upon it.

July 13.

"Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten." Judges 2:8

We have no elaborate account of the closing scenes of this godly man's life. Many chapters are filled with accounts of his life, his work, his wise words, and his many activities; but all we know about his death is told in this one little phrase. If he had lived in these days--the scenes of his death would have been described with glowing pen. We would have known what his last words were, how he met the end, whether with or without fear; what dying testimony he left to the power of divine grace. But not a word have we, about any of these things. We are told simply, in the briefest possible words, that 'he died'.

The same is true of all Bible saints. We have no death-bed scenes, no descriptions of dying experiences. The meaning of this, is that it matters very little how a man dies; living is the important thing. Not many people have raptures in the last hour. Some, whose lives have been very Christly, die without any remarkable manifestation of faith or any joyous experiences. Then sometimes those who have not lived a Christian life at all--seem to have the greatest raptures in their last hours. All this proves that it is living, not dying--which tests one's character. In such a man as Joshua, it mattered not whether he had a triumphant end, or sank away in the shadows of old age, and died without a word of ecstasy. His life was his testimony. He needed no other.

July 14.

"Joshua ... died . . . and the children of Israel did that which was evil . . . and they forsook the Lord."
Judges 2:8-12

That is too often the way. So long as the godly parent or the faithful friend lives, it is not hard to do right; but when the human guide is gone--the restraining hand is withdrawn, and the child or friend drifts away from the holy influence. Many a boy begins to drift away from God--at his mother's grave.

There was a man whose besetting sin was strong drink. He said to a friend one day: "When I am with you, I feel strong; if I could always be with you, I would never give way to my terrible passion." Said his friend: "Whenever you feel the temptation getting the mastery over you, come to me and I will help you." So, many a time this poor man might have been seen hurrying toward his friend's office. Once in that helpful presence, he soon grew strong.

But death came to this friend, and among those who wept at his grave--none shed bitterer tears than he who had so often run to him for the sympathy and help that saved him. Soon the temptation came again, and there was no one to whom to go. In his despair he fell into the old sin, and sank down to ruin! If he had known Christ, when his friend died he would still have missed him, and would have found living harder without his help--but he would not have sunk down in utter helplessness. He would then have had the strength of Christ to support him in his temptation.

July 15.

"Jesus gave him no answer." John 19:9

The silences of Jesus are as significant as his words. He was silent before Pilate. He understood the governor's miserable insincerity. Pilate had had opportunity enough to do the right thing--but he had thrown away his chance. Now Jesus would answer no more of his questions. It was not worth while.

One lesson we get from this silence of Jesus is, that if we reject his offers of grace over and over--the time may come, will come, when he will be silent to us. And of all calamities that can possibly ever come to any man, no other could be so great as that Christ should be silent to his prayers, turning his back and answering no more when he calls.

Another lesson from Christ's example is, that there come times in every life when silence is better than speech. Ofttimes to words of reviling or insult, silence is the only true answer. To many of the assaults made by sceptics on our religion, it is better that we remain silent. There is a time to speak boldly in the presence of Christ's enemies; but there also are times when we should keep silence, attempting no answer.

July 16.

"Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, 'Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor!' And they rebuked her harshly." Mark 14:4-5

It is very easy to yield to the temptation to criticize others, and find fault with their way of serving Christ. There are many motives which come in to promote this unchristian habit. We are all prone to be envious of others, and hence to form unjust opinions of what they do. One of the last graces to ripen in a Christian, is usually that of rejoicing in another's good work. It is very hard, too, to learn our Lord's lesson: "Do not judge--or you too will be judged." It seems natural, too, as sad as the confession may be, for us to disparage what others do, and to underestimate it.

But we should learn the sinfulness of murmuring against others. We see how unlovely, how unChristlike, it was in these first disciples. Is it any less so in us when we allow ourselves to criticize our fellow-Christians, finding fault with the way they show their love for Christ? Even if they do not do their work as we do ours--have we a right to judge them and blame them, and speak unkind things about what they have

done? Between them and their Master, rests the matter, and it is not our duty to make ourselves judges and condemners of their acts. They are responsible for what they do--not us. There are few lessons more needed than this, for there are few faults more common than that which we see here in these first disciples.

July 17.

"No chastening seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." Hebrews 12:11

We have all known Christian sufferers who have grown into rare, sweet beauty--as they have suffered.

They have lost their earthliness--and have learned heavenliness.

Pride--has given way to humility.

The harsh music--has grown soft and gentle.

The rough marble--has taken the shape of graceful beauty.

There are elements of loveliness in the depths of every life--which pain alone can bring out. God often chastens His children--to bring out more clearly in them, the features of His own lovely image.

Yet afflictions do not always make people better. Not all suffering yields the harvest of righteousness and peace. We have all seen people suffering, who became only more impatient, selfish, and cold. Their trouble hurt them.

As I watch the effects of suffering upon men and women, I find that it is only in the fewest cases--that the life is made more radiant by pain. There are dangerous shoals skirting all the deeps of affliction, and many frail barks are wrecked in the darkness! In no experience of life, do most people need wise friendship, and firm loving guidance--more than in their times of trouble.

July 18

"As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand." 1 Kings 17:1

"You are the God who sees me!" Genesis 16:13.

We all stand in the presence of God. His eye is ever upon us. His face ever beams its light upon us. We all believe this, and say it often with our lips; yet many of us do not really get the truth into our heart! If we did--it would make holier people of us. We would not slight our work as now we do so often, if we were truly conscious that God is looking on us as we work!

This consciousness of the presence of God, would also give us hope and courage in darkness or danger; like Hagar, who said, "You are the God who sees me!" Some people think of the omniscience of God--as a reason for fear and terror. But to Hagar, it meant divine love and care. God had not forgotten her, nor forsaken her. She was cast out of her earthly home--but the Lord saw her and took her up.

If we are God's children, the thought of our Father's presence should always bring us comfort, assurance, and a wonderful sense of security. It is a great thing to stand before God, to be conscious of His eye upon us, and to know Him so well as not to be afraid of Him.

July 19.

"You are to drink from the brook. I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there." 1 Kings 17:4

God is never at a loss for a way of providing for His children. The brooks of water, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the winds of heaven, the waves of the sea--all creatures belong to him, and are under His direct control. He has no trouble, therefore, in getting food to His children, wherever they may be.

Perhaps none of us ever had ravens carry our daily bread to us--but God sends it to us in other ways; and it is just as really HE who sends it, whether railroad trains carry it across a continent, or ships bring it half around the globe, or birds convey it to our windows, or it comes through hands of loving friends.

Many of us know too much for our good, these 'modern days'. We are so wise about "laws of nature" that we can account for everything on scientific grounds, and have no need for God's assistance anywhere! Consequently we forget, some of us, that God has anything to do with this world. What poor fools we are! What are the laws of nature--but God's established and common ways of doing things? If I sow wheat-seeds on a little patch of soil, and in a few months reap a harvest, and then, taking the wheat to the mill, get fine flour and have good bread on my table. Had God nothing to do with sending it to me? Did not he provide it as really, as when he sent the ravens to Elijah day by day, with food for him?

July 20.

"It came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up!" 1 Kings 17:7

That is the way this world's brooks always do. For a time they flow full; then they begin to waste away, and at last dry up altogether. This is true of all earthly joys. There is a comfort, however, in what comes after the statement made in these words. When the brook dried up, God had another place ready for his servant. "Arise, and go to Zarephath." There he found other help ready.

It must have been a sore test of Elijah's faith--to watch the stream growing less and less every day. "What shall I do when the brook is dry?" he would wonder. But we need not suppose that he ever worried about it. He knew that God was providing for him, and would have something else ready when this supply ceased. One morning there was no water running over the stones, and the prophet had to eat a dry breakfast only bread and meat; but still, I think he did not grow anxious. Then after breakfast the Lord came and told him to move.

The lesson is, that we are never to doubt God, no matter how low the supply gets. Though we have come down to the last mouthful of bread--and the last cupful of water, and still see no new provision beyond, we are to take the last morsel with thankfulness, believing that God will have something else ready in time. It will be soon enough if it is ready when we have eaten the last crust!

July 21.

"So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her son continued to eat from her supply of flour and oil for many days." 1 Kings 17:15

That is, she took the handful of flour she had and the little oil, and made a cake for her hungry guest first, and then for herself and her son. Then she found that there was as much meal and oil left--as she had before.

There are several things to commend in this woman. One is her faith. She believed what was told her, and acted on it. It is when we do God's commandments, that he blesses us. His promises are conditional, depending upon the fulfillment of our part. Had this woman not believed and obeyed, the wonderful two or three years miracle in her house, would not have been wrought. The woman's unselfish generosity must also be commended. She had enough only for a meal for herself and son--but she fed the stranger first. Had she prepared a meal for herself and son, and left the hungry prophet unfed, there would have been no miracle of increase. We must be ready to share our little with others who need, if we would have the blessing on ourselves.

July 22.

"So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her son continued to eat from her supply of flour and oil for many days." 1 Kings 17:15

Had not the prophet come to the widow's door, she and her household would probably have perished in the famine. Or had the woman refused the prophet's request, saying, "I cannot spare anything for a stranger; charity begins at home, and I must look first after my own," she and her son would have starved before the rain fell. The meal wasted not, because she shared it with another.

The lesson is plain. There is a withholding that tends to poverty; there is a giving that enriches. The way to make sure of spiritual blessing is--to seek to be a blessing. If your love is growing cold, help someone, and it will become warm again. We cannot afford to shut our doors in the face of those whom God sends to us for sympathy and for the ministries of love. Such serving brings to us blessings which we must not miss.

July 23.

"He himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a juniper tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." 1 Kings 19:4

He was sorely discouraged. It seemed to him that all he had done, had come to nothing. There are few things we need more to guard against than discouragement. When once we come under its influence, it makes us weak, robbing us of our hope and making cowards of us. Many a life is discrowned and drawn down to failure, through discouragement.

It is surely a sad picture: this greatest of the old prophets lying there under the little bush, in the wilderness, longing to die! If he had died then and there, what an inglorious ending it would have made of his life! As it was, however, he lived to do further glorious work and to see great results from his contest with idolatry. God was kinder to him, than he knew.

It is wrong to wish ourselves dead. Life is God's gift to us, a sacred trust for which we shall have to give account. While God keeps us living--he has something for us to do. Our prayer should be for grace to do our duty bravely and well unto the end. From Elijah's after-experience, we learn that we would never be cast down by any discouraging experiences. The things we think have failed are often only slowly ripening into rich success. We have only to be faithful to God and to duty, and we may always rejoice. What seems failure--is often best success.

July 24.

"Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God." 1 Kings 19:5-8

Behold the loving gentleness of God. He followed his discouraged servant in his flight, kept watch over him all the way, and did not cast him off. There is great comfort in this for us all. God is very patient with us in our weaknesses and faults. He does not break bruised reeds.

Then it must be noticed that when God would restore his servant's soul--he began with his body. He gave him sleep and then food, until his exhausted nature was refreshed. Much spiritual depression is caused by the bodily condition. Ofttimes the best cure for despondency, is sleep and rest, until the body is restored to healthy conditions.

This incident is typical. God is continually preparing a table in the wilderness where he feeds his weary ones. In their sorrows, he provides for them food which the world knows nothing of; they rise up and go on their journey with joy, sustained by the secret strength which divine grace supplies. Many people whose lot in life is hard--go through the days with cheerful, songful spirit, because every morning in the closet, God gives them food which makes them strong.

July 25.

"I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." 1 Kings 19:10

There is something very pathetic in this verse. Elijah really thought he was alone. He did not know of one other man in all the land, who was loyal to God. This made it all the harder for him. Companionship strengthens us. It is comparatively easy in battle for one to march and fight in the ranks, with others all around him; but to move out alone, old soldiers say, is a sore test of courage. It is easy to be good, faithful, and loyal in duty, diligent in Christian service--when one has companionship. But it tests one's life to have to stand alone, the only Christian in the family, the workshop, the store, the school. But many have to stand just in this way. They are really the only one who is in their place to stand for God. If they fail, God's work there will suffer greatly.

But we see also the value of a single life. For years Elijah was the only one who confessed the Lord and was faithful to him. Yet though utterly alone, and not knowing of any others who even secretly were true, he yet stood firm, and bravely maintained the honor of Jehovah in the face of a whole nation. As we read the story through to the end--we see the outcome of his faithfulness. He alone wrought a great reformation. We sometimes find ourselves alone--the only one to witness for Christ in the place where we stand. If we simply stand and falter not, we shall by and by see the triumph of that for which we stand.

July 26.

"Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel--all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him." 1 Kings 19:18

Things were not so bad as Elijah had thought. He supposed he was the only one left; but there were seven thousand more, scattered here and there through the land, who were still loyal to God. God's cause in this world is never hopeless. He has others, where we think we are the only one.

There is an experience of Luther's which is suggestive: "At one time," he says, "I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers that beset the church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. 'Do you not know?' she replied; 'GOD is dead.' 'How can you talk such nonsense?' I said. 'How can God die?' 'Is that really true?' she asked. 'Of course,' I said, not perceiving her aim.' How can you doubt it?' 'Yet,' she said, 'though you do not doubt that--yet you are so helpless and discouraged.' "

July 27.

"The time had come for the Lord to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind." 2 Kings 2:1

When a godly man leaves the world--he does not cease to live. The Lord took Elijah to live in another country, a heavenly one. We are able actually to verify this statement. We have but to turn over to the Gospels to see him again, nearly nine hundred years later, alive, and active still in God's work. "Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus." Matthew 17:3

It is just as true of the Christians who die in our homes--as it was of this old prophet, that the Lord takes them up into heaven, and that they live on in blessedness forever.

One cold autumn day I saw an empty bird's-nest on a tree. It looked desolate and forsaken. But I knew the birds that once were there were living yet, living now in the warm South, beyond the reach of winter's storms, and singing there then sweet songs. There is an empty love nest in many a home, in many a heart--but we know that the dear Christian who is gone--is living with God in heaven. There is comfort in this.

There is a suggestion in the way God took Elijah from earth. It was "in a whirlwind." A whirlwind suggests terror. But this wild storm was God's chariot, and it took the prophet up into heaven. Death always seems terrible to nature. Sometimes it comes in form of great terror. But however it may come, it takes God's child home to glory!

July 28.

"As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind!" 2 Kings 2:11

So the most loving friends must sometimes be parted. We walk on together, talking of a thousand things, not dreaming of separation, when suddenly, as we turn some sharp corner in the way, the 'chariot' is waiting, and one is taken and the other left! We ought not to forget the certainty of separation in every friendship we form. Some day one of the two will be taken, and the other must be left to weep by a grave and to walk on lonely and sorrowing after that.

Another thought suggested here is, that heaven is not far away. One of the 'chariots' from the King's country came down that day to carry Elijah home. Another came down to the door of your house when your godly father died, or when mother or brother or sister died. We shall not leave this world as Elijah did, missing death; we shall have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death; but we shall have the

heavenly chariot to bear away our freed spirit just as truly as he did.

July 29.

"When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"

"Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. 2 Kings 2:9

Elisha's choice shows where his heart was. He did not ask for position, for wealth, for ease, for honor--but for more spiritual power. He had watched his master in his great work, his zeal for God, his heroism, his intense earnestness, and he wanted to have a large measure of the same spirit. He wanted most of all to be a better man, a more useful man, more active and mighty in the Lord's work. Here is a good lesson for us. We ought to seek above all other things--the qualities and graces and beauties which make a noble character.

There is something else. Elisha greatly admired his master, Elijah, and his chief desire was to be like him. This is commendable. Christ, our Master, is the one great and perfect example, and all of us should imitate him. Any other model is too low. Yet he gives us in his true followers pictures of at least some fragments of his own beauty, and it is right for us to imitate these. Paul said: "Be imitators of me." Every parent should live so that his child, imitating him, shall be ever following Christ and growing more like him. It is right when we see anything beautiful in another--to desire to have the same beauty in ourselves. Whether we will or not, we grow, even unconsciously, like those whom we admire and love.

July 30.

"He picked up the mantle that had fallen from Elijah." 2 Kings 2:13

We are continually seeing useful lives removed from earth. The loss seems irreparable. But there are no accidents in God's providence. Everyone's life is a plan of God, and no faithful servant is taken away--until his part in the great plan is finished. There is abundance of work remaining--but it is the work of others, not of him who is gone. His mantle falls at someone's feet-- yours, perhaps.

A godly father dies, and there is grief in the home. How he will be missed! Yes, but an elder son stands by the coffin, strong and gifted, blessed with the blessing of the father's life and teaching. At his feet the mantle falls from the father's shoulders. He must take it up, and with it lift the burdens and responsibilities of manhood. He must become now his mother's protector, and the shelter and defender of his younger brothers and sisters.

A godly mother dies, and when a gentle mother goes out of a home--the loss indeed seems irreparable. But if there is an elder daughter in the sorrowing group at the grave, at her feet the mantle falls.

So it is in all the breaches which death makes in Christian homes and communities, in every case the mantle falls at someone's feet. God makes provision that his work shall not suffer, unless his servants fail in their duty. We must be ready always to take up what is ours.

July 31.

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night." Psalm 1:2

A perfumer bought a common earthen jar, and filled it with fragrant flowers. Soon every particle of the substance of the jar, was filled with the rich perfume; and long afterward, and even when broken, the fragments retained the fragrance. So it is that a human life becomes filled, saturated, with the Word of God, when one loves it and meditates upon it continually. The thoughts, feelings, affections, dispositions, and the whole character become colored with the spirit of the Word.

Such a filling of the heart and memory with the pure words of God, is the best way to prepare for any future of darkness into which the life may pass. It is like hanging up a hundred lamps while the light of day yet shines, to be ready to pour down their soft beams the moment daylight fades.

AUGUST

August 1.

"The Lord has sent me to Bethel."

So they went down to Bethel.

"The Lord has sent me to Jericho."

So they went to Jericho.

"The Lord has sent me to the Jordan."

So the two of them walked on.

"Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind!"

2 Kings 2:2, 4, 6, 11

God leads us on step by step, each step a new revelation. He led Elijah on with new calls to new errands, from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, from Jericho to Jordan, and then over the river and up among the hills, until at last, as he went on, the chariot came down and lifted him away to heaven! In this same beautiful way, does God lead each one of his children through life. We know not what any day may bring forth. But God knows; and he calls us forward, to this duty and experience today, to others tomorrow, and so on and on, and on and on, until we come to the last step, and that will be into glory!

Elijah's prompt obedience, teaches us our side of the lesson. He went swiftly from task to task. He would finish his work, before the end came. It was to visit the schools of the prophets that he went to Bethel and to Jericho. He wanted to give his last counsels to the young students whom he had been training, and on whom the future religious work among the people would depend.

The nearing of the end of life, should intensify our earnestness. A godly woman was told that she could not live more than six weeks. "Then I must arise, and hasten to finish my work!" Leaving her bed, she went out and hurried from place to place, laboring intensely until the very end came.

August 2.

"Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days." 1 Samuel 31:13

It has been said, that everyone lives for a funeral; that the burial one has--tells the story of one's life. One man amasses great wealth, and when his body lies in state, the rich come and look at him and pass on with their tearless eyes. Another devotes his life to doing good. His hands scatter blessings. The needy are cared for, the hungry are fed, the sick are visited, the fallen are lifted up. When he lies in his coffin, the poor come, the widow and the orphan, those whom his hands have relieved and helped, and with grateful hearts and tearful eyes take their farewell.

It is a beautiful sight this rescuing of the body of King Saul from dishonor on the field where he had fallen, and it is especially so when we learn that it was an act of kindness which he had done many years before, which secured for his dead body the gentle thought and care it received that day. Had Saul's life been filled to its close with such deeds of true valor as marked its beginning, he would have had the gratitude of a whole nation when he came to die.

We should try to live--so that we shall be remembered with gratitude. Also, we would never fail to show gratitude to anyone who has conferred a favor upon us. Let us be sure, too, that we live so as to obtain honor from God, when we come to the end of life. If we miss that, earth's honor will be an awful mockery.

August 3.

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer." Psalm 32:3-4

Sometimes we would better be silent to God. When sore trials are upon us we should not say a word in resistance. But there is a silence to God which does not bring blessing. Unconfessed sins, produce bitterness. David's words tell a sad story of the suffering of the days when he kept silent about his guilt.

He could not put away the memory of his sin. It stayed in his mind, saddened every joy and embittered every sweet thing in his life. His very body suffered, and his heart cried out continually in anguish.

Unconfessed sins are a burden too great for mortal to bear. We should never keep silence for a moment, about a sin which we have committed. The only godly thing to do--is to confess it instantly, and put it out of our life utterly and forever.

Sin is a demon from the dark abodes, and must be expelled--or it will take up its home in the heart and destroy the life. Sin is poison of eternal death, and if not cast out--it will spread its death through the soul. The only safety is, by confession and repentance, to thrust out remorselessly every sin that has overcome us!

August 4.

"The Babylonians broke through the wall--and the city fell!" Jeremiah 39:2

When even the smallest breach is made in a wall--it is the beginning of the end! The breach is easily increased, until, where at first only one or two men could enter--now a whole army pours through.

Each of us lives 'within walls'. There is the wall of innocence, which God sets around every human soul. So long as it remains unbroken, we are safe; but when once a breach is made--enemies pour in! It is then easy to break down the whole wall, leaving the life exposed to every temptation. Then, every wild beast enters the garden at will.

Conscience is another of the walls which God builds around each soul. So long as it is kept inviolable, it is an impregnable protection. But this, too, may be broken; and when one small breach has been made in it--it is easy to make it larger breach. It is not as hard to violate conscience the second time, as it was the first time. It is easier still the third and the fourth time. By and by the whole wall is broken down! When this time comes--the citadel of the heart is utterly in the enemy's hands! Everything beautiful is destroyed. The temple is in ruins, the altar is torn away, the fires are out--and there is only darkness in the place once sacred and bright with God's presence. It is well that we look after 'the walls of our life'!

August 5.

"After leaving them, He went up on a mountainside by himself to pray.

He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. About three o'clock in the morning He came to them, walking on the water." Mark 6:46, 48

He did not come immediately; indeed, it was almost morning when He came, and the disciples had been struggling all night in the storm. Yet He had not been indifferent to them meanwhile. From the mountainside where He was praying--He kept his eye upon them. "He saw that they were in serious trouble." All that dark night, He kept a watch upon that little boat that bore His disciples in the midst of the waves.

There is something very suggestive in the picture. This 'boat in the storm', is a picture of 'Christ's friends in this world, in the storms of life'. Sometimes we think we are forgotten--but from His place in glory, Christ's eye is always on us! He sees us struggling, battling with the waves, beaten, and distressed. He has full sympathy with us in all our struggles. It ought to be a great strength and comfort to us in trial, to know this. Jesus intercedes for us in our distresses!

It may not be best always to deliver us immediately--but His prayer continually ascends, that our faith may not fail in the struggle. This also should encourage us.

Then, He always comes in time. He may delay long--but it is never too long. If we call upon Him in trouble--we may be sure that He hears and sees us, and knows just how hard it is for us to endure; that He prays for us that we may not fail, and that He will come at the right time for our deliverance!

August 6.

"Jesus did not answer a word." Matthew 15:23

Jesus is not so tender-hearted, that he cannot tolerate to see us suffer--when suffering is the best experience for us. He does not immediately lift burdens from our shoulders when it is needful for our growth that we bear the burdens longer. There is a mushy sentimentality in many people's ideas about Christ--as if he were too gentle to endure the sight of suffering. It is possible to be too tender toward pain. It is possible for parents to be too emotionally kind to their children. Uncontrolled pity is great weakness, and it is oftentimes very injurious.

Christ's tenderness is never too tender to be wise--as well as tender. He never makes the mistake of yielding to anyone's entreaties, when denial would be better than acquiescence. He never lets us have what we want--because he cannot bear to say "no" to our tearful cries. He is not so tenderhearted as to allow his own disciples to go unchastened, when only by chastisement can he promote their spiritual

growth.

But one thing we must not forget, it is love which prompts his severity. He was silent here, that, in the end, he might give the full, rich blessing he wanted to give this woman--but which she could not receive at the first. He denies us, and is silent to us when we cry--that he may draw out our faith, and give us his best blessings by and by.

August 7

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." Colossians 3:22

Paul speaks of "eye-service" as a kind of service that is not the truest. There always are those who work well when they are under the eye of a master--but who fall off in diligence and faithfulness when the watching eye is absent. This is very imperfect serving. The person who takes advantage of an employer and does his work slowly, or loiters at his tasks, or shortens the time he is expected to be at his post, or in any way is less faithful or less diligent and careful than if his employer were beside him--is yielding to a temptation which will hurt his own life immeasurably. The wrong he does to another by skimping his work, is sin enough; but the injury done to himself is far more serious. The former is only in money; the latter is in character. The man who does a dishonest thing, or is in any way unfaithful in duty, has lowered the tone of his own life, and blighted irreparably some portion of the possibilities of his being.

August 8.

"After Hezekiah received the letter and read it, he went up to the Temple and spread it out before the Lord." Isaiah 37:14

That was Hezekiah's way of laying his troubles in the Lord's hands. He could not do anything, and so he gave the matter to God. We all have our cares. Sometimes it is a business perplexity, sometimes it is a temptation; or it may be a combination of circumstances that seems about to crush us.

What is our duty? what is our privilege? We may take the matter directly to God! We may cast the burden upon him. That is what Paul tells us to do with all our anxieties; and he says the peace of God shall then guard our heart and thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?

The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?

To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging 'round?

On Jesus' bosom, naught but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?

In Jesus' keeping, we are safe and they.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?

Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough; earth's struggles soon shall cease,

And Jesus calls us to heaven's perfect peace.

Edward Bickersteth

August 9.

"In those days king Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death." 2 Kings 20:1

Palace walls cannot shut out sickness. Kings and queens, as well as peasants, must yield to the touch of disease and pain. People who live in a plain, humble way--very often feel that somehow this world's troubles have easier access to them than to the rich, who live in a grand way. Sometimes they envy those who dwell in the great houses, and imagine that palace walls exclude most of the ills of life.

But they make a mistake; no splendid doors can shut out trouble. The healthiest people in the world--are working people, who earn their bread by honest toil--the healthiest and the happiest too. Wealth and high station bring more cares than they shut out! The tall peaks are more conspicuous than the little hills--but they are swept by more storms. Contentment, with plainness and God's blessing, is the lesson. "If we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap, and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge people into ruin and destruction!" 1 Timothy 6:8-9

One stormy night during the American civil war someone in conversation with Mr. Lincoln was pitying the soldiers in the field. The President replied, that there was not one of them with whom he would not gladly exchange places that night. Responsibility brings burdens.

August 10.

"Turn my eyes from looking at what is worthless." Psalm 119:37

We must be always turning--if we would keep our life true and according to God's commandments. There are some flowers which always turn toward the sun. There was a little potted rose-bush in a sick-room which I visited. It sat by the window. One day I noticed that the one rose on the bush was looking toward the light. I referred to it; and the sick woman said that her daughter had turned the rose around several times toward the darkness of the room--but that each time the little flower had twisted itself back, until again its face was toward the light. It would not look into the darkness.

The rose taught me a lesson--never to allow myself to look toward any evil--but instantly to turn from it. Not a moment should we permit our eyes to be inclined toward anything sinful. To yield to one moment's sinful act--is to defile the soul. One of the main messages of the Bible is, "Turn from the wrong, the base, the crude, the unworthy--to the right, the pure, the noble, the godlike." We should not allow even an unholy thought to stay a moment in our mind--but should turn from its very first suggestion, with face fully toward Christ, the Holy One.

"I will set before my eyes no vile thing!" Psalm 101:3

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things!"
Philippians 4:8

But we should train ourselves to turn also from all discouragements. There is always a bright side, and we should find it. Discouragement is full of danger. It weakens and hurts the life.

August 11.

"Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her." Proverbs 8:10-11

It is hard to convince people in these days, that anything is or can be better than silver or gold or rubies. The best way, however, to look at this subject--is to think of some of the greater and deeper needs of life, and ask what these earthly gems can do to meet them.

One writer represents a party of emigrants wrecked on a desert island, far from the tracks of men. They have food to last for a time. The soil is rich and the climate fine. Soon, however, they find gold, and instantly they all begin to search for the precious metal. They gather much, and are rich; but they have not sown a grain of seed, and no harvest is coming, for the season for sowing was now past. Famine is upon them, and their gold will not feed their hunger.

This illustrates the value of godly wisdom. In the great needs of life, riches and jewels amount to nothing; only the grace of God will do then. In the time of great sorrow, no one turns to gold or diamonds for comfort. In the sore struggles of life, in its temptations, trials and perplexities, these symbols of earthly wealth will not meet the needs of the soul. When death comes, these things are utterly worthless, are indeed bitter mockeries! We need a help greater than earth's glittering baubles, in these solemn experiences!

"But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs!" 1 Timothy 6:8-10

August 12.

"All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia." Psalm 45:8

We cannot guard too carefully, the influences which we allow to play upon our life, for all of them leave their hue and impress upon us, either for beauty or for marring. A great artist refused to look upon the works of inferior artists, saying that they would affect his style. We should seek continual fellowship with the good, the pure, the holy; for in close, sympathetic mingling with them, we unconsciously receive into our own spirit something of their sweetness, their beauty, and the aroma of heavenliness that surrounds them. We absorb something of whatever we see or touch.

August 13.

"Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing."
Psalm 143:10

There are so many possibilities in life, in attainment and achievement, and so many opportunities of doing good, that it is a glorious thing to live. Surely, then, we ought to make the most of our life, not failing to become what Christ would have us to be, or to do the sweet things he would have us do--as we pass along the way.

Yet life's lessons must always be learned slowly. Paul was well on in life when he said, "I have learned, in whatever state I am, therein to be content." The words suggest that the lesson was not easily learned; that it required time and struggle. It is only fair to infer that Paul could not have written thus in his earliest epistles. There is comfort in this for us common mortals, who in younger or middle life grow discouraged because we have not Paul's contentment. If only we are really learning the lesson, there is hope that some day we shall be able to say we have learned it.

August 14.

"Each one helps the other, and says to another, Take courage!". Isaiah 41:6

It was Charles Kingsley who said, "We become like God--only as we become of use." The saying is truer than at first we may think. Every glimpse we have of heaven's life--is a glimpse of usefulness, helpfulness. In olden days, angels sometimes came down to earth, and they always came on some errand of service to men. Then, we are told in our New Testament, that the mission of the angels to earth is "to minister to those who shall be the heirs of salvation." Thus these pure creatures of heaven live only to serve. God himself is revealed on every Scripture page, and always in the same character of helpfulness. Christ came as God incarnate; and his whole life is summed up in the words, "He went about doing good." Thus the divine life finds its expression in serving, doing good. "God is love;" and love cannot but minister and bless, even to the point of utter self-sacrifice.

August 15.

"I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry." Psalm 40:1

Has God taught you some great truth, or revealed to you, in deep personal experience, some new, sweet thought of his love? What is the next thing? Is it not that you shall whisper the blessed secret to some other soul? After Peter's strange vision, he sat pondering what it could mean; and while he thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, "Behold, three men seek you." The picture is very suggestive. When we have gotten anything from God--there is always someone waiting to get from us what God has just given to us. Heavenly visions are not shown to us, only to be absorbed in our own soul--but to be translated into some form that will bless the world. That is what the artist does with his visions. That is what we should do with ours.

August 16.

"We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He is!" 1 John 3:2

Thoburn tells a beautiful story about a picture of his dead child. It seemed a very imperfect photograph, so blurred that scarcely a trace of the beloved features could be seen in it. But one day he took the picture to a photographer, and asked him if he could do anything to improve it. In three weeks he returned; and as he saw the picture in its frame on the wall, he was startled. It seemed as if his child were living again before him. The image had been in the old picture--but was concealed beneath the blurs and mists that were there also. The photographer, however, had brought it out in strong, living beauty, until it was life-like

in its tender charm.

In every true disciple of Christ, there is the image of the Master, It may be very dim. Its features are overlaid by blurs and blemishes, and are almost unrecognizable by human eyes. It is the work of Christ in our lives to bring out this likeness, more and more clearly, until at last it shines in undimmed beauty. This is what Christ is doing in many of his ways with us.

August 17.

"While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

"Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to Me!" Mark 14:3-6

Usefulness is not the only test. Acts may be beautiful in Christ's sight, even though they do not seem to be immediately helpful to others. Mary's deed fed no poor, relieved no sick, clothed no shivering child--and yet Jesus commended it. He is pleased when offerings are made from love to Him, even though the things offered may not be necessary to His work.

We may not measure all our services to Christ, by the standard of direct helpfulness to others. Mary's ointment, spilled over Christ's head and feet, was not a really useful ministry, and yet it was good and beautiful in Christ's sight. What shall we say of the loveliness which God lavishes everywhere in nature? Does the beauty of the flowers, of the skies--feed the hunger of the poor? Evidently it was Mary's love for Christ which pleased him, and made her deed beautiful. She had indeed wrought a good work on Him, one that blessed Him; for in the great sorrow of His heart as He drew near His cross, nothing could so strengthen Him, as love! It made Him stronger for the journey to His cross! Likewise, nothing else that we can give another, will be such a blessing, as love.

August 18.

"About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Which of us is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' Jesus called a small child over to Him and put the child among them." Matthew 18:1-2

When the disciples wanted to know who was greatest, Jesus called a little child, and took him on his knee. The disciples were clustered around him, and saw what he did. A little child in the midst, is used oftentimes to teach great lessons to older people. When a new baby comes into a home, God sets it in the midst of a family as a teacher. Parents suppose they are training their children--but the children are also teaching and training them.

I learned more of the meaning of the fatherhood of God, and of the way he feels toward his children, in one week after the first baby came into my home, than I had learned from teachers and books, even from the Bible, in all the preceding years

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/millers-year-book-july-to-december/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net