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Pressing into Truth, Pouring out His Grace

August 2026

Strength for the Journey

Every day we face battles. At times the obstacles before us can seem overwhelming, leaving us tired, discouraged, or wondering if we have the strength to keep going. Yet God has not left us to fight alone. Through His Spirit, He has given us everything we need to stand firm—to strengthen us, encourage us, comfort us, and help us persevere as we continue running the race He has set before us.

"But those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint." — Isaiah 40:31

In this issue of The Wine Press, we focus on the battle of the spirit and the wonderful gifts God has provided to equip us for the journey. It is our prayer that these articles will encourage your heart, renew your strength, and draw you closer to the One who is always faithful.

The Wine Press is a thoughtfully curated collection of articles from across the web, compiled to inspire, encourage, and deepen your walk with our King and Savior, Jesus Christ. All articles remain the property of their respective authors to whom we joyfully give full credit and our appreciation for sharing their wisdom and experiences with us. May these words uplift your spirit, strengthen your faith, and draw you into ever deeper communion with the God of all grace.

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God's Voice Versus Your Thoughts

By CS Lewis

So many believers wrestle with the question: is this God's voice, or just my own thoughts and emotions? This is a real struggle, and sometimes we over-analyze every thought that comes into our minds, obsessively wondering if it's God, ourselves, or even a spiritual enemy. This can lead to spiritual exhaustion, fear, and confusion.

But the Bible tells us we can know the voice of the Holy Spirit. In John 10:27, Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice." So as God's children, we do have the capacity to discern His voice.

The Voice That Stays the Same: Stability and Consistency

One of the surest signs of God's voice is its stability and consistency. God's nature is unchanging, which is reflected in the reliability of His words to us. Isaiah 48 states, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." This scripture paints a powerful contrast: while the natural world changes, God's voice remains steadfast. This stability provides an anchor for us, especially in times of doubt or transition, reminding us that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Our own thoughts and emotions can be as changeable as the weather. When facing stressful situations, our feelings may swing from hope to despair, from optimism to fear, making it hard to feel grounded. But God's voice brings clarity,

not confusion, and calls us to peace even when life feels chaotic.

Moses heard God's voice through the burning bush and was given the task of leading Israel. God consistently reassured him and was patient with Moses's insecurities, showing that He doesn't rush or change His expectations on a whim.

In contrast, our own thoughts are often colored by our fluctuating emotions. We might feel led to make a big life change one day, only to feel hesitant or doubtful the next. This instability can be particularly confusing when we're trying to follow God's will. However, when God speaks, he doesn't contradict himself or leave us feeling disoriented. James 1:5–6 tells us that when we ask for wisdom, we should not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. God's words provide a solid foundation upon which to stand, enabling us to make decisions confidently without feeling tossed around by every passing thought or emotion.

If you're seeking God's guidance, start by grounding yourself in His promises. Find scriptures that relate to your situation and meditate on them, allowing His consistent truth to bring clarity. God's voice is always in alignment with the rest of His word, providing confirmation and peace rather than instability or hesitation. Ultimately, God's voice will reveal His unchanging nature, His unwavering



faithfulness, and His steadfast love.

The Voice That Leads in Peace, Not Pressure

Psalms 23 beautifully describes God as our shepherd, one who "leads me beside quiet waters." This image of a shepherd guiding his sheep reveals much about the nature of God's voice. Unlike a voice that pressures, rushes, or overwhelms, God's voice gently guides us with wisdom and peace. When God speaks, he doesn't push us into action through anxiety or fear; rather, He draws us to follow Him willingly.

Generally God's voice is one of patient guidance; He allows us time to respond, to seek counsel, and to act with clarity.

The enemy, on the other hand, loves to stir up a sense of urgency or panic. The voice of the devil often sounds pushy, driving us to make hasty decisions that may lead to regret or confusion.

Our own voice, fueled by fear or insecurity, can also push us into making impulsive decisions. When we act out of fear — fear of missing out, fear of

making mistakes, or fear of disapproval — our decisions are often misguided. Proverbs 3:5–6 tells us to "trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding," a reminder to let God's voice lead rather than our own fears or pressures.

When faced with decisions, cultivate a habit of waiting and praying for clarity. If you feel that God is leading you, ask Him to confirm it — in Scripture, through trusted counsel, or by a peace that surpasses understanding (Philippians 4:7). The Holy Spirit guides us step by step, without creating unnecessary tension. As we learn to wait and listen, we'll find that God's voice is not forceful, but steady, reliable, and comforting.

The Voice That Carries Peace, Even in Correction

Another distinguishing mark of God's voice is that it speaks from a place of peace. Even when God convicts us or brings a challenging word, his voice is marked by a peace that reassures us. 1 John 4:18 tells us, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear."

While the Holy Spirit may lead us into uncomfortable or humbling truths, he does so in a way that gives us inner peace, not anxiety or dread. Often we might feel nervous or apprehensive when God is calling us to take a leap of faith, but these feelings are different from the sense of torment or fear that comes from our own minds or the enemy. God's voice is gentle and comforting, never chaotic or fear-inducing.

Even in moments of correction or rebuke, God's voice brings a sense of peace. Hebrews 12:11 says, "No discipline 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." This verse assures us that even in correction, God's voice leads us toward peace, not shame or condemnation.

If we're experiencing turmoil, self-doubt, or fear, we're likely listening to our own insecurities or the enemy's lies. The enemy loves to stir up fear and shame, making us feel inadequate or hopeless, but God's voice speaks from a place of love, peace, and encouragement, inviting us to draw near to him rather than run away.

When discerning if you're hearing from God, ask yourself: is there a peace at the core of this message? You may feel nervous or convicted, but the presence of God's peace will always confirm his leading. If a thought is leaving you in a state of panic, condemnation, or confusion, it is likely not from God. His Spirit brings peace that surpasses all understanding, even when he calls us to make challenging changes or to repent from sin. God's peace is the marker of his presence — a "yes" from the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you" (John 14:27). That peace does not mean every decision will be easy, but it does mean that even in difficulty, you'll have a core assurance

that he is with you, guiding and upholding you.

The Voice That Affirms Your Identity

One of the clearest ways to recognize God's voice is by its affirmation of our identity in him. God's voice builds us up, reminds us who we are in Christ, and reassures us of his unchanging love. Romans 8:15–16 beautifully illustrates this: "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship, and by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." When God speaks, there is no uncertainty about where we stand with him. His voice is filled with love, stability, and conviction, inviting us to live confidently as his beloved children.

In contrast, the voice of the enemy always aims to distort our identity. This is a tactic he has used since the beginning, as seen in Genesis 3, where the serpent led Eve to question God's word and doubt his goodness. Satan uses subtle lies to create doubt, insecurity, and confusion. When he tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he started by questioning Jesus's identity, saying, "If you are the Son of God" (Matthew 4:3). But Jesus, rooted in his identity and in the truth of God's word, responded with Scripture each time, refusing to be swayed.

Our own thoughts can also create doubt about our identity, particularly when we focus too much on our weaknesses, failures, or inadequacies. While the Spirit may convict us of sin and call us to repentance, he does so in a way that lovingly draws us back to God. He corrects us without tearing us down or questioning our place in God's family. Hebrews 12:6 reminds us, "The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."

When God corrects us, it's from a place of love, intended to build us up, not tear us down.

If you're struggling with doubts about your value, remember that God's voice will always bring clarity and reassurance. He will remind you that you are loved, chosen, and held by him. Meditate on scriptures that affirm your identity in Christ — such as Ephesians 1:4–5, which tells us that we are chosen and adopted by God, and 1 Peter 2:9, which reminds us that we are a royal priesthood, called to declare his praises. This foundation in truth helps us resist the enemy's lies and remain secure in our God-given identity.

Let's remember that discerning God's voice is less about skill and more about intimacy with him. The voice of the Holy Spirit isn't hidden from us; it's accessible, clear, and always aligned with God's unchanging word. God speaks in ways that are stable, peaceful, affirming, and consistent. He draws us near, never using fear or condemnation to push us away, but rather calling us higher, building us up, and rooting us in his love.

The world, our own thoughts, and the enemy all speak loudly and frequently, but God's voice brings a calm and a

confidence that outshines the rest. As we've learned, discerning His voice means silencing the noise, tuning into His word, and letting the Holy Spirit reveal God's truth to us daily. This process may require patience and trust, but the result is profound: a life anchored in the peace and certainty of God's guidance.

So commit to making space in your life for God's voice. Be intentional about grounding yourself in his word, surrounding yourself with godly counsel, and making prayer a regular habit. When you do, his voice will become a guiding light, bringing clarity, confidence, and direction in every season. Let God's voice be your foundation, your comfort, and your wisdom.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the gift of your voice and the guidance of your Spirit. Teach us to recognize your voice above all others. Help us to tune out the distractions, rely on your word, and rest in your peace. Draw us closer to you each day, and let our lives reflect your truth and love. In Jesus's name, amen.

Watch the video here:
<https://youtu.be/9Dr5SYyq-tQ?si=EkZFP9x3MdlHyUrP>



The University of Life

By Billy Graham

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

A World Searching for Rest

This verse is an invitation to men and women who are exhausted with the search for truth. Jesus said, "You've been searching for truth. You're tired. I am the way, the truth, and the life. You've found it. The search ends with me."

All over the world, people are beginning to ask questions about where civilization is headed. One of the foreign experts left Washington in despair this past summer and went back to the university to teach. He was asked why, and he said, "Sometimes I get the feeling I'm sitting on a hilltop watching two trains racing toward each other on the same track." Vice Premier Deng of China stated recently, this past summer, that World War III is inevitable and independent of man's will in this decade. A British editorial said recently that the world is on a collision course with disaster.

Now, when I see the affluence of America, I also read about the new surge of problems that our affluence has created. Psychologists, economists, clergy, and politicians are dealing with social and moral problems on a scale

they've never had to deal with before: Escalating drug addiction, alcoholism, and suicide.

The Restless Search for Escape

The Psalmist said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then I would fly away and rest." Have you ever felt that way? You'd like to get out of life and rest. You'd like to get out of that kitchen and rest. You'd like to get out of that job and rest. You'd like to fly away somewhere.

The real thing people are searching for is God, because you see, they were made in the image of God, and without God their hearts are restless till they come to know God. You can never find true rest until you know God.

The Psalmist's longing to escape has become the cry of the world today. The Psalmist also said, "I'm full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none." The Bible also says, "But the eyes of the wicked will fail, and escape will elude them. Their hope will become a dying gasp." No way out.

Jesus said, "I am the way out." He said there's only one way to escape, one way out, and "I'm it." You have to come by way of the cross and the empty tomb, and find reconciliation with God and peace in your heart and joy in your heart that you have lost.

Jesus, the Greatest Teacher

Jesus said, "Learn of me." It's a picture of Jesus Christ as the great professor at the university. He's the greatest teacher that ever was. The Bible says he taught them as one having authority. He spoke with authority. You never find Jesus saying, "I hope this is the way," or "I think this is the way." The Bible says, "There's a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." There are many ways in life that seem right, but the end is death, destruction, judgment, and hell. And Jesus warned about that. Jesus said, "I am the way."

In most American universities and colleges, they have what are called required courses and elective courses. Now, in life, there are three required courses and three elective courses that I want you to think about tonight.

Required Course One: Life

The first required course is life itself. We did not choose to be born. We were not consulted about living. And there's nothing you can do to stop living. We did not choose where to be born. We did not choose what color of skin we have. There's no escaping life.

Oh, you say, "I can commit suicide." That doesn't get you out of life. You only kill the body. Your soul, your spirit, is eternal. It lives on. So you cannot escape by suicide. Suicide does not end it all, as some people think.

Yes, you're required to live. How do you face life? What resources do you have to call upon? When the pressures get great and the crisis comes and the difficulties come, what do you have to call upon? Well, if you know Jesus Christ, you don't have anything to worry about, because when He lives in your heart, He gives great inward peace and joy and assurance and a sense of safety and well-being. It affects you physically and

mentally and socially — every phase of your life is affected when Christ dominates your life, because you let Him come as Savior as well as Lord.

Required Course Two: Death

And then the second required course that you have at the university: you're required to die. George Bernard Shaw said that there's one statistic that we can be sure of. There are odds against which no gambler can win — that one out of every one dies. The Bible says there's a time to be born and a time to die. The number of years is simply relative. The fact is, we all die.

There's only one man in history who didn't have to die, and that was Jesus Christ. He said, "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He was perfect. He was free from sin and its effects. And yet He died on the cross. Why? Because He died for you. He took the things that caused death in your life on the cross in your place. He died for you. God laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

But not only did he die — he rose again. He's alive tonight, "who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification." The Bible says there's coming a time when there's going to be a general resurrection, when all of those that are lost are going to be raised, and all of those that are saved are going to be raised. And Jesus Christ died on our account on the cross, was raised again, and that is living proof that there is going to be a resurrection someday. Think of it: Jesus Christ came back from the dead to tell us there's more. Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. The Bible says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."



Required Course Three: Judgment

And then the third thing in this school that is required of you: the judgment of God is required. You're going to face the judgment. Someday you're going to give a moral accounting. The searching eyes of God will miss nothing in that day when you stand before him. "And every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," the Bible says.

Those are the required courses. Life itself — you cannot be unborn. You're required to die. You're required to face the judgment.

Now, there are certain Elective Courses at the University of Life.

Elective One: Choose Your Way of Life

First, you can choose your way of life. The Bible says, "Choose you this day." As I said a moment ago, there is a way that seemeth right.

Some of those roads seem right. There's the lust of the eye that the Bible talks about — possessions. It seems that there's nothing wrong with gaining all the possessions you can. But when your life is centered in the acquisition of physical possessions, then the lust of the eyes has gotten the best of you. And that's sin. It seems right, but it's wrong, and it leads to a dead end.

Then there's the lust of the flesh — those physical things which offer luxury and entertainment. Some of us are selling our souls for sinful pleasure: overeating, the wrong use of sex, excessive use of alcohol, all of these things. The Scripture says, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Then there's also the pride of life: ego, position, getting the best, self-interest. But that's a wrong road. The very heart of sin is ego, and when you come to Christ, your ego has to be surrendered to Christ until he becomes Lord.

Elective Two: Choose the Master of Your Life

Secondly, not only can you choose your way of life, but you can choose who will be the master of your life. What's going to master your life? Who is going to control you? Are you going to control your own life and make a wreck of it? "Thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, and thou shalt be saved."

By nature, we want to run our own lives. We think we know better than even God knows. But God has a plan for your life, and His plan is perfect. Maybe you're older now, and your life is all messed up. Did you know that God can rearrange your life after you've messed it up, by forgiving your sin? He can't take those scars of sin away. I've watched people come forward here, and I've seen many of them stand in front of this platform night after night. I've seen them with sin-scarred faces, because sin leaves its mark. But God can forgive all that, and He can take all that mess that you've made in your life and straighten it all out and get you back on the right road, if you'll trust Him.

You can start from where you are, by trusting Christ where you are. He'll forgive the past and give you a whole new spiritual life, and give you a power beyond anything you ever dreamed, and a love and a joy and a peace. Don't let the devil worry you about past sins once you've been to the cross. "If your son asks for bread, will you give him a snake?" No. God loves you. He has a plan for you. If you ask for something good, he's not going to give you a snake.

The rich young ruler — the problem with him was not his wealth, but that he wanted to control his own life. And many of you want to control your own life. You see, we want to run our own

lives. Suppose I'd go up in the airliner and tell the pilot, "I want to pilot this plane. I've never piloted a plane in my life, but I can take over from you." No. God says, "Get up out of that seat. You're making a wreck of your life. You're heading toward destruction. Let me take the controls of your life. I've been over the road before. Let me help you."

Elective Three: Choose Your Destination

And then, lastly, you can choose your own destination. The destination is heaven or hell. The Bible says, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and narrow is the gate and hard is the way which leadeth unto life."

The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Just believe! You say, "Well, there must be a catch somewhere." There is. That word "believe" means that you put your total confidence in Him. You don't put your confidence in your own works; you don't put your confidence in anything but the person of Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for you. You cannot work your way, you cannot pay your way — you come by simple, childlike faith.

C.T. Studd was the son of a very wealthy man, and he was one of the greatest cricketers that Cambridge has ever had. He said, "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice that I can make for him can be too great." And he started a whole missionary movement at the end of the last century.

Jim Elliot, who was killed by the Aucas Indians in South America, wrote this as a young student: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Watch the full sermon here:

<https://youtu.be/S-UfFkPubkQ?si=OVyHCdBWU36hhh5T>

Winning the Invisible War

By Charlie Kirk

There are going to be some hard truths today, straight from the Bible. I'm going to say something that some people would consider controversial, though I don't: the churches that refuse to recognize Satan and refuse to recognize the evil one — the one in rebellion to God — are doing the work of Satan in the church. We need to recognize that we are in this battle and this struggle.

Satan is a real thing. It's not imaginary. We need to call Satan by name, and Satan hates it when we do. In the Bible, Satan is mentioned as a person — always "he," never "it." Not some amorphous figure, not some idea, but a being. That's a hard thing for some Christians to recognize.

One pastor said to me, "Charlie, I don't talk about the spiritual war, because that's a little dark. It's a little scary, a little intimidating." I said, hold on — it's absolutely scary. Without the truth of Jesus Christ, this is overwhelmingly intimidating; it's something I would stay away from and wouldn't even be prepared to talk about. But we need to say what we're really up against.

So here are three truths about Satan — because so few Christians will confront this directly. You've got to confront it head-on.

Truth One: Satan Is a Liar

Satan is the master of deceit.

In John 8:44 Jesus is talking to the Pharisees and He says, "You are of your



father, the devil. Because you were not able to listen to my word."

Jesus is creating the dividing lines — light versus dark, good versus evil. The passage continues: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources" — meaning not of the Lord — "for he is a liar and the father of it," the father of all lies.

So when have you heard a lie in the last year? Where do the lies all come from? The abortions, the vaccines, the masks, the lockdowns, the voter fraud, the corruption, the insider dealing, the social media. Now we're getting to the real domain that this flows from.

The passage ends: "Which of you convicts me of sin? And if I tell you the truth, why do you not believe me? He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God." It's a beautiful discourse.

When we talk about lies, we have to understand that Jesus didn't just **say** the truth — He was the embodiment of truth. Everything about Him was true.

Truth Two: Satan Is a Thief

Satan has never built anything. Satan does not build; he only destroys. He infiltrates, deconstructs, and obliterates. Anything meaningful, he tries to destroy. He is not a creator — it's not in his nature.

Jesus says this in John 10:10: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they might have life, and have it in full." By definition, Satan tries to steal from you.

This is why Satan hates being called out by name. The deeds of darkness are always done under cover, under the shadow. As soon as we expose the child

sex trafficker, the people running guns, the people committing murders, they hate it.

Satan is the same way. He hates it when you say, "I see exactly what you're trying to do. You're trying to infiltrate the church. You're trying to turn people against each other." Satan loves sowing division between people. He hates harmony and enjoys discord. He wants to turn people against each other. Satan is a thief.

Truth Three: Satan Is Limited

This is the best news. You say, "There's good news about Satan?" You better believe there is. Satan is limited.

Satan is always trying to debase the bride of Christ, and to make you question and lose faith in what has always been true.

The devil hates the Bible, and specifically the two books he hates the most are Genesis and Revelation. The beginning and the end. Genesis describes Satan's devices; Revelation describes his doom. Right there in Genesis 3, we see exactly how the devil works: turning people against each other, sowing doubt, questioning God's commands, introducing rebellion against God.

Let's go back into our Bibles and see where the Savior of the world confronted the devil himself. "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry."

"The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.'" Mocking him.

The devil was missing one of his greatest tricks against Jesus: holding one sin against him. That's one of his favorite tools — the devil stays in your ear about the ways you've fallen short. The devil didn't have his best trick here, because



Jesus never did anything wrong; He lived a perfect life. So Satan resorted to his second-best trick: mocking, and then the temptation of ruling. "Come on, if you say you're the Son of God, turn these stones to bread." He was trying to provoke Jesus into engaging on the devil's terms. But Jesus refused to engage on Satan's terms at all.

"Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, and had him stand at the highest point of the temple." He says, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written..." And here it gets interesting: Satan is quoting scripture. He's trying to use this perfect book against Jesus — "You say you're so powerful; I know your book too."

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Jesus is laying it down — you don't want this fight; we are going to crush you. Don't put me to the test. I'm going to win and you're going to lose.

But the devil, like every person with the spirit of the devil, never knows when to stop. They do not have the fruit of self-control — constantly pushing, constantly trying to conquer, trying to do more than they can.

Jesus never questioned what Satan says. He never said it's untrue. He didn't say, "No, this earth is mine, not yours." He essentially acknowledged: this is your kingdom, your enemy-occupied territory. Jesus, in human form, was going through the same temptation we go through every day.

So what was Satan doing? "All the kingdoms and their splendor. I'll make you famous. I'll put you in a Netflix series, make you a billionaire, give you a private jet and a yacht. People will love you. You'll get five million Instagram followers. There'll be songs written about you, statues built for you. Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

And then the mic drop that I think some of you are waiting for, because I'm sure

you feel the spiritual heaviness in our country and you're saying, "Just get out of my head." "Then the devil left him." Why? Because he's limited. And then the angels came and tended to Jesus. There are limitations to Satan's power. So if you're in a moment where you feel Satan is harassing you: it will not last forever.

How Can We Achieve a Sound Mind?

The scriptures tell us we need to "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings." Don't feel sorry for yourself if Satan's harassing you. Your fellow believers, even if they don't talk about it, are harassed too. They also hear those negative thoughts and are constantly under attack.

So what can we do to achieve peace and a sound mind? Let me reiterate our goal: "Then the devil left him." How many of you would love that to happen right now? There are seasons where we feel more at peace than others — because Satan is not constant, but God is constant.

One: prayer. My favorite prayer in the entire Bible is three words, said by one of the women Jesus healed: "Lord, help me." Your prayers must be sincere, but they don't have to be sophisticated. You don't need a doctoral thesis submitted to Stanford with citations and footnotes. Just "Lord, help me." Sincere prayer is one of the ways we counter this onslaught.

Two: dig into the Word and know it is the Word of God. The Bible is a USB drive waiting to be downloaded into your operating system to protect you from the ransomware and malware attacks of the enemy. As soon as you start memorizing

scripture and are filled with the Word — you'll say, "Oh, I know what's happening here." You start to understand the terrain on which this battle is being fought.

Three: submit and resist. James 4:7: "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Not that he'll casually walk away — he flees, and when you flee, you're in danger. That means submission to the Lord and obedience to His commands: he flees and runs. "Adios, Satan, have a nice day." You won't be able to do this on your own, but through submission and obedience.

Four — the best news: we are promised victory. Despite what the devil tells you, despite the thoughts weighing you down, victory is promised. This is why Satan hates the book of Revelation: he will be thrown into the lake of fire and burn forever. That's his destiny — the harasser, the tormentor, the liar, the serpent, the mocker. That battle is over and done. We are simply temporary physical manifestations of that spiritual war.

The scripture says clearly that the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace." But then comes the part we don't talk about: "In this world you will have trouble." Jesus is saying you're going to have trouble — so if you think it's unique that you're being harassed right now, it's not. He said you'd have trouble. "But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/u5g3RYz30ic?si=gKPY1IPkZP0IUWOS>

All Things Reunited in Christ

By Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. Ephesians 1:9-10

So God has made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself. Were it not that God had given us that ability to understand by the Holy Spirit, we would still be ignorant of the mystery.

The mystery is something that is unattainable by unaided human effort, but it is something which is revealed to those to whom God gives the spirit, so it is now to the Christian an open secret.

Well, now then the question is, what is the mystery? What is this knowledge which has been given to us in that remarkable manner? And the answer is to be found in this great 10th verse, which we are looking at together this morning.

In this verse, we are taken right up into the heavens, and there we find ourselves looking face to face at God's final purpose. We are now being transported right above our own personal salvation into the realm of the ultimate things, God's grand, comprehensive, final,

ultimate purpose - not only world unity, but for the unity of the whole cosmos.

With our world in its present state and condition. What lies ahead of us? We see the nations torn and divided. We see turmoil, we see dread possibilities that we don't even want to mention. And the great question is what's the matter with the world? And what can be done about it? I don't know what's going to happen on the world stage, nobody else knows, I don't know what's going to be peace or war, and I'd be wasting your time if I tried to address you on such a subject.

But I'm going to talk to you about something that I do know, and I'm going to talk to you about something on a much bigger scale, and I'm going to do so with the authority of God. The immediate may be war, the immediate may be peace, I don't know, but I can tell you about the ultimate.

And this is the point at which I think the Christian and the non-Christian are differentiated and separated from one another. The Christian is interested in the ultimate, the Christian is interested in God's plan.

What I'm going to tell you about is going to happen whatever men and nations may do, because it is God's plan and it is absolutely certain. And if you understand these things as I do, it enables you to look at the present world crisis and

remain absolutely calm.

Here the apostle tells us when this great plan of God is to be put into operation and into action. When this great thing that was in the mind of God from eternity is really going to be brought to pass.

In Galatians 4:4 the Apostle says, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to that that to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

That's exactly the same phrase as we have in this verse that we're looking at together now.

What is happening at this present time is that this great original plan of God is being worked out in this fullness of the times, in these last days, in the ends of the world, and it'll go on until it is finally completed.

The next thing we notice is that he tells us that this great plan is being carried out in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he, God, might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.

The plan is that He might gather together in one all things in Christ and that God is going to head up again all things in Christ.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and Christ was the head of all, and everything was in a perfect, complete state of harmony.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the angels and all these great powers and authorities, and the world, the animals, the fruit of the earth, and over them all, man was made the Lord of creation. And it was absolutely perfect. It was a perfect state of harmony.

But alas, it didn't continue like that. First of all, there was a revolt, a rebellion in heaven itself. The devil rebelled and fell, and a large number of the holy angels fell, followed him and fell with him, and immediately there was discord, yea, discord in heaven.

And in Revelations 12:7, it says “and there was war in heaven”. Discord in heaven, confusion and fighting, war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought against his angels, read it for yourselves.

There was discord, loss of harmony, this pristine, perfect, original harmony, it began in heaven. But it didn't remain only in heaven, this fallen angel, this devil, this Satan came and tempted men, and men fell.

And the result of that was discord amongst men, dispute, quarreling, misunderstanding, warfare, bloodshed, murder, jealousy, envy, and all the foulness that has followed, that's where it's all come from, the loss of the original harmony.

Now then, you see the doctrine the mystic secret into which you and I as Christians have been led. God is doing something to restore the original harmony, to reunite again all things in Christ.

We've already been told what happens, redemption through the blood of Christ. Reconciliation to God. Reconciliation with one another, by His blood, by His cross, He made peace, the middle wall of partition has gone, the old enmity, the old divisions have gone.

Peter tells us in the second Epistle in the third chapter that a day is coming when there shall be a great destruction of the earth and of the world as we now know it.

The elements shall melt with fervent

heat, etc. Evil and sin will be burnt out of the universe, there shall be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

In Romans 8, the Apostle tells us that the whole creation he says, groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

There is a day coming when the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp.

And the and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den, they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

The perfect harmony will be restored. Harmony in men and between men, harmony on the earth and in the brute creation, harmony in heaven and all of it. Under this blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who will be the head of all, and everything will again be united in him.

And wonder of wonders, marvelous beyond compare, when all this happens, it will never be undone again. Reunited forever and ever to all eternity.

That is God's plan, that is the mystery which has been revealed unto us.

Do you know that these things are so marvelous that you'll never hear anything greater, either in this world or the world to come? Do you realize that you have a part in these things? I said just now, I say again, I don't know whether a war is coming or not, nobody else knows. But whether it be war or no war, I am in this plan of God.

And there is no bomb that can be invented, there are no bacteria that can be cultivated and used. There are no chemicals, no gases that can be invented by the inferno itself, that can ever touch to the slightest extent these things.

That's God's plan, and God's plan is going to be carried out. Beloved people, let us decide to read less of our newspapers and more of our Bible.

And God forbid that we should fritter away the scriptures by trying to reduce them to terms of contemporary events, look at the argument, look at this grand thing, this glorious thing. Don't be over particular in your interpretation of contemporary history, don't waste your time with it, come back to this.

God's plan, God's eternal scheme, this dispensation, this economy, this thing that we are in that's being worked out since the beginning of the fullness of the times. And the ultimate restoration of that glorious harmony, where with our whole being we shall praise the Lamb that once was slain, and say blessing and honor and worship and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and forever.

Let wars come, let pestilence come, let hell be let loose. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That is the Christian message for today. Thank God for it, let us rejoice in it.

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/haaAK6uMqy4?si=aFj4848xfunltqCK>

We're Rebuilding Babel

By Nate Sala

We are building something that God has disrupted before. In Genesis 11, humanity built a tower to reach the heavens to secure power and unity on their own terms, and God blew up their plans.

Today, we are building a new tower with the same ambition, only this time it's made of artificial intelligence. We may be repeating one of the oldest rebellions in human history, and most people don't even see it.

Many people in the AI industry are sounding the alarm right now about how AI is about to disrupt a lot of jobs in a new industrial revolution, and at the same time, it's already creating itself now.

For thousands of years human progress moved at a human pace, right? We built tools, and those tools helped us build better tools, but there was always a bottleneck, and it was us. It was human limitation, human speed, human understanding.

No matter how advanced the tool was, it still depended on human cognition to move it forward. Now, maybe that bottleneck was not there by accident. Maybe it was protective. But now, that bottleneck is disappearing. Recently, OpenAI described one of their systems being instrumental in creating itself. AI helped build itself. To be clear, humans are still overseeing this process, but the

system is now actively participating in building its own successor.

Humans build a system. That system helps build the next one, and the cycle accelerates. That's compounding capability. That's exponential growth, and we are at the steep part of that curve right now.

But what does that mean? We have created something that is now actively creating itself, and we still don't even know what it means.

Now, does that mean AI is evil? No, not inherently, but it is powerful. And that's the problem. Power without moral formation is dangerous. Power without wisdom is actually a recipe for disaster.

Power without submission to God is rebellion waiting to scale. And even secular people know this. People who have no theological framework whatsoever, they're starting to realize the potential problem here.

We do not ultimately know how these systems actually make decisions, and we can't really control them either.

The warning is that our current design methods do not guarantee control once these systems exceed our own cognitive abilities. And that day is already here. These systems are becoming embedded in everything. Your job application is filtered by AI. Your loan approval decided by AI.



Your feed ranked by AI. Your kids' education curated by AI. This isn't theoretical, it's already happening.

This happened before in the Bible. In Genesis 11, mankind did the exact same thing that we're doing today, only back then they were building a tower.

They said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down there and confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."

Babel was not about ambition, it was about rebellion. These people in Genesis 11 were saying, we will control our own destiny. And that put them on a collision course with the destiny that God had already laid out for mankind back in

Genesis chapter 1.

But the folks at Babel rejected God. They unified their language, they centralized themselves, and they said, let us make a name for ourselves.

So what happens next? Genesis 11:6, God comes down and He disrupts their plans and scatters them. Why? Because God knows something. He knows that unchecked human autonomy at scale does not lead to utopia, it leads to tyranny. It leads to oppression, and it leads to collapse.

Do you think that God is indifferent to what's going on in the world right now? If He wasn't back then, do you think He is today?

We have to remember, the original human beings that built the tower created that structure to to bring the gods down to them. That's the audacity of Babel. These people were building a system to access divine power without divine submission.

So now we are building an omniscient AI system that is functionally similar to Babel, right? A tower that reaches

toward capabilities that we literally call superhuman.

The Bible tells us that the ancient pagans used to worship gods, but the gods that they worshiped were actually demons. When ancient people worshiped what they called Baal, Molech, Ashra, right? They thought they were worshipping gods, but they were actually engaging with demonic powers, real spiritual entities, fallen beings presenting themselves as divine.

That's what idolatry was in the ancient world. But what happens when we build our own altar? What will we worship with our new tower? Will it not be ourselves? Will it not be a magnified projection of ourselves?

AI is trained on human data, reflecting human biases, optimized for human engagement, but also amplifying human desires and also our flaws.

We are creating something in our own image, and then we're going to turn around and treat it like it's a god.

Now, if that sounds familiar to you, it's because this is what Paul was saying before in Romans chapter 1: "For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things."

The problem with doing something like this is really simple, if AI is in our image, it will carry our fallenness with it. Our pride, our tribalism, our appetite for control, our refusal to depend on God. AI will not transcend our own human nature, it's going to scale it. And we are preparing to give that scaled-up reflection of ourselves increasing authority over the whole world. This

tool that we have created is going to become the altar of our self-worship.

Have we learned nothing meaningful from the past? Because the warnings were there for us in Genesis 11. They've been there the whole time.

I don't know what's going to happen in the future. What I'm showing you right now is a pattern that we are repeating that has already played out before. And it didn't end well with humanity back then.

So I'm not predicting a second Babel event. I'm asking the question whether God historically blesses autonomous human empires or whether He humbles them.

Now, if you're a Christian, I don't want you to despair, okay? Because the Bible does not end with a scattered and confused people at Babel. If it ended at chapter 11, we should be thoroughly concerned. But it doesn't end there.

If you read all the way to the end of the Bible, it actually ends with a unified people of God who are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The toughest pill to swallow for this world, particularly now with AI in it, is that sovereignty was never meant to belong to us. If we ever displayed any authority, it was always borrowed from God.

Why? Because He has and He always will be in control. And one day, whether tomorrow or a thousand years from now, every knee is going to bow to him. Every system will be judged. Every tower is going to fall. Every authority is going to give an account.

And may He find us all in submission to Him when that day comes.

Watch the full video here:
https://youtu.be/P_9dhVMvnNY?si=72aMwIkRfcSNt9nn

How Can We Finish the Race with Death?

By O.O. Living

We all dread the thought of dying. But it is a fact of life we must all face, whether you are well advanced in age or you're just a teenager. And I think it will do us good to accept that early in life because it will help us not to waste life. When I made the statement: The Christian faith is the race you run with your life and finish with your death. What do I mean? How are we to run the Christian race with our lives and finish with our death? What kind of death is that?

God's chief purpose for our existence is to reflect (as created in His image) the glory of God. God gave us life so that with our bodies and minds and hearts we might draw attention to Jesus and make Him look as great as He really is. The purpose for our existence, according to the Bible, does not change at death. It is the purpose of our dying and the purpose of our living after death.

For the Christian, eternal life has already begun and will not be interrupted by death or judgment. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24). Already, by faith in Christ Jesus, our judgment is past and our death is past. Death is no longer death for those who are in Christ, those who believe and delight themselves in Christ. The essence of what made it death has changed.

What has changed is found in 1 Corinthians 15:56: "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ fulfilled the law perfectly (see Matthew 3:15). He also took on Himself the curse that the law put on us because of our sins (see Galatians 3:13).

Therefore, in Christ, the righteousness that the law demanded from us is provided for us, and the curse that the law pronounced over us is removed from us.

The sting of death is gone. For the believer, death is no longer the terror that death used to be. Death is now a transition from life to a better life, from faith here to seeing there, from groaning here to glory there, from good fellowship with Jesus here to far better fellowship with Jesus there, from mixtures of pain and pleasure here to all pleasure there, from struggles with and fight against sin here to perfect affections for Jesus there. We have passed from death to life. It is the race we have been called to run.

Therefore, the way we run the Christian race with our lives is to show Jesus to be great so that when we finish the race in our dying, we treasure Him more than life itself. That is, treasure Him more than what we leave behind in dying. This is how we fulfill the God-given purpose of our death as those who cannot die. The purpose of this deathless dying is to

glorify Christ. Death, though not God's chief plan for us, is God's appointed way in this fallen world for Christ to get His last praise from us on earth before we enter into endless praise.

Paul says we do this by counting death as gain: "It is my eager expectation and hope that . . . Christ will be honored in my body. . . by death. For to me to . . . die is gain" (Philippians 1:20-21). Christ is magnified in our dying when we treasure Christ more than life, so much so that dying is felt to be gain.

If you are a Christian, death is a time for glorifying God. God appoints it for this purpose in His saints. Another example is the death of Peter. Jesus spoke to him about his death, "When you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go" (John 21:18). Then John interpreted these words for us as follows, "This [Jesus] said to show by what kind of death [Peter] was to glorify God " (verse 19). God has promised us long life, but we all have our appointed time and way of dying. This is our last way on earth of esteeming the supreme value of Jesus in our lives more than our lives. This is the last time on earth for glorifying God. It happens by counting everything on earth as loss (Philippians 3:8) and counting the sight and savoring of Christ in heaven as gain.

Those who remain behind feel the loss here deeply. There are untold tears. This is good. It testifies to the preciousness of a gift enjoyed. But even here, through all the tears and mourns, there is a way to magnify Christ. The life of Job gave us a glimpse into this. When the news came that all ten of his children were dead, the Bible says, "Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb,

and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord'" (Job 1:20-21). He wept and he worshipped.

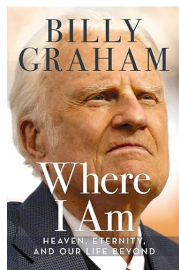
The death I speak of isn't self-denial—like death to self. But actual death—physical death. Sometime ago, I saw a WhatsApp status posted by a dear friend about the death of a believer who had just received Christ as Lord and Savior the previous day. He was killed because he became a Christian. The picture alone made me sober. Yesterday evening, I was scrolling on Facebook and saw the video of a pastor here in northern Nigeria telling his church member not to pay anything to those who might kidnap him. He will tell them to kill him because nobody will pay for his ransom¹. And the thought that kept coming to my mind since this morning is this question: Would you die because of your faith in Jesus? Would I still be a Christian in the face of death? Or would I deny Christ? Think of the question, then check your commitment to Christ.

Let us pray earnestly for each other, that Christ would be so real to us that we would live and die in a way that shows His supreme preciousness to us. Paul said: "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8). This is the great Christian race; this is the great battle of life: to treasure Jesus like that—to treasure Him more than life in living and dying. Please pray for me because this is really crucial to our eternal destiny and daily life. I pray for you: O dear sovereign Lord, our loving Father, satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love that we might live and die to make You look as great as You are. In the name of your Son, Amen.

Read the article here:
<https://godcenteredchristianity.substack.com/p/how-can-we-finish-the-christian-race>

Check It Out: Books, Apps etc.

Please send in your recommendations of books, podcasts, apps or shows to:
contact@thewinepress.org



Where I am

By Billy Graham

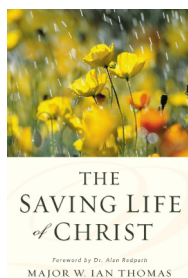
In *Where I Am*, Mr. Graham shares what the Bible has to say about eternity. Just after his ninety-fifth birthday, Mr. Graham proclaimed with resolve, “When I die, tell others that I’ve gone to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—that’s where I am.”



The Hiding Place

By Corrie ten Boom

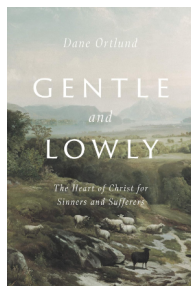
This powerful story recounts the courage of one Christian family of Dutch watchmakers who determined to save Jews and resistance workers from the Gestapo forces that had overrun the Netherlands. Following the war Corrie began to tell her story of God's faithfulness and his mercy, even in the darkest and deepest pit.



The Saving Life of Christ

By Major Ian Thomas

Major Thomas points out how many dedicated people have come out of the old life but never gone on to the full, joyous life in Christ. He challenges Christians to walk on and take the victory that is already won.



Gentle and Lowly

By Dane Ortlund

Jesus describes himself in Matthew 11 as “gentle and lowly in heart,” longing for his people to find rest in Him. This book encourages us with the affections of Christ for His people and His longing heart to comfort and sustain us in our up-and-down lives.

My Worth is Not in What I Own

Song by Fernando Ortega, Keith & Kristyn Getty

My worth is not in skill or name
In win or lose, in pride or shame
But in the blood of Christ that flowed
At the cross

I rejoice in my Redeemer
Greatest treasure, wellspring of my soul
I will trust in Him, no other
My soul is satisfied in Him alone

As summer flowers, we fade and die
Fame, youth, and beauty hurry by
But life eternal calls to us
At the cross

I will not boast in wealth or might
Or human wisdom's fleeting light
But I will boast in knowing Christ
At the cross

Two wonders here that I confess
My worth and my unworthiness
My value fixed, my ransom paid
At the cross

I rejoice in my Redeemer
Greatest treasure, wellspring of my soul
I will trust in Him, no other
My soul is satisfied in Him alone

