

WEEK NINE

—Sunday—

Dear Lord, so often our prayers are full of our own selfish ignorance. But you can adjust such and give meaning. Fix our desire for you — establish our time with you. Increase our faith in you.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“May my prayer be counted (fixed) as incense before thee; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering” (Psa. 141:2). Here are the personal prayer needs of David. He comes to you with confidence that you can and will meet his needs. I want to consider the requests, but I want also to look behind the requests to the One who answers: (1) David wants his prayers to be established, to be made firm — as a receptacle fastened to receive the incense. How this does speak to all our hearts. You alone can crystallize our commitments to prayer. (2) Our prayer is compared to incense — so does John in Revelation so symbolize our prayers (Rev. 5:8; 8:3,4). Incense was made of a mixture of several spices. Incense must be consumed or it is of no value — it must be burned.

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. Dear Lord, there is much in this for me: (1) I want to establish my time of prayer so firmly that I expect it even as a permanent fixture in my house of service to you. (2) I want to combine the elements of prayer in their proper order — praise, confession, thanksgiving, intercession, petition. (3) Most of all I want to ignite the incense. I want to give my energy and life to this wonderful experience. Indeed, I want to be consumed with this fragrant act of worship. (4) The whole ceremony of worship is here described in a single verse. Following the incense is the sacrifice. David lifts his hands up to you, and in the gesture he is offering his whole self to you as a living sacrifice. Such sacrifices were offered at least twice *every day*. Dear Lord, oh my Lord, I do want to lift up my whole self to you — and I do it every day. All of these pious pretty words will be as meaningless as the sacrifices of the Old Testament without you!

CONFESSION OF SIN

How easy it is to admit my missing your target here! How is it that I have been a worshiper of you for all these years and have not *fixed* or *established* my prayer as incense before you? And even now I know that without your presence and power I will not continue. But, oh my Lord, I do so want to! Forgive my vacillation. The elements of the incense were beaten before they were burned. Until I am ready to allow my praise, thanksgiving and intercession to be purified by your discipline I cannot pray as I should. As you know my heart you know this is my sincere desire. When will I daily hold up my body as a living sacrifice to you? My sin is that I believe this is an unreasonable, impossible request. I am wrong! Paul used the strongest appeal possible to affirm such a request. When will you hear it, oh my soul? (Romans 12:1,2) I 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

“Give me thy heart,” says the Father above,
No gift so precious to Him as our love,
Softly He whispers wherever thou art,
“Gratefully trust me, and give me thy heart.”
“Give me thy heart, Give me thy heart,”
Hear the soft whisper, wherever thou art;
From this dark world He would draw thee apart,
Speaking so tenderly, “Give me thy heart.”

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

HIS WORD

⁶And he was amazed at their lack of faith. Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. ⁷Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. ⁸These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the

journey except a staff — no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. ⁹Wear sandals but not an extra tunic.

¹⁰Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. ¹¹And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them."

—Mark 6:6-11, NIV

Read also Matthew 10:1-25

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Talk about the "great commission"! Here is a commission fraught with such warnings it would stop the stoutest heart. How I do want to gather around with the apostles as they listen to the words of your Son. Jesus commissioned them, but he also equipped them. "He gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to cure every kind of disease and sickness." I want to follow carefully his words as found by those who went or talked to those who heard him. (1) They were divided into teams of two. (2) "Do not go to the Gentiles or Samaritans" — go rather to "the lost sheep of Israel." (3) This was a preaching mission — the message was "the kingdom of heaven is near." (4) Their message was to be confirmed by the signs that followed. Such signs were to be done freely.

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 going to continue my journey with these twelve men. (5) The twelve were to depend upon the hospitality extended by strangers. Such hospitality was considerable: (a) No money was needed. (b) No lunch bag was needed, i.e., no meals would be missed. (c) No one will need to sleep out in the open — so no extra tunic is needed. (d) One pair of sandals and one staff will be adequate. (6) Such hospitality would not be immediately available, but if they looked they could find someone to treat them as described. (7) The reception given to these men would be very important. The peace of yourself or your judgment would be the result. (8) The whole demeanor of your servants is described: (a) As shrewd as snakes, as harmless as doves. (b) Wary of men who could and would hand them over to local councils for a flogging in the synagogues. All this and much more. How easy is your service in comparison.

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 preparation Jesus gave these men before he sent them out. (2) Thank you for the supernatural equipment our Lord gave to these men. (3) Thank you for our Lord's priority concern for the lost sheep of Israel. (4) Thank you for the degree of faith it took to even go as the Lord had commanded. (5) Thank you for the wisdom of serpents and the innocence of doves granted to his servants. (6) Thank you for the promise of "the Spirit of your Father" speaking through them.

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them." It is altogether remarkable that our Lord had such compassion on everyone and now makes this statement of what seems to be the rejection of some men. Jesus does not recommend a casual indifference. It would seem he wants a positive reaction to every situation. Why such an attitude? We need to first of all recognize just what it is our Lord recommends. In the first place, he is not rejecting men — he is simply accepting their rejection of him. In particular he is registering his disapproval of their refusal to understand his message. He wants those who disbelieve to know how serious their decision is.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Dear Lord, send me out into my world — yea, you already have! I now ask for your grace in these requests: (1) Develop my perception in accepting your word — the source of my faith. (2) Jesus still walks the streets of many villages today, i.e., in the person of his servants — teach your word through me. (3) I have no authority of my own — how I do want to let your authority be known. (4) Who is the one with whom you will send me out? Give me wisdom in choosing a partner. (5) Even in the hospitable culture of my Lord's day it took real faith to start out in total dependence upon others. Forgive me for my little faith. (6) I do need the courage to rebuke in the spirit of love those who need it.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In these verses speak to my heart: (1) "I speak to you through my word before you can speak to anyone else." (2) "You can usually get more done by working with others than doing it on your own." (3) "People accept me or reject me — not you."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Israel — Point for prayer: *The missionary force* is variously estimated to be 350-1500. Pray for the Lord's servants who labor among the Jews where there is so little encouragement that they may not succumb to discouragement, and that they might know the Lord's will as to how best to minister.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns
around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

WEEK NINE

—Monday—

“If any man sin not in word the same is a perfect man.” I am NOT that man — but I want to be! Set a guard over my mouth! I bow before you for help!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips” (Psa. 141:3). There could hardly be a quality of yourself more needed by man, at least by *this* man. If you could somehow provide a protection against the many words we wish could be retracted — oh, that we could but return them. “The watch does not stand with his back to the mouth, to challenge what would come out.” There is a profound thought in this statement from *Graham Scroggie*. Dear Lord, you know how vulnerable we are to evil thoughts. In the midst of verbal exchange between men so many thoughts form in our mind. But if they never get out of the mouth then at least no sin in word has occurred. Why do some words never escape the mouth? Because of your guard, because of your protection.

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 am constantly embarrassed at the hasty words that stream from my mouth. I need a clutch between my thoughts and my lips. It is this *guard*, it is this *watch*, it is this *clutch* provided by yourself! In what form or guise will this powerful ally appear? Dear Lord, I can think of several. (1) *Personal loss* — when it is a great loss, it produces a thoughtfulness — at least for a time — to set a guard on our lips. Whom you love you chasten — and this is part of the fruit of such chastening. (2) *The rebukes of men and women.* The exact opposite might occur at the moment of rebuke, but afterward it does yield this peaceable fruit. (3) *Memorizing your word* — and a constant review of it. Somehow it becomes easier to pause and wait before I answer when I have been thinking and repeating your thoughts. (4) Most of all, there is the promise of the blessed Holy Spirit who guards my heart and my thoughts in ways best known to him. Praise your dear Self.

CONFESSION OF SIN

In the nature of the praise there is confession. Is it with what men think or with what you think I am concerned in my words? Even as I write these words I want as much as possible with my deceitful heart to be totally honest with myself and yourself. “I do not know” is the answer to such a question. It really matters not at all to the real need just here — the need for forgiveness. In hasty words there is such a need for forgiveness! How well do I relate to these words of *Amos N. Wilder*:

*“Speak quiet words — the constellations wait,
The mountains watch; the hour for man is late
Likewise to still his heart and supplicate.”*

*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

Oh, the pure delight of a single hour
That before Thy throne I spend,
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God,
I commune as friend with friend!
Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.

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

HIS WORD

²⁶“So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot destroy the soul. Rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground

apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are numbered. ³¹So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. ³²"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown before my Father in heaven. —*Matthew 10:26-33, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Shall I ever lose my hesitancy as I approach this monumental task of reading the words of your Son back to you? This would indeed be the height of folly were it not for the purpose behind it. I am only telling you how very much these words mean to me — or I want them to mean to me. How often men have died in despair thinking that truth died with them. How comforting are his words! "There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known." The deep convictions of the heart — "get out in the sunlight before everyone and tell it!" How I do need to hear these words! Jesus here promises that men will violently oppose us (at least if we approximate the circumstances here described). What a power promise: "Do not be afraid. . . ." They cannot kill the real you!

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 do receive these words just for me. There will be a spiritual body in which men will live. How awful it will be to enter that body and be cast into hell! Love and kindness and personal concern are here, but the mind-jarring thought of everlasting punishment is also here. Wake up! *There is a hell to fear!*

If there ever was a verse I treasured to my heart it is Matthew 10:29: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father . . . You are worth more than many sparrows." The kind of intimate interest indicated here is just marvelous! I have seen some tragic things happen to sparrows. But God has a way of balancing out their population. Sparrows will not live forever — we will!

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 constant assurance given by our Lord that there will be justice and equity in the total perspective of life. (2) Thank you for the urging of our Lord to speak out and not to hold back in declaring the good news. (3) Thank you that all fear of physical punishment can be removed by a more significant fear. (4) Thank you for the plain statement of the separation of the person from his body.

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." You

also defined the sword you came to bring — or at least the consequences of your sword: "For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother . . . a man's enemies will be members of his own household." How sharp a sword is this! We all know just how heated a disagreement can become among members of the family. In attempting to project ourselves back to that day and time, we wonder just how the conversation went in the homes up and down the length of Canaan. It must have been over two basic points: (1) That his teachings were revolutionary and demanded much more than some were willing to give. (2) His humble station in life as a Nazarene was a barrier in the minds of many to his Messiahship. It hasn't changed from that day to this.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Surely these strong words of warning and encouragement lead us to prayer: (1) May I believe with my Lord that truth will ultimately triumph in every situation. (2) How I need to remember that there are really no secrets not known to you. (3) The courage of my Lord in the face of opposition is amazing — what excuse do we have for not proclaiming his word from the housetops? (4) My Lord expected opposition and triumph. How I want to adopt his attitude! (5) I really do not know how I would react to physical torture for your cause — I thank you I have not had to find out. (6) I am glad there is no death for the man inside — keep this truth ever bright!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me in these words: (1) "Fear is an ever present threat." (2) "I know you better than Satan." (3) "Trust — not fear is the answer to your problems."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Israel — Point for prayer: *Missionary work among Jews* could be legally stopped. Unwise methods and tactlessness by certain more extremist groups has stimulated Jewish demands for the ending of all Protestant mission work. Pray for humility and tact for all serving the Lord from other lands.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy! Holy! Holy! Merciful and Mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

WEEK NINE

—Tuesday—

How glad I am to ask for help from One I know is more anxious to give than I am to ask. You are indeed "the Lord of circumstances." Enable us to speak for you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"Incline not my heart to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in the company with men who work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties" (Psa. 141:4).

This is such a good verse to describe both your work and my work, both your involvement and mine in the development of character. This is a prayer to you but I am very much a part of the action. How do you incline my heart? How do you prevent inclination of heart? I am the active agent in busying myself with wicked deeds or seeking the company of men who work iniquity. Dear Lord, I have found through careful observation that I find circumstances being altered and environment changed because I prayed. It is *not* only my attitude that has changed. I praise you for being the Lord of circumstances!

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. In this time I want to spend it all on praise and very little on philosophy. For today and its needs: guard my heart and my desires. Arrange the circumstances of my life in such a manner that even now all my events are planned and arranged by yourself. May I be taught by trials and not overcome by them. Keep me busy about your interests. Deliver me this day from busy work, i.e., from the deadly danger in meaningless activity. Even if I am attracted to men who gather to talk and waste time make it possible for me to choose not to be there. In the fulfillment of the desires of my body give me your direction — you already have — but in the immediate application of what you have said I lean heavily upon the promises made in this verse.

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

I think again of that blessed verse in Romans 13:14: "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh*, to gratify its desires." It is in the provisions made ahead of the circumstance we find our greatest problem. Nay, more than a problem — *our greatest sin!* Do we really *want* deliverance from the inclination to sin? We have been such a long time in the world that we easily become a part of it. It is in the capitulation to the presence of evil that we sin. *It is not inevitable that evil shall conquer!* I can not and will not eradicate the desire to sin but I can decide to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" ahead of the temptation instead of deciding that I will enjoy the pleasures of sin. It is in this last decision I have sinned. Forgive me. I am repenting — help my continuing repentance.

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

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand th'eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

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

HIS WORD

¹²They went out and preached that people should repent. ¹³They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. —Mark 6:12,13, NIV

⁶So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere. —Luke 9:6, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Here we read of the fulfillment of the commission. It

is so good to see a plan carried out. Our Lord planned his work and worked his plan. This is the first commission accomplished. What we refer to as "the great commission" was also accomplished. Colossians 1:23 says ". . . the gospel which . . . has been preached to every creature under heaven. . . ." Not since these days has any generation taken our Lord seriously enough to do it again. Dear Lord, I want to do what I can to tell the world of your love. I notice the apostles were quite systematic in their efforts: they "went from village to village." If Jesus was a preacher, i.e., a public proclaimer — and his disciples were also preachers — then it ill behooves us to say a disparaging word about this means of communicating. Indeed it is your ordained manner of getting the job done.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Healing was as much a part of the apostolic preaching as the preaching itself. I can see how it was essential to the confirmation of what was said. Dear Lord, there are several wonderful truths here I want to embrace to my heart: (1) No restrictions were placed on either the preaching or the healing. All needed both, either for their physical needs or their spiritual needs. (2) The message is described as "good news" — how I do want that one basic attitude to pervade all I say on your behalf. (3) The message's purpose is described in the one word "repent." How very far short I fall in this area you know. Teach me, dear Lord, how to so speak that men will change their minds about you. (4) I am so glad for this plain all inclusive statement that demons could not stand before the authority of your "sent ones."

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 moral courage of the twelve. (2) Thank you they made no exceptions — "they went from village to village." (3) Thank you they made no distinction as to who would be healed. No mention is here made of faith or lack of it. (4) Thank you these men were telling glad tidings. (5) Thank you for the one word message that covers the whole spectrum of revelation: "repent." (6) Thank you for the power of the good news over demons. (7) Thank you for the oil, representative of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the healing of the sick.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

". . . and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them." We do not believe the oil was used to accomplish the healing but rather to offer comfort after the healing. The oil could be symbolic in representation of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The three

static characteristics of the healings of the New Testament are present here also: (1) *Instantaneous*. No progressive healings here. (We will comment on the one progressive healing in the ministry of our Lord when we come to it in our prayer time.) In the nature of the healer even Jesus, who has all authority, we preclude any other type healing. (2) *Permanent*. We do not read of those who lost their faith and therefore their healing. No faith is mentioned here. (3) *No failures*, or unsuccessful attempts. Since our Lord gave them authority to perform such miracles their confidence in his power prevented any failures.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I want to be a participant in the healing ministry of my Lord: (1) Is it easier or more difficult today to tell the story of his power and love? No matter — it *must* be told. (2) Teach me how to preach repentance. (3) How did these twelve men get the attention and interest of the people? How can I move men to hear? (4) I am glad we serve One who can defeat every effort of the evil one — give me the boldness I need. (5) Increase my compassion for the sick. (6) Deepen my awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence in all I do. (7) May I never lose the wonder of the goodness we have to tell.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me in these few words as you send out to preach and teach: (1) "My message is still goodness — it just hasn't been told." (2) "There were just as many disbelievers in our Lord's day — he didn't stop." (3) "I am now omnipresently alive to give you the same commission to preach."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Israel — Point for prayer: *The Jews of the Dispersion*. There are about 13,000,000 Jews living in other lands. These people are more receptive to the Gospel than those in Israel. Many societies work specifically among the Jewish people in the U.S.A. and Britain, but little work is done in Argentina and France. Pray for this ministry — usually more in personal witness and patient caring for individuals — that it may bear fruit in the conversion of Jews to their Messiah. There are reports of many Jews now seeking the Lord in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R., especially young people.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

WEEK NINE

—Wednesday—

You are my portion in the land of the living. Each of us is given an inheritance — an allotment. Teach me how to use what you have given. John the Baptist is a very good example as to how you want us to use our portion.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

"I cry to thee, O Lord; I say, Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Give heed to my cry; for I am brought very low!" (Psa. 142:5,6a). How very, very often I need a refuge — it seems the longer I live the more I need a refuge. There are so many distracting and unsettling circumstances in life. But there has never been a man born of woman that did not need a hiding place for an escape. David thinks of the dividing of the land of Canaan under Joshua and the portions given to the separate tribes. Each man is given an allotment in life, a *portion* of life in the land of the living.

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 last portion of this verse does indeed describe my response to life in the land of the living: ". . . I am brought very low." Am I ready to say with the psalmist or the song writer "other refuge have I none"? What a solace it is to come to One who never changes! You are like a great rock in a weary land. I think of you also as a Father who offers the warmth and understanding of his love as my refuge. When my father was alive there never was a problem greater than his love. What I found in my earthly parent I can find multiplied a thousand-fold in you! Praise your name! "Christ is our life" — i.e., all of life — "For me to live is Christ" — Thou art my portion in the living of this day.

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

It is always good to enter this area of worship as I am forced (at least at times) to think of how I have failed to fulfill what I have just affirmed. I have fled here

and there for an escape. I found I was more exposed to the battering of life than if I stayed where I was. Indeed, I can agree with the song writer: "other refuge have I none." My sin is in forgetting and yielding to the pressure about me to "try this" or "try that." How always disappointing they have been. Forgive me! How easy it is to be caught up in the flow of life "in the land of the living" and actually find very little time or place for yourself in my experience. "A *portion*" of the land of Canaan was where the person lived. I want to live in you! Just for today this shall be true!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Sweetly, Lord, have we heard Thee calling,
Come, follow me!
And we see where Thy footprints falling
Lead us to Thee.
Footprints of Jesus, that make the pathway glow;
We will follow the steps of Jesus where'er they go.

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

HIS WORD

¹⁴King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well-known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

¹⁵Others said, "He is Elijah."

And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago."

¹⁶But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, the man I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!"

¹⁷For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. ¹⁸For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, ²⁰because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a

righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

—Mark 6:14-20, NIV

Read also Matthew 14:1-5.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How poignantly does this text speak to me, I do want to attempt an approach that lifts these words into your presence. How slow and ignorant are men! Such would seem to be a reasonable reaction to the words of men about your Son. How is it some men knew more of John the Baptist than they did your Messiah? I cannot answer; I can only ask. Even in this mistaken view John did no miracles (John 10:41) so why imagine he is doing so now? It would seem men are intent on misunderstanding. Satan's efforts are to get us to choose any option but yours! How is it Herod would not come face to face with the issue of your Son?

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Our estimate of John only increases the more we know of him! How courageous he was! Even in high places he did not hesitate to identify and condemn sin. Didn't John know that Herodias was a very dangerous woman? Did John know the depth of her evil designs? If he did it did not change his message. Dear Lord, how I want this courage today in every relationship of my daily living. I do believe there are evil men in my town who have a conscience much like Herod. Dear Lord, open my heart and mouth to them. Men and women on all sides live in a state of fornication or adultery without any thought of marriage — legal or otherwise. What would John say about the society of our day? We already know! Dear Lord, keep me from insensitivity!

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the willingness of Herod to believe with others in life after death. (2) Thank you for the tacit admission of the miraculous nature of our Lord's works. (3) Thank you for the anticipation of the coming of Elijah — however distorted. (4) Thank you for the courage of John even while in prison to preach to Herod. (5) Thank you for the rebuke to the heart of Herodias. (6) Thank you for the clear lesson here that until men and women know they are sinners they can never be saved. (7) Thank you for the attraction of the truth for all men.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“... he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.” There was something strongly attractive about John the Baptist. When we remember Elizabeth and Zechariah — it all seems so long ago. We wonder if they are still alive; we would not imagine they were. What of all of John's disciples? We know how deeply our Lord felt about John. Herod had had contact

with the life of our Lord and his work from the beginning. The puzzlement of Herod was not as to who John was or what he represented. He was non-plussed over someone who did not fear the consequences of opposing Rome. How we would all have liked to listen to John. When one is totally full of the subject and the subject is the message from heaven he becomes a very interesting speaker. How sad to remember that Herod died in his sins and was lost!

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a section for prayer requests in our own life: (1) People in our Lord's day believed in life after death and the resurrection — our Lord taught the same — can I believe less? (2) Thank you for the large place the supernatural had in the record of his life — this is truth — this reality — keep me tuned in. (3) There are so many fine lessons from the life of Elijah — help me to learn at least one for today. (4) It is so good to agree with Peter that my Lord was indeed “the prophet” like Moses — open my ears to hear him! (5) What strange tricks a guilty conscience can play! Cleanse my conscience that I might look at all of life without fear. (6) John did no miracles (John 10:41), his life was his miracle — how I want to be like him. (7) There was something wonderfully strange about John — even for a man like Herod — it was John's courage and faith and wisdom — how much such men are needed now!

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In this vortex of conflict speak to me: (1) “He that is the newest member in the body of Christ is greater than John the Baptist.” (2) “A burning message will attract attention anywhere.” (3) “My laws of adultery have not changed.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iran — Population: 45,100,000. Annual growth 3%. People per sq. km. — 27.

Point for prayer: The 1979 Revolution has been a blessing in disguise. Islam has been shown to be a system worse than that which it replaced. Muslims are seeking answers. May the tragedy, hatred, cruelty, bloodshed and religious fanaticism open hearts to the Prince of Peace and doors for the gospel.

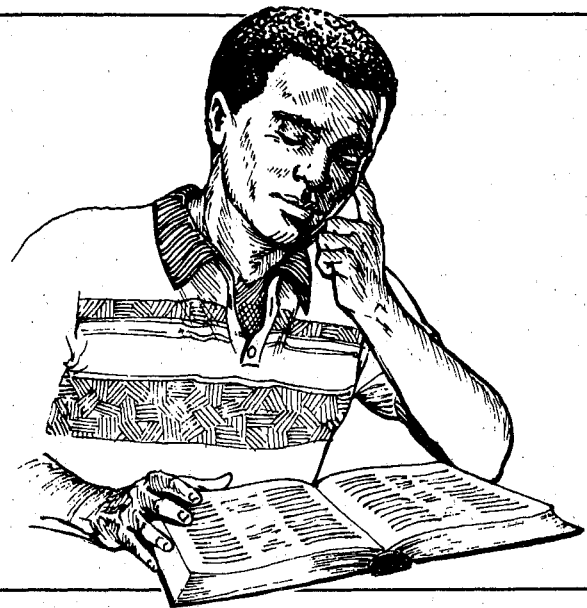
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

“Man of Sorrows!” what a name
For the son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! what a Savior!

WEEK NINE

—Thursday—

I delight in your goodness — in both your general interest in all men and your personal interest in me. You have declared all your children righteous — “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound!”



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications. In thy faithfulness answer me, in thy righteousness! Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no man living is righteous before thee” (Psa. 143:1,2).

The attributes of yourself seen in these two verses are so strong and helpful to me — and to all men. They are most of all just a source of praise and wonder. Just for yourself we praise you! Here is how I see you in these words: (1) You are listening to all our general requests in our *prayers*. (2) You take a personal interest in our personal needs as expressed in our *supplications*. (3) You have already pledged yourself to answer us. It is not at all because we deserve an answer — other than a blunt, “No!” (4) Your righteousness includes a means of declaring us righteous. Praise and exaltation to your glorious self!

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. Dear Lord, I know you hear all our prayers — however poorly or selfishly expressed. But in my personal intimate needs I ask your particular attentiveness. I know what a presumption this is, but I am emboldened to thus speak since I know of your character in the person of your Son. “It was in thy righteousness that thou didst make all your promises, but it is thy faithfulness that will keep each one.” Since I know what you have promised I know also what you will fulfill. Dear lord, I do have such sore needs — I bring them to you and claim your interest and love.

At the same time, I do not at all want justice — “no man living (beginning with me) is righteous before thee.” Give me mercy, O Lord!

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

What a true term to describe myself, “*thy servant.*” Not “*thy good servant*” or even “*profitable servant.*” But just and only “*thy servant.*” You have already entered into judgment with your Son, your good and profitable *Servant!* Only because of your judgment with him can I at all take courage to even appear before you. I want to enter into judgment with myself that I be not condemned before you. How futile do all my efforts to reform become! It is only in your goodness that I find hope and motivation to repent. May this never, never become a license for disobedience. May my repentance be of yourself that it will produce the fruit of service.

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

When Jesus as Lord I had crowned,
My heart with this peace did abound;
In Him the rich blessing I found,
Sweet peace, the gift of God’s love.
Peace, peace, sweet peace!
Wonderful peace from above!
Oh, wonderful, wonderful peace!
Sweet peace, the gift of God’s love!

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

HIS WORD

²¹Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee.
²²When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. —Mark 6:21,22a, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

How strange it seems to read these two verses in your presence — i.e., just for your benefit. On second thought, isn’t this what happens every time we read your word? How tragically pathetic all the efforts of

these men must appear to you! We wonder just which birthday Herod was remembering. You were there for every one of them from the first day until now.

Herod, or no man, will have one more birthday than you decide. Here is a celebration of the brevity of life and the certainty of death — i.e., from eternity's perspective. What important persons were in attendance that day? We are sure you know them all by name. What was in the mind of the girl as she danced? Whatever it was you read it. Herodias was really responsible as the source of this whole fiasco. And so it is that you watch the absurdities of men in high places.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Just for me. Such sensationalism is more than prevalent in our day. To watch such a performance one need but flip the dial of the TV set or step into the Cinema. Such prostitution of your purpose for the appetites of men and women! There is such a pervasive attitude of hedonism in our day we are surely tempted to say in exasperation: "If you want to go to hell, go to hell!" But this is *not at all* the way you see man. Your satisfaction for the strange desires of man is so much more meaningful. We do not know the daughter's name; she is just "the girl" in the narrative — a "sex symbol" — "a thing." But you know her name. How much more you had for her than she found at Herod's party. How much more you have for all men than they can find at any of the parties of life.

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 this plain example of the contemporary value of all we see here. (2) Thank you for the warning of the serious consequences of living by the desires of the body. (3) Thank you for the futility seen in the efforts of man to please himself. (4) Thank you that this word has been kept until this day to say over and over again to us happiness is not in pleasure. (5) Thank you for your enjoyments that do not leave a residue of regret. (6) Thank you for the deliverance of John. He had a good conscience.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"... Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee." This "stag" party was so very, very typical. (1) It gave no thought to the value of anyone present. It was "every man for himself." (2) It was based on pride and would easily explode into argument upon argument. (3) It was only an excuse for sex, food and other expressions of greed. The birthday of Herod was wholly incidental to their purpose. Probably most

of the men present hated Herod and wished "no happy returns of the day of his birth." (4) It was over too soon and left the regret that they had ever attended.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In Satan's opportunity there is a great need for prayer: (1) Guard me today that I might detect the evil one's devices. (2) Give me the wisdom to not give place to the devil in any area of life. (3) Satan gets much more credit than he deserves — I resist him. I need your grace to overcome. (4) I am no match for Satan — but with you and in you I am "more than a conqueror" — make this a reality today. (5) The lust of the flesh is multiple in its appeals — I want to be vigilant on all fronts. (6) Pride and ego can lead us into death-traps — deliver me! (7) I know my task in temptation is to get up and leave the dinner party and the sensual entertainment — I decide now so I will fulfill my commitment when the time comes.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me: (1) "Temptation is not sin — only your wrong choice is sin." (2) "Sitting in the seat of the scornful is an open door for Satan." (3) "Even evil men do not respect weakness."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iran — Point for prayer: Unreached areas and peoples: a) Of the land's 66,438 villages, only half a dozen have a Gospel witness. b) Many sections of the population are unreached — the nomadic people, the middle class, university students, women and children, etc. c) The linguistic minorities — the 200,000 Muslim Baluchi and Brahui are more open now, but no one is working full time among them. Many other minority peoples have never been evangelized and have nothing of the Word of God.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine.
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His spirit, washed in His blood.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

WEEK NINE

—Friday—

My total trust is placed in your person — this gives me a joy too wonderful to express! “Come, thou Almighty King, help us your name to sing!”



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Let me hear in the morning of thy steadfast love, for in thee I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to thee I lift up my soul” (Psa. 143:8).

In this beautiful verse I see you from several perspectives: (1) You speak to us through your word — as I meet with you this morning I can confidently expect to hear you speak to me. I am never disappointed! Praise your name. Each of the varied expressions I receive from you (and I am but a poor representative of all men who love you) is an expression of your steadfast love. (2) It is more than just *good* to put my trust in you — it is *glorious*. My trust is placed in your total person and this is more wonderful than I am able to express.

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. Once again the objective and the subjective aspects of my worship before you have overlapped. Morning seems to be a favorite time for David — and for David’s illustrious son. It is surely *the* very best time of the day for me. When I am rested and fresh and all the world is new and bright with prospect. None of this would be true if I did not arise with the purpose of hearing your voice as I open your word. How blessedly true is the next phrase: “Teach me the way I should go, for to thee I lift up my soul.” It would be a simple matter if I would pause before your throne and you would give my instructions for the day — to some extent this is what happens — but in the larger sense I am given but the small part of the larger lesson.

How do you personally relate to the steadfastness of God, and God who is love?

CONFESSION OF SIN

Why is it so easy some mornings and so difficult

other mornings to come to hear of your steadfast love? I know it is the fluctuation of my spirit and not of yourself. You have not changed or moved — I have! But I am glad to acknowledge that there has never been a time when I did not hear your voice as I read your word, if I acted on conviction and commitment and not only on the joyous feelings I have at times. It is my sincere desire to repair the changing moods of my heart so that all times I can lift up my whole inner being before your throne of grace.

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

Come, Thou Almighty King,
Help us Thy name to sing,
Help us to praise:
Father, all glorious,
O’er all victorious,
Come, and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.

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

HIS WORD

The king said to the girl, “Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you.”²³ And he promised her with an oath, “Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom.”

²⁴She went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?”

“The head of John the Baptist,” she answered.

²⁵At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: “I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

²⁶The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oath and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s head. —Mark 6:22b-27a, NIV

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

There could hardly be a more tragic place in the events of men. When life is in the balance all heaven pauses to see the outcome. How many millions of times such a decision has been made! No life is unimportant. No life is expendable like so much chaff. How much more was this true when the life of your prophet John was in the balance. There was no love involved in the whole transaction. Lust is not love — there is indeed “strong desire” (or lust) in love — but strong desire directed toward our own selfish ends cannot be described as love. Love is giving to others. Love is doing for others what is best for them. Lust is wholly selfish. All present were selfish: (1) The daughter was a pawn but selfish. (2) Herodias was the essence of selfishness. (3) Herod was there to do nothing else but satisfy his lust.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How easy it is to condemn someone else — and forget how very much we are also involved! This little scenario could be repeated in one form or another in many a life. Dare we say it? in *my* life? in *your* life? Dear Lord, thou knowest! Forgive me. Does lust always result in embarrassment and regret? When it gets out of hand and goes public it can indeed repeat the embarrassment of Herod — but even if we find no regret in this life there is all eternity ahead. The total consequence of our utter selfishness can be played back to us. Dear Lord, I want you to permanently erase ten thousand of my tapes! I am glad for the promise that you already have. I find it increasingly easy to not remember. Praise your name!

It is so important to 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 impulsiveness of Herod — in it we see ourselves and our weakness. (2) Thank you for the hateful scheming of Herodias — it tells us that there have always been such people, but they were no happier then than now. (3) Thank you for John’s release from this life — he was glad to enter your presence. (4) Thank you for the shock given to Herod — maybe somebody spoke to him about our Lord while his conscience was tender. (5) Thank you for the man who wielded the sword or ax in cutting off John’s head — how I hope he too began to evaluate the whole circumstance. (6) Thank you for Herodias — she could have remembered ere too late the enormity of her sin. (7) Thank you for the daughter — perhaps she learned from this episode and decided to serve someone better than her mother.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Then the king was sorry, but he was embarrassed to

break his oath in front of his guests.” Mark seems to suggest that if it were only a matter of breaking his oath with the daughter of Herodias or with God he would not have hesitated. Peer pressure is an awesome power! Was it wine that prompted the oath at the beginning? Was it the enflamed power of lust that put him in this embarrassment? It was all of this, but beneath it all it was Herod’s weak character that did it. How often have we found ourselves in almost the same position? Just as often as we allow what “everyone” else thinks to mean more to us than what our Lord has said.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Herod must have been very drunk to open his mouth with such a rash promise — there are various ways of being intoxicated — set a watch on my lips: (1) How easy it is to boast in the presence of our peers — humble my heart. (2) What a pawn was this daughter of Herodias! — but no more than some of us under different conditions — open the eyes of my conscience. (3) Why did Herod make such a foolish promise? — pride? — lust? — glory of men? Today the evil one will tempt me in these same areas — I want to be “slow to speak.” (4) How totally unexpected was the request — how it hurt Herod — *sin does have wages!*

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me in a very personal way: (1) “Resentment demands a terrible price.” (2) “Mothers carry a heavy responsibility.” (3) “Wake up — sin is here.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iran — Point for prayer: The minority ethnic Christian groups have not been singled out for harassment. Churches have continued to function despite fear and uncertainty, though many Christians are emigrating. Armenians and Assyrians are 95% of the Christian community, but most are nominal. Pray for a work of the Spirit in the Eastern, Catholic and small Protestant churches.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and Mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

WEEK NINE

—Saturday—

What a marvelous teacher you are — so kind — so knowledgeable — so full of desire to communicate! How vastly important are the lessons you have for us. We look up in eager anticipation



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Teach me to do thy will, for thou art God! Let the good spirit lead me on a level path” (Psa. 143:10). I praise your name this morning! Such important qualities of yourself are suggested in this verse — you are a teacher — your Son came to teach and preach. Implicit in this designation are other attributes: (1) You have a great store of knowledge to share with men. (2) That you *want* to communicate with us is so important. (3) You have direction and instruction especially suited to our needs. (4) You have the right by reason of your nature — we would expect you to so instruct us. (5) It is by your spirit you lead men on a level path.

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 cast myself upon you in thanksgiving and praise and expectation. I want to relate each of the above qualities of yourself to me: (1) *Indeed, indeed* you have a great store of knowledge you want to share just with me (and I am only representative). You have two books out of which to teach me: (a) your Word; (b) my experience. (2) I believe, like most teachers, you are far more interested in communicating than we as students are in learning — I want to be that eager student on the front row. (3) The lessons you will teach me each day are especially prepared for my needs — praise you for such interest. (4) You are my God — and therefore you have my total respect and interest as a student.

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

CONFESSION OF SIN

How like the poorest students I have had I do appear to you! There are several kinds of poor students —

and I see myself before you in every one: (1) There is that student who comes because his parents insist that he must. A sense of duty brings him to the classroom, but many times it is an unwilling sense of duty. (2) There is that student who already knows what he wants to do, and does not come to be taught but to teach. (3) The student who sits in class because that is where he has sat ever since he can remember. When one graduates from high school one enrolls in college and sits in another class. Dear Lord, dear teacher, forgive me! I am glad that these same students can suddenly (at times) become the open, willing learners we all want to be. Some loving words directed by your Spirit can lead us on your “level path.” Speak to me; I want to learn!

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

Break Thou the bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee,
O living Word.

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

HIS WORD

⁶On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much ⁷that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. ⁸Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.” ⁹The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted ¹⁰and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹His head was

brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. ¹²John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

¹³When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns.

¹⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. —*Matthew 14:6-14, NIV*

Read also Mark 6:27b-29; Luke 9:7-9.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Here is the whole sad incident again before us. Dear Lord, I want only to read it several times and make a few expressions of praise and wonder as related to the closing words. I do wonder what the guards thought as they went to perform their grisly job. What did they think of John? of Herod? of Herodias? of her daughter? of themselves and their task? Will we ever know? How sad must have been our Lord when he received the news, but was it really news to him? All such questions serve to open my heart to you.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Just for me. From a purely personal view I want to try and answer some of these questions: (1) What did the guards think of John? If they were in his audience as unrepentant sinners they probably thought "It's good to get rid of him and his message against my sin." If they believed John they must have thought: "How sad, Herod is the one who should lose his head — as a matter of fact, it is because he lost his head that we are on our sorry mission." (2) What did the guards think of Herodias and her daughter? If some women could only know what some men think of them it would shock them to see how far removed these thoughts are from what these women thought these men were thinking. The physical attraction was not ignored but the character of those involved was much removed from the lust of the moment.

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 your promises that are never made in haste. (2) Thank you I can be warned by this incident of the tragic consequences of selfish lustful decisions. (3) Thank you for reminding me again that there are men and women who will lie and cheat and steal regardless of the consequences. (4) Thank you for the beautiful record of John's life. (5) Thank you for the tender love John's disciples had for their teacher. (6) Thank you for the message John's disciples carried to Jesus. (7) Thank you for the hope mingled with grief in the death of John.

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

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"And his disciples came and took the body and buried it; and went and told Jesus." What fond memories must have flooded the hearts of the men who came to take the body of John! People will make an evaluation of all of us shortly after our death. Will they remember us for some of the same qualities we see in John? (1) He was disciplined. From his birth he lived as a Nazarite — i.e. he lived apart from the ordinary lifestyle. He did have a different wardrobe and diet, but his distinction consisted most of all in his attitude. Do we care or dare to be different? (2) He was clear in his ethical code. There was never any doubt about what John believed about right and wrong.

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

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

What a sad day it was for the disciples of John and for our Lord. It should indeed lead us to prayer: (1) Help me to be as ready to buy up the opportunity for good as Herodias was for evil. (2) What did the guests think of Herod? Deliver me from the need of the approval of men. (3) What did Herodias think of her offering on the platter? Such revenge really never satisfies — do I really believe all vengeance belongs to you? (4) What thoughts were in the hearts of John's disciples as they prepared his body for burial? A good life provides a good death. (5) Our Lord himself delivered the eulogy for John — may I be as ready to give credit where credit is due.

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

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In this sad incident there is much I can hear for my own heart: (1) "You can expect daughters to be very much like their mother — for good or evil." (2) "My Lord needed prayer as he thought of his dear friend John — can you do less in the loss of loved ones?"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iran — Point for prayer: The events of the last few years have dynamized many of the Protestant churches. Low church attendances, personality clashes, lack of vision and witnessing characterized them in past. Many Protestants have fled, but their numbers have been more than made up by conversions in churches that fearlessly preach the gospel. Christians have been challenged to stand for the Savior and have had remarkable freedom to distribute literature and testify.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

O worship the King all glorious above,
O gratefully sing His pow'r and His love.
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.