

## A Better Life

Devin Butts, Jul 2020

### **A Better Life**

#### **John 10:10**

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As you know, our Pastor plans the message topics more than a year in advance. However, it just so happens that we are between sermon series this Sunday, so I thought I'd do something a bit different.

You are going to want to take some notes today because I'm going to point out some practical ways you can have a better life. A write-up of this message is already available on our website, FBCLV.com under Resources, so you can follow along.

To get us started, I wanted us to look at a couple of verses.

#### **Romans 5:8 (NIV84)**

<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So, the first thing to notice is that God loves you so much He came to earth to show us His love and give His life for us. So, if He did all that, do you think He wants you to have a good life? I know it is difficult for many of us to wrap our minds around the idea of a perfect, loving Father. We need to be careful not to apply the failings of our own fathers to God, the perfect loving Father. The Bible tells us that God is Love. Therefore, He can't do anything but love us! And just like any loving parent, He wants us to have the best life possible.

#### **Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV84)**

<sup>17</sup> The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

Imagine a parent singing over their child. My wife Alison would sit and rock our daughter to sleep every night, singing over her. And she did that as long as our daughter would let her! Believe it or not, understand it or not, God loves you infinitely more than that!

Look at another verse:

#### **John 10:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**

What would you call an "abundant life?" Being human, we often think that an abundant life is one with lots of money. However, if you look at our world, we find that there are many, many people that have lots of money and zero happiness in their lives. So, this doesn't mean money. It doesn't mean things. What does it mean?

Think for a moment that you are on your deathbed and you want to be surrounded by the things in your life that have the most meaning to you. What would that include? What in your human existence would be valuable to you at that moment?

Relationships. You would want to be surrounded by love. The love of your family, the love of your friends, and most of all, the love of the Creator of the Universe who gave His life for you He loved you so much! So, we see that an abundant life is one full of love. So, if God wants us to be surrounded by love, why are there so many bad things in our lives? Look at another verse.

**Psalm 37:25 (NIV84)**

<sup>25</sup> I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

The righteous people in this verse are those that are “right” with God. Through the salvation offered in Jesus Christ, we are made “right” with God. Please notice this verse doesn’t say the “righteous won’t be begging for bread.” It says their children will not be begging for bread. This means, that you and I will have difficulties in our lives, but God will always make sure our children are taken care of as we are faithful to Him. Here is another verse.

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV84)**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

The Bible tells us that we are all God’s creation. However, only those that choose to follow Him are adopted into His family, becoming one of His children. Think of a Robot builder. Imagine how much more he loves his own children than a machine he can program to say, “I love you.” If the house catches on fire, he’s going to get his children out first! The same is true when we are children of God.

There are many reasons we have difficulty in our lives. Some of which we have no control over. Think about a life with no difficulties. That would be pretty boring! The difficulties in our lives make it interesting and make us stronger as we go through them. God allows difficulties in our lives to make us stronger! Like any good parent, He wants His children to grow up strong.

One more point here. God did not create evil. Evil is simply the absence of God. Where He is not, there is evil. Darkness doesn’t exist either. It is the absence of light that we call darkness. So, the evil in our world is related to people pushing God away.

But, setting aside the bad things that just happen to us, we need to consider the trouble we bring on ourselves. This verse reminds us that we are a new creation! When we are saved by Christ, we are re-born as a new creation. The problem is that we keep pulling our old-selves back into our lives.

Imagine a butterfly in a cocoon. We understand that the difficulty the butterfly has getting out of the cocoon is what makes the blood flow into his wings. He must go through that struggle to survive. What if, instead of the butterfly breaking out of the cocoon, he keeps trying to pull that old cocoon back over himself. This is very often what we do to ourselves.

If you were to examine your life, you would find that only about 20% of the decisions you make in your life result in about 80% of the trouble in your life!

**A Better Life**

Make good decisions and choices through Jesus Christ.

What does this tell us? We can have a better life if we would just make better decisions. Really! We want to rationalize this away and blame our troubles on anyone or anything other than ourselves. But we know it is our own choices that determine our quality of life.

So, how can we make better decisions? Change is hard. The old saying, “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks” pretty much rules our thinking. But this isn’t true. New habits, good habits can turn our lives around.

Scientists tell us that there is a 21/90 rule in forming habits. It takes 21 days to form a new habit and 90 days to make it permanent. Ok, so we can do that, right?

We have to be careful in removing bad habits from our lives. We as humans work at stopping a bad habit only to find that it has been replaced by another bad habit! So, one of the primary concepts in getting rid of bad habits, is to always replace a bad habit with a good one.

I want to give you some practical resources that you can use to make a better life. Another way that church people would say this is that I'm going to stop preaching and start meddling in your business!

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your heart!  
Christian media

First, think about what you are taking into your mind. The media we take in changes our thought processes whether we like it or not. We need to guard our hearts. Once we take it in, it is very difficult to get it out!

During my school years, I listened to Country Music. You know, "somebody did somebody wrong" songs or "Married, but not to each other" songs. During my college years, Christian Radio became popular and finally there was a Godly alternative!

Many men I've taught over the years have gone home and told their wives, we need to buy a DVR! They are so common now in homes, that it's not quite such a big deal. But one way to control what you watch is to only watch things that you have recorded. This means you made the decision to watch this TV show when you were thinking clearly and not when you were channel surfing at 2am!

So, there are two things you can do to get you started: Choose to only listen to Christian music and only watch what you have previously recorded.

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your Heart!  
Christian Media  
Sweet Thoughts  
Make Lists

Here are some more ideas. Many times we find ourselves down or pulling away from God. When this happens, we need to take action before we walk too far on the other side of the fence and step in something smelly! There are many more blessings close to our Savior than when we are wondering away from Him.

In our Bible Study class, we made "Sweet Thoughts" jars. It is a jar filled with pieces of paper, each containing a Bible verse, promises from our Lord! "Take one to stop Stinkin' Thinkin'." Every time you start feeling alone or unloved, take one!

Other things you can do includes making lists. Make a list of your questions for God. Leave some space below each one so you can write the answers God gives you in the future. Make a list of the troubles that God has brought you through. Write down how God is using it for good in your life or someone else's. List the blessings God has poured out on you. We humans have to come to worship each Sunday because we quickly forget all that the Lord has done for us!

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your Heart!  
Christian Media  
Sweet Thoughts  
Make Lists  
Attitude of Gratitude

Develop an "Attitude of Gratitude." Make the decision to thank God every time you see a blessing. When you wake up and see the sun, thank the Lord. When you see your loved ones, thank the Lord for them right then. When you look around at the place God has given you to

live, thank Him! When you get in your car, thank Him for giving you transportation! When you see a flower, a rainbow, or a sunset, thank God. When you see Pastor Josh, thank God for bringing such a loving, caring pastor to your church. When you see difficulty, thank the Lord that it won't even be remembered a year from now! See, you can truly spend your day being thankful for everything you see. Develop an "Attitude of Gratitude."

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your Heart!  
 Christian Media  
 Sweet Thoughts  
 Make Lists  
 Attitude of Gratitude  
 Grow in Christ  
 Prepare for Worship  
 Read His Word  
 Christian Books  
 Daily Email Reminders

How about growing in Christ? The Bible tells us that as we get to know God and His ways, we will have a deeper love for Him. Think about it, as you get to know things about the people you love, it just makes you love them more. When you realize that God keeps His promises, you will want to live for Him. So, spend some time in His Word, spend some time in prayer, and in worship. Prepare yourself for worship on Sundays by seeking Him BEFORE you get to church! You will find a whole new depth in Worship when you warm up first! Along with reading the Bible, there are many really great devotional books which can lead you into closer relationship with Him. Here at the church, we have four books that I've written that are free to you just for asking. Send me an email, and I'll get them to you. There is a description of them in the Sermon notes available on our church website under Resources. You can also sign up for daily verse emails or messages to help you focus on Christ.

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your Heart!  
 Christian Media  
 Sweet Thoughts  
 Make Lists  
 Attitude of Gratitude  
 Grow in Christ  
 Prepare for Worship  
 Read His Word  
 Christian Books  
 Phone a Friend  
 Pray for Others  
 Get Out and Bless Others

You can also pray for others, phone someone and just tell them you were thinking of them! The very best way to fight depression is to get out and help someone. Do something nice for someone. Take them some cookies or a cake. As you bless others, as you see their circumstances, your own troubles will melt away and seem quite small.

I think often of the movie "Anna and the King." In the movie, if you approach the King's Throne without being called, they kill you immediately. However, at one point in the movie, the King's little daughter comes running in and runs right up to the throne and climbs up into the King's lap. This is the picture I want you to have in regard to your relationship with God. Through Jesus Christ, we are made a child of God and we can run up to His throne and we can cry out to Him saying "Daddy, I need you!" I want you to realize that in Christ you are a child of the King of the Universe. Live like it!

Let's look at one final verse.

**Philippians 4:8–9 (NIV84)**

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. <sup>9</sup> Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Are you looking for the peace of God? This is how you get it. Whatever is true, noble, or good, think on these things! Paul said in 2 Corinthians, “we take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ!” We need to train our minds to think on these things!

**Better Life Resources**

Guard your Heart!  
Christian Media  
Sweet Thoughts  
Make Lists  
Attitude of Gratitude  
Grow in Christ  
Prepare for Worship  
Read His Word  
Christian Books  
Phone a Friend  
Pray for Others  
Get Out and Bless Others

I pray you will not be hearers only of this Word, but you will be doers! Yes, you can have a better life. Make decisions and choices that lead to that, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today is the day to spend some time in prayer and get right with God!

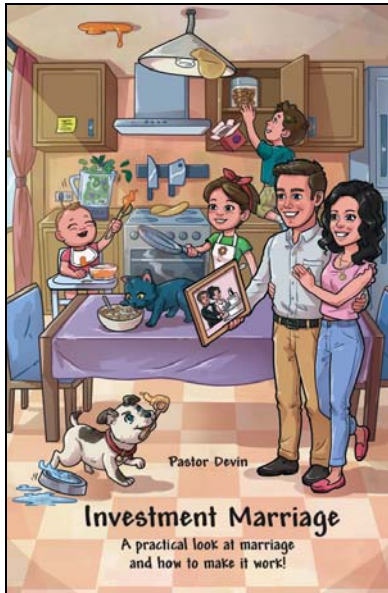
Keep The Son in Your Eyes,



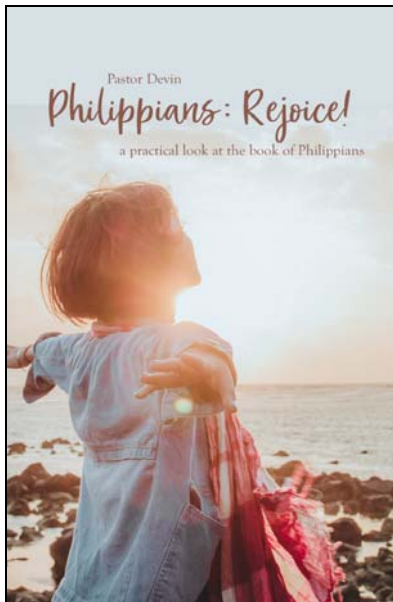
Pastor Devin

## Books by Pastor Devin

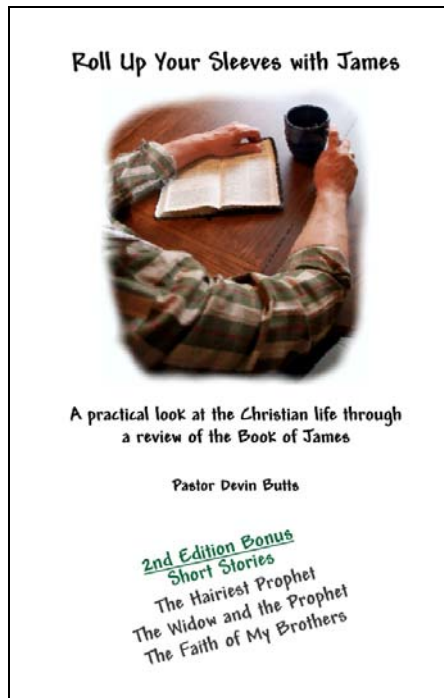
Available to you for FREE, just ask: [Devin@FBCLV.com](mailto:Devin@FBCLV.com)



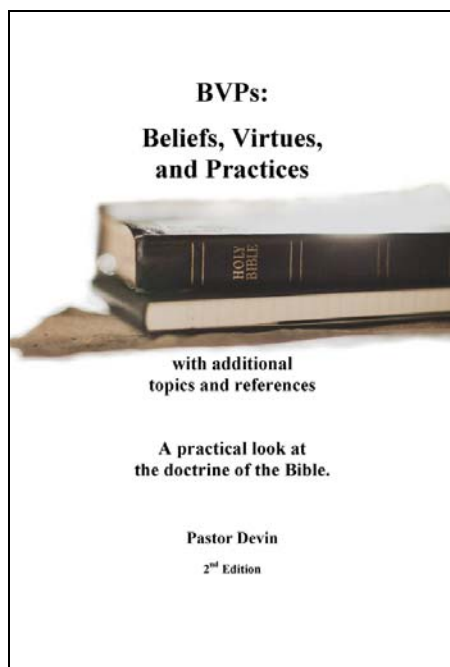
**Investment Marriage:** A practical look at marriage and how to make it work. This has specific advice to people who are married or are planning on it one day. It also has a chapter on Children.



**Philippians: Rejoice!:** A practical look at the Christian life through a review of the Book of Philippians. This is also a devotional type book which is targeted at teaching people to rejoice. Most people fight with depression at some level, this book has some ideas to help that.



Roll Up Your Sleeves with James: A practical look at the Christian life through a review of the Book of James, this is a devotional type book that you can read a chapter a day if you want. It has a lot about understanding God and His ways...



BVPs: Beliefs, Virtues, and Practices: A practical look at the doctrine of the Bible. This will tell you everything you need to know about What we believe and Why we believe it. Includes:

Body, Soul, and Spirit: Tripartite Nature of Man; Logical Redemption; Can I Lose My Salvation?; Resurrection in the Bible; When to Wait, When to Move; Why Bad Things Happen to Good People; and Confession Leads to Healing.

You are welcome to all you want, free.

Use the next few pages to make yourself a Sweet Thoughts jar!



# **Sweet Thoughts**

## **Take one to stop Stinkin' Thinkin'**



**Philippians 2:13 (NIV84)**

13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

**Joshua 1:7 (NIV84)**

7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

**Psalms 23:1 (NIV84)**

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

**1 John 4:4 (NIV84)**

4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

**Psalms 119:71 (NIV84)**

71 It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

**Psalms 31:24 (NIV84)**

24 Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.

**Isaiah 40:28–31 (NIV84)**

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

**Psalms 103:2–6 (NIV84)**

2 Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits— 3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, 5 who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. 6 The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

**1 Peter 5:7 (NIV84)**

7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

**Proverbs 3:5–6 (NIV84)**

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

**1 John 5:14–15 (NIV84)**

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV84)**

7 We live by faith, not by sight.

**Proverbs 17:17 (NIV84)**

17 A friend loves at all times,  
and a brother is born for  
adversity.

**1 Samuel 30:6 (NIV84)**

6 David was greatly distressed  
because the men were talking  
of stoning him; each one was  
bitter in spirit because of his  
sons and daughters. But David  
found strength in the Lord his  
God.

**1 Corinthians 16:13 (NIV84)**

13 Be on your guard; stand firm  
in the faith; be men of courage;  
be strong.

**Romans 15:4 (NIV84)**

4 For everything that was  
written in the past was written  
to teach us, so that through  
endurance and the  
encouragement of the  
Scriptures we might have hope.

**John 16:33 (NIV84)**

33 "I have told you these  
things, so that in me you may  
have peace. In this world you  
will have trouble. But take  
heart! I have overcome the  
world."

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV84)**

17 Therefore, if anyone is in  
Christ, he is a new creation; the  
old has gone, the new has  
come!

**Hebrews 13:5 (NIV84)**

5 Keep your lives free from the  
love of money and be content  
with what you have, because  
God has said, "Never will I  
leave you; never will I forsake  
you."

**2 Corinthians 4:7–9 (NIV84)**

7 But we have this treasure in  
jars of clay to show that this all-  
surpassing power is from God  
and not from us. 8 We are hard  
pressed on every side, but not  
crushed; perplexed, but not in  
despair; 9 persecuted, but not  
abandoned; struck down, but  
not destroyed.

**1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV84)**

11 Therefore encourage one  
another and build each other up,  
just as in fact you are doing.

**1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV84)**

13 No temptation has seized  
you except what is common to  
man. And God is faithful; he  
will not let you be tempted  
beyond what you can bear. But  
when you are tempted, he will  
also provide a way out so that  
you can stand up under it.

**1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV84)**

58 Therefore, my dear brothers,  
stand firm. Let nothing move  
you. Always give yourselves  
fully to the work of the Lord,  
because you know that your  
labor in the Lord is not in vain.

**Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV84)**

11 For I know the plans I have  
for you," declares the Lord,  
"plans to prosper you and not to  
harm you, plans to give you  
hope and a future.

**Matthew 6:33 (NIV84)**

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

**Psalms 27:4 (NIV84)**

4 One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

**James 4:7–8 (NIV84)**

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

**John 15:13 (NIV84)**

13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

**Hebrews 10:19–23 (NIV84)**

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

**Psalms 42:11 (NIV84)**

11 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

**1 Peter 2:9–11 (NIV84)**

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

**Romans 8:28 (NIV84)**

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

**Ephesians 3:17–21 (NIV84)**

17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

**Philippians 4:5 (NIV84)**

5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

**2 Corinthians 2:14 (NIV84)**

14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

**Romans 1:17 (NIV84)**

17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

**2 Timothy 4:18 (NIV84)**

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**Psalm 119:105 (NIV84)**

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

**Philippians 4:4 (NIV84)**

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

**Joshua 1:9 (NIV84)**

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

**Psalm 120:1 (NIV84)**

1 I call on the Lord in my distress, and he answers me.

**Colossians 3:15 (NIV84)**

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

**Philippians 4:8 (NIV84)**

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

**Psalm 46:1–3 (NIV84)**

1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

**Psalm 55:22 (NIV84)**

22 Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.

**Psalm 23:4 (NIV84)**

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**Psalm 16:8 (NIV84)**

8 I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

**Matthew 7:7–8 (NIV84)**

7 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

**Philippians 3:10 (NIV84)**

10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

**Philippians 4:9 (NIV84)**

9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

**Psalms 121:1–2 (NIV84)**

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from? 2 My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

**Philippians 4:19 (NIV84)**

19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 1:27 (NIV84)**

27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel

**Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV84)**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Proverbs 18:10 (NIV84)**

10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

**John 14:27 (NIV84)**

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

**Isaiah 43:2 (NIV84)**

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

**1 John 3:1–3 (NIV84)**

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

**Hebrews 3:6 (NIV84)**

6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

**Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV84)**

6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

**Hebrews 4:12 (NIV84)**

12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV84)**

7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

**Philippians 2:3 (NIV84)**

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

**Psalms 119:50 (NIV84)**

50 My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.

**Luke 11:9–10 (NIV84)**

9 “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

**2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (NIV84)**

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

**Revelation 14:12 (NIV84)**

12 This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.

**Isaiah 26:3 (NIV84)**

3 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

**Philippians 3:13–14 (NIV84)**

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 3:20 (NIV84)**

20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

**Matthew 6:25–26 (NIV84)**

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

**Isaiah 41:10 (NIV84)**

10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

**John 15:4 (NIV84)**

4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

**2 Thessalonians 3:3 (NIV84)**

3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

**Psalms 119:114–115 (NIV84)**

114 You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word. 115 Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God!

**James 1:22 (NIV84)**

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

**Psalms 118:14–16 (NIV84)**

14 The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. 15 Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: “The Lord’s right hand has done mighty things! 16 The Lord’s right hand is lifted high; the Lord’s right hand has done mighty things!”

**2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NIV84)**

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

**Romans 8:31 (NIV84)**

31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Psalms 90:17 (NIV84)**

17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.

**Hebrews 2:18 (NIV84)**

18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

**James 1:2–4 (NIV84)**

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

**Psalms 34:19 (NIV84)**

19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all;

**Psalms 37:4 (NIV84)**

4 Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.

**Romans 15:13 (NIV84)**

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV84)**

12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

**1 Corinthians 15:57 (NIV84)**

57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 4:6–7 (NIV84)**

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Proverbs 16:3 (NIV84)**

3 Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

**Psalms 34:8 (NIV84)**

8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

**John 3:16 (NIV84)**

16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**Philippians 1:6 (NIV84) 6  
being confident of this, that  
he who began a good work in  
you will carry it on to  
completion until the day of  
Christ Jesus.**

**Romans 8:38–39 (NIV84)**

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Philippians 3:7–9 (NIV84)**

7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

**Lamentations 3:22–23 (NIV84)**

22 Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

**Matthew 11:28 (NIV84)**

28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.



**1 John 4:18 (NIV84)**

18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

**James 1:12–15 (NIV84)**

12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. 13 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

**2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NIV84)**

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Philippians 3:1 (NIV84)**

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.

**Ephesians 6:10–11 (NIV84)**

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.