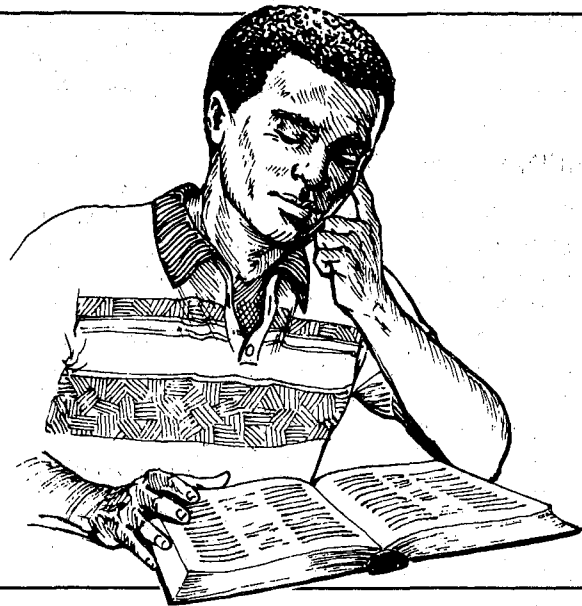


# WEEK SIX

## —Sunday—

*The fulfillment of your word is just as dependable as sunrise! How encouraging — how we need it! Sow your word in my heart today!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, indeed more than watchmen for the morning”* (Psa. 130:5,6). Dear Lord, all of us can relate to these words; it would seem that most of our activity is in the inactivity of waiting. The context of these verses is the early morning — sometime before sunrise. We think it a most appropriate figure since the keeping of your word is just as dependable as sunrise. It could be an allusion to the sentinels on the wall who were waiting the sunrise for the changing of shifts. In your creative power to speak it is to have it. “God said, ‘Let there be light’, and there was light.” When we know what you have said we can eagerly expect the fulfillment. All of the above is true, but is this the real thrust of the text? I believe there is more here for which we can praise you.

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* It is one thing to wait “on” the Lord, it is an entirely different thing to wait *for* the Lord. To wait *on* the Lord is to wait for *himself*. Ah, there is indeed a vast difference in these two little words. The enjoyment of a promise is one thing; the enjoyment of a person is something else. My whole being reaches out for yourself. You have promised your presence and your very self in us. We have come through a dark night of waiting — the dawn cannot be far away. Dear Lord, I *know* you keep your promise to come to me in the person of yourself. I read again the words of your Son and hold them to my heart: “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home (in) with him” (John 14:23b,24).

*How do you personally relate to the presence of God, and God who is Present? Speak it out or write it out.*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

Once again, it is not difficult to confess my sin in this regard. I can freely confess that my whole soul does long for you. I do reach out to you in the darkness of my need — like the watchman for the morning. At the same time, my Lord’s words are like a sharp two-edged sword. “He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me” (John 14:24). How shoddy is my love! “Love is not irritable or resentful.” In my subconsciousness I resent your telling me what to do. Because of this I am irritable. Oh, to yield my whole self (soul) to your dear Son — to yourself. I am not what I want to be, but praise your name, I am not what I used to be! Forgive me, Lord, and keep on motivating me to love you totally.

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

All the way my Savior leads me;  
Cheers each winding path I tread,  
Gives me grace for ev’ry trial,  
Feeds me with the living bread.  
Though my weary steps may falter,  
And my soul athirst may be,  
Gushing from the Rock before me,  
Lo! a spring of joy I see;  
Gushing from the Rock before me,  
Lo! a spring of joy I see.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

**13** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. <sup>2</sup>Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. <sup>3</sup>Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed.” —*Matthew 13:1-3, NIV*

## READ HIS WORD TO HIM

This was on the same day that your Son was interrupted by the visit of his family. Jesus did go out of the house, but it was not to visit with his mother and brothers. He left the house to be able to speak to a larger crowd. Indeed the crowd was so large he had to get into a boat and teach them from the surface of the lake. How wonderfully well your Son did communicate! How I do want to follow his example in preaching. We are not told all he taught; there were many other things said than those here recorded. The form of teaching is just as important as the subject matter: “. . . he told them many things in parables.” How I do need to develop this capacity.

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

## READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

It requires more time and thought to create a story in which the point can be made than to describe your point in abstract form. How often have I been content with the latter and neglected the former? Dear Lord, I am not like your Son when this happens. I want to so carefully examine every word he said that I can use the same devices of communication as I attempt to teach the same truths he taught. How wonderfully good it will be to discover that the power here described is the Son of man, my Lord himself. When I follow in his steps in sowing the seed of your word in the hearts of men it is really my Lord sowing all over again the seed of the kingdom.

*It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.*

## READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the spontaneous popularity of my Lord. (2) Thank you for his willingness to give himself to his teaching. (3) Thank you for Jesus' adaptation to the circumstances to meet a need. (4) Thank you for the power of parables — then and now. (5) Thank you for the unlimited number of familiar things out of which parables can be formed. (6) Thank you for my Lord seen in the farmer and his seed. (7) Thank you my heart can be his field.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

## READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“A farmer went out to sow his seed.” Mark uses the word, “Behold,” the farmer went out to sow his seed. It is possible that Jesus could have pointed to a farmer doing the very thing he described. Our Lord described himself as this farmer. Since he set an example for us how eternally important it is that we constantly make disciples. We must be reminded again and again that the seed is the word of yourself. Until and unless we plant your word in the minds and conscience of people we are not following our Lord's example. We think of the literacy rate in the days of our

Lord and we remember that most of the seed planting was verbal. In the wide expanse of our world such also would be true.

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

## READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a privilege it is to lift up our hearts in prayer as we listen to him teach. (1) What wonder must have been on the faces of many who heard him. May his words fall with fresh impact on my heart. (2) Since my Lord taught so much by parable how is it we so sorely neglect this form of teaching? Increase my desire to imitate him. (3) Jesus used the most common of everyday activities. I want to do the same. (4) How good to know who the farmer represents — even my Lord — I do want him to sow his seed in my heart each day. (5) Since the seed is your word may I receive it with a good and honest heart.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

## READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In this beautiful setting by the sea I want to hear you speak to me: (1) “All my Son taught necessary for life and godliness is found in the four gospels and in the divine interpretation of it by the rest of the New Testament.” (2) “The sower is still sowing his seed.” (3) “The harvest of this planting is unto eternal life.”

## INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Algeria — Point for prayer: The believers are generally younger and the little groups less strong than in Morocco. Many of the believers are young people, largely girls. There are therefore many pressures on these young people — early arranged marriages for the girls to Muslims, and hostility in schools and at work for the young men. There are many backsliders. Pray for the establishment of many strong, witnessing fellowships of believers all over the country. Many of those who seek the Lord are unable to have fellowship with other believers due to the hostility of relatives or husbands — pray for such. Pray that there may be a more courageous witness from among these believers despite the problems.*

## SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Praise Him! praise Him!  
 Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!  
 For our sins He suffered, and bled, and died;  
 He our Rock, our hope of eternal salvation,  
 Hail Him! hail Him! Jesus the Crucified.  
 Sound His praises! Jesus who bore our sorrows,  
 Love unbounded, wonderful, deep and strong:  
 Praise Him! praise Him!  
 tell of His excellent greatness;  
 Praise Him! praise Him! ever in joyful song!

# WEEK SIX

## —Monday—

*Keep us from occupying ourselves with things too marvelous — too large for our capacity! Give me a good and honest, humble heart!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a child quieted at its mother’s breast; like a child that is quieted is my soul”* (Psa. 131:1,2). Dear Father, I shall never be equal to the task of expressing the meaning of these two precious verses. This is an expression of a soul in humiliation. David has been chastened and he speaks out of his sense of lowliness. The quality of Fatherhood, i.e., of being able to help a child see where he was wrong — how he hurt himself and others — and most of all his Father, is the attribute for which we praise you here. How often have we all been occupied “with things too great and marvelous” for our feeble fumbling efforts. But you have such a wonderful way of quieting our souls. The effort is ours but the quiet is of yourself.

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* One wonders how often you will need to teach this lesson. Of course you want us to attempt great and marvelous things for you, but you want the praise. When our motives are wrong you have various ways of upsetting our house of cards. To take the credit for any accomplishment is an absurdity. From whom did we receive our very self? i.e., our spirit? From “the father of spirits” (Num. 16:22). Who gives us the abilities resident in our spirit? Who gave us the opportunity to do what we have done? Who gave the wealth necessary to carry it out? The answers are obvious — where then is the room (or sense) in boasting? A child upon the mother’s breast would be much more appropriate than a mighty conquering hero. May such genuine humility be mine!

*How do you personally relate to the eyes of God, and God who sees all?*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

I do not confess something of which I am not guilty to satisfy those who feel I am. In every single endeavor in which I have been engaged my heart has been “lifted up” too high, i.e., I have not been as conscious of your purposes and presence as I should have been. At the same time, I did not enter these enterprises to seek my own glory. Dear Lord, you know I do not know my heart as you do, but I am attempting an honest confession. I lifted my eyes to see the multiplied thousands (millions) of people who need your word and your Son. All of these efforts were too great and too marvelous for me. There were several of them through which you taught me more humility than I had and I needed.

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now.*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

In simple trust like theirs who heard,  
Beside the Syrian sea  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us like them, without a word,  
Rise up and follow Thee.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

<sup>4</sup>As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup>Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup>But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup>Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup>Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop — a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. <sup>9</sup>He who has ears, let him hear.” *Matthew 13:4-9, NIV*  
*Read also Matthew 13:10-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15.*

## READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Indeed! I want to listen to these words just as if I were in the crowd and could hear each syllable that fell from the lips of your Son. I want also to hear his explanation to what was said. My Lord is not here identified as the sower, but considering who is doing the teaching such is a fair if not obvious conclusion. I want to mark *every thing* he said about the different soils: (1) The same seed was sown in each place. *The first was "along the path."* This is described as "trampled on," as the place where birds feed.

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

## READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

*Just for me.* I am trying, dear Lord, to absorb each of your words as here related. When I have been a long time occupied with "other things" my ears are heavy and my eyes are dull. I neither hear nor see — I become *the path!* (2) *Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil.* This one receives the word with joy. The results are not good: trouble and persecution — *because of the word* he quickly falls away. In the time of testing they fall away. Dear Lord, I have been there — the price of discipline was too high — how many unfinished tasks or projects testify to this? (3) What was sown among thorns, or fell among thorns. The thorns represent: (a) the worries of this life, (b) the deceitfulness of wealth, and (c) present pleasures or the desires for other things. Luke says of these persons: "As they go on their way" such thorns develop. Dear Lord, if I do not chop out these thorns I will never mature.

*Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.*

## READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) I thank you that I am wholly responsible for the condition of my heart. (2) Thank you for the wonderful fertile seed — even your word. (3) Thank you that I can hear your word every day. (4) Thank you that my acceptance is related to my hearing. (5) Thank you I can be of your nobility. (6) Thank you for the ability to retain your word. (7) Thank you I know that only through perseverance can I produce a crop of thirty, sixty or a hundredfold.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

## READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

*"Many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."* Surely we are living in the fullness of time. How we need to keep our eyes open and our hearts attuned to all you are saying to us in these days. We see man being able to stand before you just-as-if he had never sinned — this no prophet could ever claim. We are always on service as your priests. This no righteous man could even imagine. We hear you say: "You have redemption through the

blood of my Son." To be bought and paid for by yourself is such a position angels would long to have. It is better to live today than even to walk with our Lord over the fields of Galilee — we have what he there promised. How blessed above all people we are!

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

## READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How important it is that we link prayer with the sowing of the seed: (1) It would seem that sowing the seed is the one most essential factor in this whole story. Why haven't we sown more? (2) Help me to be able to identify the birds of Satan. (3) Am I responsible for removing rocks from some hearts? (4) I do believe I could help in hoeing out some thorns — help me! (5) Thank you for the promise of at least 25% of the sowing on good soil. Once again how I need help in sowing bountifully. (6) I have ears — increase my hearing capacity. (7) Who are those who produce a hundredfold? As compared with what or whom?

*Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!*

## READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

There is so much to hear in these verses: (1) "Seed, however good, does nothing unless planted." (2) "I sow with you, but you must throw out the seed." (3) "Do you really believe this parable or only read it?"

## INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Algeria* — Points for prayer: (1) *There is a critical lack of leaders* among the Algerian believers. Pray for the few and also for the calling of North African or other Arab Christians willing to minister there (possibly from among those in France). (2) *There is a reading room and student center in Algiers.* This provides useful contacts with non-Christians and a haven for believers. Pray for the growth of the student witness among one of the most enquiring and open sections in the nation. (3) *Literature in Arabic and especially Kabyle may not be imported.* The one Christian bookshop may only sell literature in other languages. Pray for an end to restrictions.

## SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

More holiness give me,  
More striving within;  
More patience in suff'ring,  
More sorrow for sin;  
More faith in my Savior,  
More sense of His care;  
More joy in His service,  
More purpose in prayer.

# WEEK SIX

## —Tuesday—

*How sad — sad — sad it is that when you have made your wonderful provisions for all your children to live together in unity we are divided! Put your lamp on our lampstand!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”* (Psa. 133:1). You have made altogether adequate provisions for all believers to live together as brothers. To hold the same love and esteem you hold for your Son and your Son does for you is your provision. It is not right or necessary for brothers to divide and distrust one another. I want to lift my heart up in joyful wonder that it is clearly your will that all who believe on your name be one. If this is your will then surely you have made provision. It would be easy to say your provision is your word — and it is, but there must be something tragically lacking in my approach to what you have said. Humility and love are the unifying human factors. Dear Lord, help me, chasten me. I do want to see the unity for which your Son prayed.

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* You have promised that when we are ready to accept your desire for our unity it will be as fragrant as the dew of Hermon. This should be a strong motivation. But more than this my dear Lord said that when we dwell together as one the world will believe you sent him — we shall have a turning to you like we have never seen! Dear Lord, for one I want to pledge myself to do all I can to make this true. No longer will I equate my understanding of the scriptures as equal with the scriptures themselves. How I hope I can persuade all my brothers to do the same. Bless your altogether adequate provision — may I be humble enough to receive it.

*How do you personally relate to the oneness of God, and God who provides for our unity?*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

Dear Lord, how terribly short of your will are we in

this area. The *we* is editorial — I am talking about *myself*! Has there ever been a person who studied your word as diligently as myself? Of course there has! Hundreds, thousands of persons have had the same concern — many of them have exceeded me in diligence. Has there ever been anyone who attempted to separate himself from all the creeds and dogmas of man and to approach every word of your book directly without bias? Yes, yes, there are multiplied thousands of then doing it this very minute! I want to confess my pride and bigotry in my estimate of my relation to you as compared with any other brother who loves you and your Son and your word with the same intensity that I do. How shall we ever be one if I do not repent. Forgive me!

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

“There shall be showers of blessing”:  
This is the promise of love;  
There shall be seasons refreshing,  
Sent from the Savior above.  
Showers of blessing,  
Showers of blessing we need:  
Mercy drops round us are falling,  
But for the showers we plead.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

<sup>21</sup>He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? <sup>22</sup>For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. <sup>23</sup>If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

<sup>24</sup>“Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to

you — and even more. <sup>25</sup>Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

<sup>26</sup>He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup>Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. <sup>29</sup>As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

<sup>30</sup>Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. <sup>32</sup>Yet when it is planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

<sup>33</sup>With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. <sup>34</sup>He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. —Mark 4:21-34, NIV  
Read also Matthew 13:24-35; Luke 8:16-18.

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How good it would be to be alone with our Lord and listen while he explained everything to his disciples. Dear Lord, the best I can do here is to read these blessed verses several times out loud before your presence.

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Do I have a lamp to be set on a stand? Indeed I do! What lamp stands have you given us today? We could immediately think of the mass media, but to a large extent this light does not shine where it is most needed. I believe literature is by far the most effective of the mass media. But is not the same lamp stand our Lord used available to us? I refer to the life of one person. When we set the light in the heart of one man or woman we have found the very best lamp stand. How eternally important it is to hear with the inner ear. It is equally important that we be selective in what we hear. For today and its many voices may I choose to hear your voice and may I listen really well. Thank you for the silent but inevitable growth of your word.

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the lamp stand. (2) Thank you that I want to open my ears to what you say. (3) Thank you that I can hear with such an attitude that others will be blessed. (4) Thank you for the promise that if we will be and plant the seed it will grow. (5) Thank you for the description of growth — it is gradual and perfectly in keeping with your laws of harvest. (6) Thank you for the mustard seed parable — what an encouragement!

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"He did not say anything to them without using a parable." There was at least a twofold purpose in this: (1) To prevent the Pharisees from trapping him in his words, "That seeing they should not see, and hearing they should not hear." (2) To attract the attention and interest of all. There is nothing quite so interesting as a story. *What an example our Lord is for us:* (1) There are persons who will not understand even if they hear again and again. Make the message attractive and interesting, but beyond that you need not go. (2) Never, never make a major point without an illustration. (3) Explain personally everything to those who want to know.

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

We hardly know where to begin in the many requests we see in these verses: (1) If I am the light for my world set me on a stand. (2) Perhaps it is my task to get on the stand and shine. Give me wisdom. (3) The law of increase is operating. May I be ready. (4) Thank you for this needful reminder that the growth of the kingdom is sometimes imperceptible. (5) Keep my eyes open as to just where to put the sickle into the grain. (6) With only twelve members my Lord began his universal kingdom that now numbers millions. May this encourage my lack of faith.

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I do want to hear for eternity from these verses: (1) "Consider carefully what you hear." (2) "Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him." (3) "Parables are best understood by meditation and prayer."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Algeria* — Point for prayer: *Unreached peoples* — some specific groups ought to be mentioned: a) *The Kabyle* — these people number nearly 2 million. In the past a number believed, but most later emigrated to France. There are a number of independent missionaries working among these resistant people. There are increasing difficulties in the use of their language due to government pressures to Arabise them — pray that even this may cause some to turn to Christianity, which their forebears followed. b) *The Oasis dwellers* in the Sahara — many different Berber tribes still unreached. c) *The Tuareg* — these nomadic people are very difficult to reach.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Coming for me, coming for me,  
One day to earth He is coming for me;  
Then with what joy His dear face I shall see,  
Oh, how I praise Him! He's coming for me.

# WEEK SIX

## —Wednesday—

*I do so want to establish a daily habit of praise to you in song. Such will make us whole! Teach us how to live with those who do not sing.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing to his name, for he is gracious! For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession”* (Psa. 135:3,4). How good and pleasant it is to praise you each day at this time; and to praise you often throughout the day. The term “good” would seem to be overworked as much as we use it. But it is *your* word. Having created the world and all that is in it you said, “It is good.” What did you mean? You meant it was complete or fulfilled. Wholeness is a part of the word *good*.

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* The New Testament application of these beautiful verses should be evident to each of us. We are his chosen people, the new “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16). As a groom chooses his bride so you have chosen us. The little phrase “*for himself*” is so full of meaning. If there were no compatibility there would have been no choice. I know you created me for yourself because you shared your nature with me. But in a beautiful sense you also bought me for yourself. My highest joy and purpose is fellowship with you. As a groom owns certain things to complete his life so you possess each of us to complement and complete yourself. We are “your own possession.” To say I am glad to accept this relationship is a vast understatement; I am delighted!

*How do you personally relate to the choice of God, and God who has chosen us? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

To praise you for your goodness or for my acceptance of your total completeness and then to read my track record is to admit there must be a third factor, or

Satan. My greatest sin is lovelessness. More songs of praise or grace would help so much as I attempt to acknowledge and repent of my sin. Sin is not *good* — why? Because it lacks the quality of completeness — it misses the mark of fulfillment. There is nothing of grace in sin; it seeks its own and cares not for your desires or the needs of others. Too often these words describe my attitude. Dear Lord, forgive me. I have not lost my relationship as your chosen or your possession, but just now I want to confess my lack of response to these two lovely relationships and be in truth your chosen and your possession.

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,  
Thro’ eternal ages let His praises ring;  
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,  
Standing on the promises of God.  
Standing, standing,  
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
Standing, standing,  
I’m standing on the promises of God.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

<sup>24</sup>Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup>But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. <sup>26</sup>When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

<sup>27</sup>“The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

<sup>28</sup>“ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and

pull them up?’

<sup>29</sup>“ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them.

<sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’ ” *Matthew 13:24-30, NIV*

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

We have your Son’s own explanation of this parable (vss. 36-43) and I want to read it several times. How I want to carefully identify each part of this parable: (1) Your Son is the sower — he sows through us today. (2) The field is the world in which we live. The hearts of men are the field. (3) The seed is the message of our Lord. (4) The enemy is the devil who also has seed to sow. (5) There will be a harvest and an eternal separation.

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

*Just for me.* Am I really prepared to receive the meaning of this parable? I am not at all sure that I am. Do I really believe there will be an end to this age? An end to this whole world? Am I prepared to see the angels separate the weeds from the wheat? The weeds are described as “all who cause sin and all evildoers.” If I do not plant the good seed — or my Lord does not plant the good seed through me, what will happen? I already *know* what will happen. The enemy has many who plant his seed — they are demons who are his servants. The whole field of the world is growing an abundant harvest of weeds to be gathered and burned. But these weed are people and when they are thrown into the fire there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Dear God, dear God, do I believe this? I am trying before your throne to assimilate the impact of these words — help me! Forgive me!

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that we have such good seed to sow. (2) Thank you for the assurance that your Son will work through us as we sow. (3) Thank you for the wonderful liberty we have in sowing the seed. (4) Thank you for the warning that there is indeed an evil one at work. (5) Thank you for a description of the nature of his work, i.e., “at night.” (6) Thank you for the plain statement that we should concern ourselves with planting and not hoeing. (7) Thank you for the wonderful promise of shining like the sun in your eternal kingdom.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Let them both grow together until the harvest.” Our Lord is not recommending inaction. He suggests that the wheat is to grow as well as the weeds. Why is it that weeds grow more rapidly and profusely? We could easily answer that there are more of them, but

this is not *necessarily* so. How much wheat is planted is our decision. We could say that it is easier for weeds to grow, i.e., they are sturdier by nature. I do not accept that as a valid answer. Wheat seed has been cultivated until it is much more hardy than weeds. The simple answer is that weeds grow because we do not care as much about the wheat as Satan cares about the weeds. The awful tragedy is that there *will be* a harvest!

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In this parable I find real areas for requests: (1) Thank you for the good seed — may I sow it today in the hearts of men. (2) Keep me aware that there always is an enemy. Keep me from the evil one. (3) It was while people slept the enemy worked. Keep me awake. (4) Good and evil grow together until the eternal harvest. Guard me from a premature harvesting. (5) How I want to be wiser than the worried servants. (6) I have tried pulling up some weeds. Forgive me. (7) Thank you for showing me who will be first to be removed at the end of the world.

*Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Before the end comes speak to me: (1) “My harvest is growing — take heart.” (2) “Satan’s harvest is also growing — be patient.” (3) “I have the angel harvesters already for the last day.”

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Algeria* — Points for prayer: (1) *The Algerians in Europe* — at any one time there are nearly 2,000,000 workers in France, Belgium, Holland, etc. Pray that many may turn to the Lord who will, in turn, become missionaries to their own people. (2) *Radio and Bible correspondence courses* with careful follow-up of those contacted by visits from believers is still the most effective means of outreach. Pray that literature may not be intercepted in the post and that those receiving Bible correspondence courses may be free from harassment.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

I have found a friend in Jesus,  
He’s everything to me,  
He’s the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;  
The Lily of the Valley, in Him alone I see  
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.  
In sorrow He’s my comfort, in trouble He’s my stay,  
He tells me every care on Him to roll:  
He’s the Lily of the Valley,  
the Bright and Morning Star,  
He’s the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.



# WEEK SIX

## —Thursday—

*Your love is steadfast — your love endures — you alone have created all we are and see. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear.*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures for ever; to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures for ever”* (Psa. 136:3,4). The names of yourself are given so clearly in this psalm that I want to lift them up again to you as an expression of my own praise to you. (1) *“Lord”* or *“Jehovah — the Eternal, he who was, and is, and is to come.”* In the use here it tells us of your agreement with us as your redeemed ones. I hesitate even to write these words — so great is the meaning behind this expression! (2) *God of gods or Elohim* — in reference to your creation of the world and all that is in it. Keep my eyes open to see beyond your creation to the Creator. (3) In the verse before us is the beautiful name *“the Lord of lords.”* The sovereign One who rules all — the ruler of all rulers. (4) *The God of heaven* — the Almighty One. A reference to your strength and power. Amen and amen!

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* This lovely psalm is one of thanksgiving — and oh, how I want to make it my thanksgiving to you! The *wonders* you have wrought are outlined in the whole psalm: (1) *Creation* — You called into being the heavens. As we consider now what we know of the galaxies we fall back in amazement! What we have learned of the moon and the sun and the planets only serves to increase our praise for the One who set them in their place. (2) *Deliverance* — In the experience of your children in history we can see ourselves today. We were all in Egypt — we have all escaped the eternal death sentence upon our sin. We have all come through the Red Sea of Christian baptism into the Canaan of the new life. (I use the editorial “we” because I do not want to write “I” over and over again, but, dear Lord, you know I am the one of whom I speak.)

### CONFESSION OF SIN

To approach you in confession all seems so natural. I am in need, so I come to the only One who can meet my need. All men can identify with the experiences of your people Israel in the wilderness. I have complained — (even yesterday) when all the while I have so much more than any one in Egypt. Dear Lord, forgive me! The daily — even hourly provision of manna (your beloved word and your Son) — is overlooked and misunderstood. Dear Lord, what a sin! Forgive me. Has there been any temptation or trial you could not handle? To ask is to answer — of course not! But I have acted and thought in such a manner that even I interpret my conduct as a contradiction — open my eyes, break my heart, forgive me: Dear Lord, “remember my low estate.”

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Ere you left your room this morning,  
Did you think to pray?  
In the name of Christ our Savior,  
Did you sue for loving favor,  
As a shield today?  
Oh, how praying rests the weary!  
Prayer will change the night to day;  
So in sorrow and in gladness,  
Don't forget to pray.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

<sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The

weeds are the sons of the evil one,<sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

<sup>40</sup>“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. <sup>42</sup>They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. —Matthew 13:36-43, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Dear Lord, give me ears to hear! I review again just what and who is involved: (1) The sower is your Son. (2) The field is this wide world. (3) The good seed is your word. (4) The bad seed is the word of Satan. (5) The enemy is Satan who sows. (6) The harvest is the end of the world. (7) The harvesters are angels. (8) The rewards and punishment are heaven and hell.

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

(1) What a sobering experience this will be! In every class standing before me — or above me — is your dear Son co-planting the word. (2) How — oh, how I need to remember that the field is not the assembly of the saints. It is the wide expanse of all men in every nation. (3) It is not my cleverness or commentary that will produce sons of the kingdom, but *only* your word. (4) Satan works until now — God works until now *through me* and all others who sow — but *only when and not until*. (5) There will be a general judgment — *everything and all* are involved. What a shock it will be! (6) Angels already have a tremendous task assigned. (7) Heaven and hell are described: “fiery furnace” — “shine like the sun.” Dear God, this is too much for my dull heart!

*Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.*

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that Jesus gave us the meaning of this parable. (2) Thank you for the assurance that the good seed is fertile and able to overcome all weeds. (3) Thank you that his life is our life — we are his seed and his Son’s. (4) Thank you that we are not ignorant of Satan’s work. (5) Thank you there *is* going to be an eternal harvest of all wheat and weeds. (6) Thank you that the Son of man will make the separation.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“He who has ears, let him hear.” If we were to say “He who has an interest, let him listen” we would be saying the same thing — or would we? There is

something deeper involved than mere listening. Our Lord is talking about a heart condition; does the man inside really want to change? If he does I have a wonderful answer. But hearing in this context is equated with doing. It is like our Lord’s continual use of faith. To believe is to do. How dangerous it is to hear without doing!

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As your Son explains the parable of the weeds I find place after place for prayer requests: (1) What a powerful thought — as I sow you plant — keep me full of reverence. (2) The field is the world — all the world — every part of the world — open my concern. (3) Your seed produces sons — what a miracle of birth and growth. (4) Satan’s seed also produces sons — of the evil one. In both instances keep me awake! (5) The harvest is the end of the world. How can it be? But it is! When shall it be? Today? How I want to be ready! (6) Men will be burned as chaff — awesome, terrible! Teach me! (7) Men will cry and suffer in the fire. How mind boggling! (8) I have ears; I want to hear. What a joy to be a son of the kingdom!

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

You have been speaking to me in these verses: (1) “My angels are ministering to you now. They will minister to the lost later.” (2) “There is a bright eternal day ahead for you.” (3) “If you really have ears, hear now and for eternity.”

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Egypt* — Population: 48,300,000. Growth rate — 2.7%. People per sq. km. — in fertile areas — 1,600. Point for prayer: *Pray that the promise of Isaiah 19:19-22 for Egypt may be fulfilled.* There are encouraging signs of a turning to God among Muslims, despite legal barriers. Several hundred Muslims are turning to Christ every year. Pray that Egypt’s troubles, and Islam’s emptiness may turn many to the Lord Jesus.

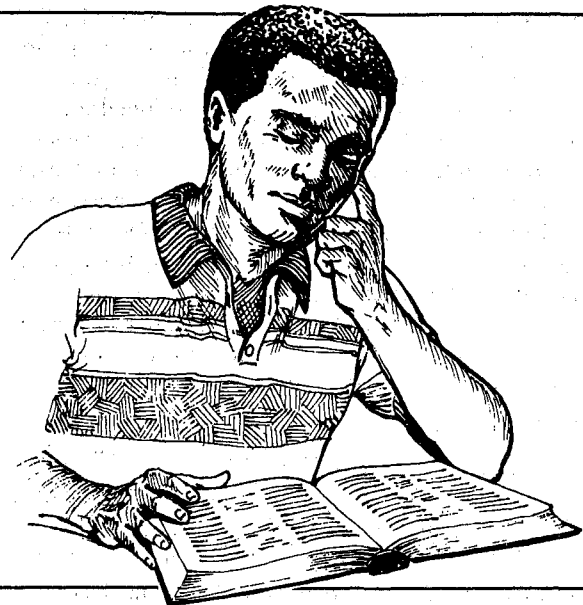
### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer’s ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.

# WEEK SIX

## —Friday—

*You remember — and I remember because I am like you — how good it is to review your mercies toward me. You are my hidden treasure!*



### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion”*(Psa. 137:1). The capacity of memory is surely a part of your own image or nature. It is my constant purpose and joy to each day praise you for one more quality of yourself. I am sure I shall never exhaust the number. I want to say that I consider this time of praise representative of what all men should (and one day will) do. Not that all men will express themselves like I do — far from it — but all men of all time should join with the innumerable angels in adoration and wonder before you. I weep when I remember the joys and associations of childhood — how much more should I weep at my remembrances of all my Lord did for me as recorded in the good news.

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* Unless my relationship with a person has touched my conscience and has become a part of my inner being there are going to be no tears at remembrance. Even when the above is true I shall only weep if the memory is linked to some tangible object or subject. Tears came at the mention of Zion. Tears flowed when a song was requested. Poetry and music are wonderful catalysts for tears. I said all this, dear Lord, because I want to spell it out for myself. I want to keep my heart tender and open to you — I want to pause and read again how he died for me! I want to sing again: “Did ere such love and sorrow meet and thorns compose so rich a crown?” Will I weep when I lift the bread and the cup to my lips? “I too remember Zion!”

*How do you personally relate to the personal interest of God, and God who is Personal? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

I wonder at my dry-eyed performance! Dear Lord, forgive. At times I am emotionally drained and there are no tears to shed. But lest deceit and hypocrisy take over — I ask myself — “Why am I so lacking in emotion?” Is it not that I have dissipated my emotion on some lesser thing or person? How much I need to guard my heart and hold for you my shouts of joy and my tears of remembrance! Dear, dear Lord, I repent, I ask for your cleansing. The blunting of my sensibility seems to me to be a terrible sin. Dear Lord, deliver me from overbearing temptations.

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!*

### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

The Lord's our Rock, in Him we hide,  
A shelter in the time of storm;  
Secure whatever ill betide,  
A shelter in the time of storm.  
Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
A weary land, a weary land;  
Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,  
A shelter in the time of storm.

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

### HIS WORD

<sup>44</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. <sup>46</sup>When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. —Matthew 13:44-46, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

My dear Father, over the years I have loved every

word of these three verses. I have loved more the One who said them. How I do want to express my joy and praise — my confession and thanksgiving to you through these words of your Son. "The kingdom of heaven" is simply your rule in the hearts and lives of men. Such a rule began long ago and will find eternal fulfillment in heaven. The most obvious expression of such rule should be in the body of your Son or his church. There are so many beautiful comparisons we can make: (1) The sudden surprise of finding a treasure hidden in the field. What was the man doing when he found the treasure? It was just an ordinary day with the usual routine when suddenly all heaven broke through!

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I have assumed in the above expression that I do represent all men who encounter my Lord. What other comparison can I see here? (2) He had to sell all that he had to possess this treasure. Oh, how eternally true this is! Our Lord's treasures cost "everything," or "all he had." The total focus of interest and commitment is what is meant. (3) There are two types of persons who find salvation: those who are found by it and those who are searching for it. Dear Lord, I have been in both positions. Or is my Lord saying that within every man there is an indefinable longing or search and it is so hidden that when he finds it it appears as a sudden treasure?

*It is so important that you pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.*

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the wonderful possibilities of heaven ruling our hearts. (2) Thank you that your rule is the rule of a king. (3) Thank you that in any field — in every field (or life) the treasure can be found. (4) Thank you for the incalculable value of your treasure. (5) Thank you for the strong fact that unless I sell all, I have nothing. (6) Thank you for the joy expressed throughout these discoveries. (7) Thank you for the beauty of the treasure and the pearl — both representative of my Lord.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... he went away and sold everything he had and bought it." Even when we know this is true we wonder if we have done it. Have we sold all to buy the field? Have we really sold *everything* to obtain the pearl? I guess we would be in a constant flux and frustration if there was not another way of approaching this subject. The simple question is: "Do you have the treasure; do you have the pearl?" At times we could exclaim with a loud "yes." At other times we are not sure. Here is the secret of a victorious happy Christian life! We must sell out every

day. Every morning is a "go for broke" day. Of course, there was that glad day when we first sold out to him, but unless we sustain such an attitude and commitment we have lost "the pearl of great price."

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Hidden in these verses are wonderful petitions: (1) How good it is to know your rule in my heart is as common and near as my backyard. (2) I do want to search for the real meaning of your rule in my life — this treasure is hidden. (3) Just for today let me find another facet of how I can let you have your way with me. (4) Enlarge the deep joy I feel in giving you the throne of my heart. (5) I know I must sell all of my selfish interests to obtain your treasure — purify my understanding. (6) All of us are looking for the beautiful in life — open the eyes of my understanding to see my Lord! (7) Twice over you have told me I must sell all to have your Son. I want to hear him.

*Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

How pointedly you speak to me here: (1) "The fields of life are full of treasure for those who are looking." (2) "Mark it again: You must 'go for broke.'" (3) "How beautiful and valuable is Jesus."

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Egypt* — Points for prayer: (1) *Unreached peoples.* Few Muslims have ever heard a Christian testify. Pray that the Christians may win opportunities to speak through their Christlikeness. The Desert Bedouin and Berber peoples remain unreached. (2) *The Nubian people* are now more receptive to the Gospel than ever before. Most are Muslim, but many are Coptic Christians. The great need is for more Christian workers to learn their language and to live and witness among them. (3) *Pray for the evangelization of the cities* — many rural people are being compelled by poverty to go to the cities. Pray that these uprooted people may be evangelized somehow. (4) *The Coptic Church* is largely nominal, but an extraordinary revival within it since 1930 has gained momentum and the present leadership is highly educated, articulate and Bible based. The present Patriarch gives weekly Bible studies to 7,000 people. These 5,000,000 Coptic Christians, if revived, could have a decisive impact on the Middle East.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Christ has for sin atonement made,  
What a wonderful Savior!  
We are redeemed! the price is paid!  
What a wonderful Savior!  
What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Jesus!  
What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord!

## WEEK SIX

### —Saturday—

*I want to lift my whole heart up in praise — my mind — my emotions — my will — my conscience. I lay before you my needs as well as praise.*



#### PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“I give thee thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing thy praise; I bow down towards thy holy temple and give thanks to thy name for thy steadfast love and thy faithfulness; for thou hast exalted above everything thy name and thy word”* (Psa. 138:1,2). You have provided more than adequate reason for me to give my whole being to you in gratitude. It is a supreme joy to lift my mind through your word and present it before you as yours. I want to yield my whole desire and hold it up before your throne. My emotions, giving color and emphasis to what I say, are yours. How strong is the approval of my conscience as I thus praise you! I want to do this gladly in the presence of all men. If you have such a high estimate of yourself and your word (richly deserved and altogether appropriate) who am I to hesitate or be ashamed?

*Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.*

#### PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

*Just for me.* I try to speak on behalf of all who come to you in praise, i.e., in the above expression, but here I review again these blessed words and make them altogether mine. As David had two basic reasons for this spontaneous expression of thanks so do I: (1) For your mercy, or as expressed in this translation “thy steadfast love.” Dear Lord, without this quality there would indeed be for me no hope at all! But in your daily goodness I take great courage. Mercy is undeserved and non-reciprocal goodness. How often does my heart stray from a worship and recognition of yourself in my daily life. I believe it is possible to integrate your presence and your love into every day. I try but I need your mercy. How gladly do I acknowledge this gift! (2) For your *truth* — not only your propositional truth as seen in your word, but for the ring of reality in all my associations with you and your Son!

#### CONFESSION OF SIN

How do I sin against your mercy and truth? By not showing your quality of mercy to others. When someone lashes out at me for what seems to be no reason at all, how do I react? Have you deserved all the stupid outbursts of my selfish heart? — and yet you were kind and patient with me. May this time of joy and praise remain with me to remind me that only he who receives mercy can give it. Am I ready to exalt your truth — your word, in the presence of other gods? Dear Lord, I ask forgiveness for any and all hesitancy to speak up for what you have said. Men are so ready to tell what others have said or to advance their own opinions. Give me a voice for your word! Forgive me for my silence!

*What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!*

#### SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Jesus, I my cross have taken,  
All to leave, and follow Thee;  
Destitute, despised, forsaken,  
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be:  
Perish ev’ry fond ambition,  
All I’ve sought, and hoped, and known;  
Yet how rich is my condition,  
God and heav’n are still my own!

*Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.*

#### HIS WORD

<sup>47</sup>“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. <sup>48</sup>When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup>This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous <sup>50</sup>and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there

will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

<sup>51</sup>“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

<sup>52</sup>He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

<sup>53</sup>When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. —Matthew 13:47-53, NIV

### READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How well do I relate to these verses! My father and grandfather were commercial fishermen on the Columbia River of Oregon as the disciples of my Lord were on the Sea of Galilee. Dear Lord, speak these words into my heart. I read them with the deepest thought and meditation. Is the net the gospel message? Is the sea the world? Are the fish by nature good or bad? — we decide our nature by our choices. The separation *is* the end of the world!

*Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

*Just for me.* Dear Lord, I read these words like I never read them before! Underneath all men are not only “the everlasting arms” but the net of God! One day we will be taken up and appear before him in judgment. It is more than interesting to notice what my Lord *did not* say about the judgment. (1) He *did not* describe the size and weight of the fish — although this is man’s constant interest. (2) He *did not* describe the beauty or appearance of the fish. (3) He *did not* make an exception — there were *no* borderline fish. Dear Lord, all these words burn my heart! How I do want to awake before I am pulled up out of the water! Thank you for the confidence I find in the change of my nature! The emphasis of my Lord was on the *bad fish*.

*Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.*

### READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that you have called all your disciples to be fishers of men. (2) Thank you for the wonderful net we have to use. (3) Thank you that you intend for the whole lake to be involved in the catch. (4) Thank you that there will be an end — there will be a shore where the fish are separated. (5) Thank you for those who do the separating — it is not us preachers. (6) Thank you for this clear word that it is the *nature* of the fish that determines its destiny. (7) Thank you for the new and old applications we see in this parable.

*Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!*

### READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“. . . the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.” Was Jesus

describing himself? Surely no one else could better qualify under this description. He alone is the owner of the whole house of this world and the world to come. What a storeroom he has! In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Only our Lord knows everything and knows how to use such knowledge. How often did Jesus refer to the “old things” found in the history of his people?

*Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.*

### READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

How familiar were these words of Jesus to the four commercial fishermen he had called to be his apostles. What lessons in prayer are here: (1) There is a net in which we all shall be taken. How glad I am I can claim the new nature you offer. Somehow I want to express my gratitude. (2) Open my mind to a fuller understanding of the events at the end of the world. (3) How shall I determine I am righteous? Is his righteousness mine? Praise your name I *know* it is. (4) What a fearful thought: “. . . throw them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” May I have pity on these poor fish. They are eternal people! (5) If my Lord were to ask me: “Have you understood all these things?” I would have to answer “no, help me.”

*Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.*

### READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak Lord, thy servant heareth: (1) “My net is still down, but it might not be for long.” (2) “You are responsible for the nature of the fish.” (3) “Ask for wisdom.”

### INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

*Egypt* — Point for prayer: *The Protestant Churches* have not grown much for many years. There is some nominalism in the older churches and a considerable drift back to the Coptic Church from where the original converts came. Pray for a deepening of the spiritual life and a more consistent life-testimony before the Muslims. There are many young people now coming into the churches. There are several interdenominational groups who seek to stimulate Bible Study and outreach among the young people. Pray that, despite the difficulties, Muslims may be reached and welcomed into the churches. One church actually gained 100 converts out of Islam in 1975.

### SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Fairest Lord Jesus!  
Ruler of all nature!  
O Thou of God and man the Son!  
Thee will I cherish,  
Thee will I honor,  
Thou, my soul’s glory, joy, and crown!