

***When GOD measures a man,  
he puts the tape  
around the heart  
instead of the head.***

A preacher once preached an entire series of sermons on some very challenging scriptures in hopes of winning one particular man of great intellect to Christ. Shortly after the series ended, to the preacher's delight, the man came forward to announce that he had become a convinced Christian and wanted to join the church.

Pleased with himself, the preacher said, "And which of my sermons was it that removed your doubts?"

The man replied, "Your sermons? It wasn't any of your sermons."

"What was it then?" the preacher asked, greatly disappointed.

The man said, "The thing that set me thinking was when a poor woman came out of the church and stumbled down the steps right beside me. When I put out my hand to help her, she smiled and said, 'Thank you' and then added, 'Do you love Jesus Christ my blessed Savior? He means everything to me,' I did not then, but I thought about what she had said, I found I was on the wrong road, I still have many questions, but now Jesus means everything to me too"

Faith is not based on convincing God of our goodness. Faith is receiving God's goodness, which he has given us through Jesus Christ.

BUT THE LORD SAID UNTO SAMUEL, LOOK NOT ON HIS COUNTENANCE, OR ON THE HEIGHT OF HIS STATURE: FOR THE LORD SEETH NOT AS MAN SEETH; FOR MAN LOOKETH ON THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART.  
1 SAMUEL 16.7

***The way each day will look to you  
all starts with whom you're  
looking to.***

Pope John Paul II has made no secret of his daily schedule in the Vatican. He begins his day at 5:30 A.M., while most of Rome is asleep. By 6:15 he is in his private chapel, meditating and praying before its altar, over which hangs a large bronze crucifix. Also within sight is a copy of Poland's most cherished Catholic icon, the Black Virgin of Czestochowa. Those who have seen the Pope in prayer state that at times he prostrates himself before the altar. At other times he sits or kneels, and with *closed* eyes cradles his forehead in his hands.

This early-morning prayer session is his time to bring before God his prayer requests for others. It is not uncommon for the stack of intentions to have more than 200 sheets, with many names written on each one.

The Pope considers prayer, more than liquid or food, to be the sustaining force of his life. Says the secretary of the Vatican's "Justice and Peace Commission," the Pope makes decisions "on his knees."

Of prayer, there's no better way to start a day or to begin a decision-making process,

A SONG OF DEGREES. I WILL LIFT UP MINE  
EYES UNTO THE HILLS, FROM WHENCE  
COMETH MY HELP.

MY HELP COMETH FROM THE LORD,  
WHICH MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
PSALM 121:1-2

***Live truth instead  
of professing it.***

Dorothy Canfield Fisher once wrote a poignant story about a physically powerful but dimwitted farmhand named Lem who lived in a Vermont valley. His mother resented him from the day he was born.

She often ridiculed him with harsh and demeaning words. Even so, the boy served her till she died.

Lem was the target of village jokes. But then one night he came upon a huge dog killing some farmer's sheep. Using his bare hands as his only weapon, he strangled the dog to death. When morning came, the villagers discovered the dog was really a giant timber wolf. Lem quickly earned the villagers' silent admiration.

Later, an unwed village girl falsely accused Lem of being the father of her baby. Even though he was innocent, he married the girl so the baby would have a father. Unfortunately, the mother died within a year, so Lem raised the little girl. After she was grown and married, her own baby became desperately ill, and Lem sold all his sheep to pay for the baby's medical care.

Confronted with meanness, misunderstanding, and loneliness all his life, Lem had no recourse in professing the true nature of his own life, other than to live it out in serving others. And that he did!

The loudest message you speak—is your life!

BUT BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT  
HEARERS ONLY, DECEIVING YOUR OWN SELVES.  
JAMES 1:22

***We often love things and use people when we should be using things and loving people.***

A fable is told of a young orphan boy who had no family and no one to love him. Feeling sad and lonely, he was walking through a meadow one day when he saw a small butterfly caught in a thorn bush. The more the butterfly struggled to free itself, the deeper the thorns cut into its fragile body. The boy carefully released the butterfly, but instead of flying away, the butterfly transformed before his eyes into an angel. T

The boy rubbed his eyes in disbelief as the angel said, "For your wonderful kindness, I will do whatever you would like."

The little boy thought for a moment and then said, "I want to be happy!"

The angel replied, "Very well," and then leaned toward him, whispered in his ear, and vanished.

As the little boy grew up, there was no one in the land as happy as he. When people asked him to tell his secret of happiness, he would only smile and say, "I listened to an angel when I was a little boy."

On his deathbed, his neighbors rallied around him and asked him to divulge the secret of his happiness before he died. The man finally told them: "The angel told me that all people, no matter how

secure they seemed, no matter how old or young, how rich or poor, had need of me."

BE DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER IN BROTHERLY LOVE. HONOR ONE ANOTHER ABOVE YOURSELVES.

ROMANS 12:10 NIV

***The ultimate message for a man is, not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.***

Some thought Les Goldberg was crazy when he cashed in his personal investments to buy a home to lease to the homeless. Goldberg, a retired engineer, felt it was the only decision he could make.

Since he retired, Goldberg has been a busy volunteer, serving on six service boards and leading a crew of homeless people at odd jobs and charity work. He spends at least an hour a day with his homeless friends and has helped renovate several properties on their behalf. In all his efforts, Goldberg never regarded the homeless as irresponsible or unreliable. He only saw them as people. He figured the house he

purchased could be used as both a temporary shelter and a drop-in center, a place where homeless people might pick up mail, make phone calls, follow up job leads, and receive donated commodities, Four homeless men live at the house, paying minimal rent to offset expenses. House rules are strict—no alcohol, no drugs, no loitering.

Goldberg has never been rich, For twenty years he ran his own business, making about \$25,000 a year designing and installing fire sprinklers, He simply was a man who saw a need and found a way to help meet it.

IF THOU FAINT IN THE DAY OF ADVERSITY,  
THY STRENGTH IS SMALL.  
PROVERBS 24: 10

***The man who fears no truths  
has nothing to  
fear from lies.***

Roger was a good employee—not spectacular—but reliable, punctual, even-tempered, and always willing to go the extra mile.

Brian also did good work, but he didn't mind cutting a few corners to finish a job or taking off a few minutes early to attend to his personal needs.

When Mr. Jones, their supervisor, announced that one of the two men would be promoted, Roger counted on his record and his reputation to win him the post. Brian lobbied hard for the job in an underhanded fashion by telling several of his co-workers that Roger had stolen credit for his innovative cost-saving measures, had misappropriated supplies, and was known to overextend his lunch hour. He was careful, of course, to preface all of his remarks by saying, 'Just between the two of us ... "

When Mr. Jones announced the following week that Roger had received the promotion, he received a rousing applause from his fellow employees. No one was surprised except Brian. After all, Roger's reputation had preceded him.

So had Brian's.

O LORD: LET THY LOVING-KINDNESS AND  
THY TRUTH CONTINUALLY PRESERVE ME.  
PSALM 40: 11

***The measure of a man is not  
what he does on Sunday,  
but who he is  
Monday through Saturday.***

The story is told of two men who met on the street. One man said to the other, "Have you heard about Harry? He embezzled half a million dollars from his company."

The other man said, "That's terrible. I never did trust Harry."

The first man continued, "Not only that, he left town and took Tom's wife with him."

The other man said, "That's awful. Harry has always been a ne'er-do-well."

The first man said, "Not only that, he stole a car to make his getaway."

The other man said, "That's scandalous; I always did think Harry had a bad streak in him."

The first man concluded, "Not only that, they think he was drunk when he pulled out of town."

The other man said, "Harry's no good!" After a few moments of reflection, he then asked, "But what really bothers me is this—who's going to teach his Sunday school class this week?"

Integrity is a seven-day-of-the-week job. It requires an ongoing supply of character and a steady flow of trustworthiness.

THAT YE MIGHT WALK WORTHY OF THE LORD  
UNTO ALL PLEASING, BEING FRUITFUL IN  
EVERY GOOD WORK, AND INCREASING IN THE  
KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

COLOSSIANS 1.10

***Authority without wisdom is  
like a heavy ax without an edge,  
fitter to bruise than to polish.***

John D. Rockefeller is known for his amazing business success, but he had a greater reputation among those who knew him as being a man who was understanding. He had a sincere appreciation for other people and was willing to accept failure if an honest attempt had been made at success.

When one of his partners, Bedford, failed in a business venture which cost Rockefeller's company a million dollars, Rockefeller responded with a statement that has become classic in business lore. He didn't criticize Bedford because he knew he had done his best. He did, however, call Bedford to his office and say, "I think it is honorable that you were able to salvage 60 percent of the money you invested in the South American venture. That's not bad; in fact, it's splendid. We don't always do as well as that upstairs."

There's very little to be gained by making people feel worse regarding something they already feel bad about! Rather, the gain lies in helping them see the beneficial side of a failure, teaching them the positive lessons that can be learned from mistakes, giving them hope for future attempts at success. Be an *encourager* to another person today. You'll both feel and do better!

FOR THE LORD HATH GIVEN US OUR  
AUTHORITY MORE FOR OUR EDIFICATION,  
AND NOT FOR YOUR DESTRUCTION.  
2 COR 10:8 NIV

***The man who wins may have been  
counted out several times, but  
he didn't hear the referee.***

Years ago in a federal courtroom in New York, a sarcastic district attorney presented a jury with a glass gadget which looked something like a small electric light bulb. With a mastery of scorn and ridicule, the attorney accused the defendant of claiming that his "worthless device" might be used to transmit the human voice across the Atlantic! He alleged that gullible investors had been persuaded by preposterous claims to buy stock in the company—an obvious act of fraud. He urged the jury to give the defendant and his two partners strong prison terms. Ultimately, the two

associates were convicted, but the defendant was given his freedom after he received a severe scolding from the judge.

The defendant was inventor Lee de Forest. The "worthless glass bulb" that was also on trial was the device he had created—perhaps the single greatest invention in the twentieth century and the foundation for what became a multibillion-dollar electronics industry.

No matter how harsh the criticism or how stinging the sarcasm aimed at your original ideas, pursue them further. Take them to their logical end—either convincing yourself that you have erred or using them to create something new and beneficial.

FOR A JUST MAN FALLETH SEVEN TIMES, AND  
RISETH UP AGAIN: BUT THE WICKED SHALL  
FALL INTO MISCHIEF.  
PROVERBS 24:16

***If a man cannot be Christian in  
the place where he is, he cannot  
be a Christian anywhere.***

Max had one of the worst jobs in the camp—carrying stones and planks through the mud to build a crematorium. Daily he was under the lash of the camp's infamous guard, Father "Bloody." Yet all the

while, Bloody kept smiling. One prisoner recalled, "Because they were trying to survive at any cost, all the prisoners had wildly roving eyes watching in every direction for trouble or the ready clubs. Father Bloody, alone, had a calm straightforward look, the look of a thoughtful man, serene, extraordinary in character."

Another said, "Those eyes of his were always strangely penetrating. The prisoner guard couldn't stand his glance and used to yell at him, 'Look at the ground, not at us!'"

Bloody often let others take his food ration. He said to those who questioned this, "Every man has an aim in life. Most of you men want to return to your wives, your family. My part is to give my life for the good of all men."

Bloody encouraged others to keep hope, to lift their voices in songs of praise. One recalled, "He made us see that our souls were not dead."

Good circumstances don't make great men. Great men create good in every circumstance.

JESUS SAID, "LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE  
BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR  
GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER  
WHICH IS IN HEAVEN."

MATTHEW 5.16

***The foolish man sees  
his happiness  
in the distance. The wise  
grows it under his feet.***

For a few long seconds, Bobby Shivar was nineteen feet nine inches away from a million dollars. Standing on the basketball court in New Orleans' Lakefront Arena, all he had to do was toss the ball through the eighteen-inch hoop. His wife was in the stands dreaming about a red sports car; his son was hoping for a new computer. He wanted to buy a new tractor and have enough cash for his daughter's college tuition. He bounced the ball three times, made his shot, then grimaced as the ball went left and rebounded on the rim. Bobby had won \$25,000 with a whirlwind week of shooting baskets on morning TV shows, posing with tourists for photos, and signing autographs.

But then it was time to go home to a tiny town, back to fixing the aging steam pipes, back to his neat three-bedroom brick house on a rural lot, back to enjoying his life. "It drained me," he said. In looking back the only thing he figures he might have done differently would have been to practice more. But after all, it was not basketball season.

We sometimes think if we could only have *more* of something, then we'd be happy. The truth is, happiness isn't a matter of *more*. It's a matter of *choice*.

FOR I HAVE LEARNED, IN RESPECT OF WANT:  
IN WHATSOEVER STATE I AM, THEREWITH TO  
BE CONTENT.

PHILIPPIANS 4:11

***The strength of a man consists  
in finding out the way GOD  
is going and going that way.***

In the book, *A Slow and Certain Light*, Elliot writes: "Two young Americans with high adventure in their hearts arrived in the city of Quito, Ecuador, on their way to the 'Great Amazon Rain Forest' east of the Andes. They were going on a six-week trek and planned to write a book about their experiences. They had been to an army surplus store before they left home and bought everything the salesman told them they would need. " What more could they want? There was, it occurred to them when they reached Quito, one thing—the language—and when they learned that a jungle missionary was in town, they came to see me. 'Just give us a few phrases,' they said. They described their equipment to me with great

pride, and I could see that it was not going to be of much use. I wanted to tell them that what they ought to have was a guide.

"Sometimes we come to God as the two adventurers came to me—confident and, we think, well informed and well equipped. But has it occurred to us that with all our accumulation of stuff something is missing. What we really ought to have is the Guide himself."

JESUS SAID: 'I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.  
HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME SHALL NOT WALK IN  
DARKNESS, BUT SHALL HAVE THE LIGHT OF  
LIFE.'

JOHN 8:12

***A gentleman is a gentle man.***

A general and General Lafayette were walking together one morning when they were greeted on their path by a slave. The old man paused, tipped his hat, and said, "Good mo'nin', Gen'l."

Immediately the general removed his hat, bowed, and answered, "Good morning to you, and I hope you have a pleasant day."

General Lafayette was shocked, but when he recovered his composure, he exclaimed, "Why did you bow to a slave?"

The general smiled and replied, "I would not allow him to be a better gentleman than I."

In our days, we rarely refer to men as being gentle. But gentleness is a character trait that results from the indwelling Spirit of God in our lives! Consider this approach in thinking of yourself as a gentleman:

G-Gracious and good

E-Engaging, willing to listen

N-Nice to others, regardless of who they are

T-Taking the time to move at another's pace

L-Loving

E-Endearing by acts of kindness and goodwill

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT  
STRIVE; BUT BE GENTLE UNTO ALL MEN, APT  
TO TEACH, PATIENT, IN MEEKNESS  
INSTRUCTING THOSE THAT OPPOSE  
THEMSELVES—IF GOD PERADVENTURE WILL  
GIVE THEM REPENTANCE TO THE  
ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE TRUTH.

2 TIMOTHY 2:24-5