

Spiritual/Religious Quotes – update on Google Doc [HERE](#) rather than in this document:

<http://www.stevelong.longmemories.info/religious-quotes-favorites-of-steve-long/>

It's not with many thoughts or words that He hears us but in the silence of our longing ~ Teresa of Avila

The Holy Spirit, being active in our lives, will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23 (New Living Translation from The Purpose Driven Life, with Steve Long slight translation)

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

Psalms 90:12 -- “Lord, teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”

“Trust in the Lord . . . and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5, NIV).

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ~ Philippians 4:6-7

Hebrews 13:5 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.”

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up” (James 4:10, NIV).

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might..... Ecclesiastes 9:10

Let us not hurry, we have no time to lose ... surgeon prior to surgery as quoted by Al Davies in MWPC sermon based on Ps. 90

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble... Ps 46

Be still, and know that I am God ... Ps. 46:10

If God be for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Galatians 6:14

To know God, you have to be out of your head -- from the book Conversations with God

A little, gained honestly, is better than great wealth gotten by dishonest means. We should make plans -- counting on God to direct us. Proverbs 16: 8-9

Psalm 128 - Scott Galloway's favorite

Psalm 91 - He is my refuge and my strength ... No need to fear

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (George Morrison favorite – liked especially the tender-hearted comment)

Matthew 19:26 -- when things seem impossible

Saints are sinners who keep on trying

Keep your eyes on Jesus and run with patience the particular race that God has set before you. (Hebrews 12:1-2 paraphrased)

Philippians 2:15 ... You are to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in a dark world full of people who are crooked and stubborn. Shine out among them like beacon lights.

Do not have your concert first and tune your instrument afterward. Begin the day with God. -- J. Hudson Taylor

Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death.

God is like a mirror. The mirror never changes but everybody who looks at it sees something different.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...for it is God who worketh in you....The Bible quoted in Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

“Grief and pain are the price we humans have to pay for the love and total commitment we have for another person. The more we love, the more we are hurt when we lose the object of our love. But if we are honest with ourselves, would we have it any other way?” C.S. Lewis in *A Grief Observed*

I discovered that our unwanted stress stems from our failure to trust God. Dr. Richard Ecker in "The Stress Myth"

That's what comes from comparing yourself to someone else. Don't do it. Success is really measured by how close you come to living up to your potential. Work on that and forget the rest....Rudyard Kipling (see Galatians 6:4)

Lord, help me to leave unsigned notes of love wherever I go.

Don't worry about the future, God is already there.

We build our own ladder to the sky..... Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.... William Carey, missionary in India

Fear knocked at the door. Faith answered. No one was there.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have loved one to another.... John 13:35

"God is my best friend; easy to talk with, difficult to totally satisfy, but understanding and willing to forgive and move on as long as intentions are good to improve each time." Steve Long 3/3/98

"Aeschylus wrote: In our sleep, pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart and in our despair again our will comes wisdom through the awful grace of God. ..." Portion of quote near Robert F. Kennedy grave at Arlington National Cemetery

Dietrich Bonhoeffer on DEATH: Nothing can make up for the absence of someone we love ... we must simply hold out and see it through. That sounds very hard at first, but at the same time, it is a great consolation, for the gap, as long as it remains unfilled, preserves the bonds between us. It is nonsense to say that God fills the gap; God doesn't fill it, but on the contrary, He keeps it empty and so helps us to keep alive our former communion with each other, even at the cost of pain.

The God whom Jesus proclaimed is not the guarantor of the status quo. God is the power of the future pressing for a radical conversion of the present. -- in "The Future of God" by Braaten

We should consider ourselves as spirits having a human experience, rather than humans having an occasional spiritual experience. "Pass It On" from May '93

Time spent laughing is time spent with the gods -- Japanese proverb

O God, animate us to cheerfulness! May we have a joyful sense of our blessings, learn to look on the bright circumstances of our lot, and maintain a perpetual contentedness. -- William Channing

When I was in my early teens every day I saw a blue neon sign on a nearby church, a sign that flashed, "Prayer Changes Things." I'd like to go back to that church and adjust the sign to say, "Prayer Changes People." -- Kristen Johnson Ingram in July/Aug 2005 Alive Now devotional

We are trapped somewhere between earth and a glimpse of heaven. I try not to lose that glimpse.
-- Eric Severide

"If it's to be Lord, it's up to me." Gregg Grippio's grandma's quote - Guideposts 12/05 article about building a house for an elderly community member.

I am content to know that God is great and Lord of fish and fowl and sea and air; a few little points are not quite clear – let them wait.

“I have been gripped by something great, something greater than myself, something people call God.” Carl Jung

“Life is short and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love and make haste to be kind. And the blessings of God, Creator, Christ, and ever-present Spirit with us, go with you this day and forever more. Amen.” Dr. Marcus Borg

“If you believe in prayer, pray that people will find the strength to change.” An Inconvenient Truth

When you pray, move your feet. African proverb

“When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.” Proverbs 11:2 NIV (from Alive Now article on humility, where the authors talk about “it’s time to start trying to live so as to treat more lightly on the earth.” Also, in the definition of humility they talk about meekness – knowing when to use power – as part of that definition.)

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Romans 12:12

“The church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.” Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 1963

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid. The Lord your God will go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor forsake you.” Quoted in Bobby Mercer 11/07 Guideposts article about bible passage that helped him through brain surgery experience.

Westminster Catechism (first question of the Calvinist questioning): “What is the chief and highest end of man?” ***Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.***”

the best way to lead people to Christ is by 'building your own fire so bright that it draws other people in' – Debbie Sawvel’s favorite minister

“He never jests as Socrates does, but He often lets the ripple of a happy breeze play over the surface of His mighty deep.” Harry Emerson Fosdick referencing Christ’s teaching in “The Manhood of the Master” p. 16 (quoted in “The Humor of Christ”)

“The humor of Christ is based largely on what Frost stresses, ie., on connections which are genuine, but which ordinary men do not recognize without help.” Elton Trueblood in “The Humor of Christ”

“Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.”
Pascal (as quoted by Elton Trueblood in “The Humor of Christ”, p.74

Friends, Life is short and there is precious little time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us. So be swift to love and make haste to be kind. And the blessings of God, Christ, and ever-present Spirit, go with you, and direct you, this day and forever more. Amen. -- Composite of sayings from Dr. Marcus Borg, LP Jones, Steve Long and April (participant in women's Jail Ministry 4/13/08)

“Stop praying and get moving!” commentary on Exodus 14:15, described by Scott Culshaw during 10/26/08 worship

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139: 23-24

"From tomb to womb to bloom – opportunities for a new beginning out of Christ's temporary ending...." [Steve Long quote based on Easter 2009 LP Jones sermon - talked about tomb and the womb – that Christ's grave was a womb for believers.]

Only God's Spirit gives new life. The Spirit is like the wind that blows wherever it wants to. You can hear the wind, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. John 3:8 CEV

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”
Luke 1: 78-79

Prayer is the place where burdens change shoulders.

“When the waves closed over the sinking car, God’s heart was the first of all our hearts to break.” William Sloane Coffin (when Coffin’s 24-year old son died as his car careened into Boston Harbor, “Alex’s Death,” The Collected Sermons of William Sloane Coffin)

Jesus said, "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day." Luke 9:62, The Message

“It’s important to give up—maybe daily—the old longing to be perfect. . . . Of course, I think we want it so strongly because we reason that if we are perfect, if we do a perfect job, we will be perfectly lovable. . . . What a heavy burden. Thank God we don’t have to earn every bit of love that comes our way.” Fred Rogers, of Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood fame

Pro 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. 1 Timothy 6:10

“God’s will is not a puzzle to be solved but a mystery to be lived into.” Wendy M. Wright in “The Rising: Living the Mysteries of Lent, Easter and Pentecost.”

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8

"The path of love that I walk is neither predetermined nor clear cut. It is forged in the process of walking day by day, listening deeply to the silence brooding beneath the noisy instructions issuing from without and within our own hearts. God's will is not a puzzle to be solved but a mystery to be lived into. It is a mystery whose contours emerge as we journey on." Wendy M. Wright (from "The Rising: Living the Mysteries of Lent, Easter and Pentecost")

My favorite metaphor for scripture is "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). LP Jones

The value of persistent prayer is not that he will hear us . . . but that we will finally hear him.
—William McGill

I believe in the essential unity of all people and for that matter, of all lives. Therefore, I believe that if one person gains spiritually, the whole world gains, and if one person falls, the whole world falls to that extent. Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948) – known as Mohatma (Great Soul)

“This technological age bombards us with more information than we can absorb and more noisy input than our spirits can endure. We lose our center in a swirl of stimulation coming from computers, cell phones, television and talk radio.” *Praying in the Messiness of Life* by Linda Douty (Alive Now)

As we become increasingly indifferent to anything other than what God would have us do and diligently seek God’s will and movement in our lives, we can experience the presence of God in the momen. It is this experience of God in the present that leads us to action in tune with our Maker. “Creating a Life With God, pages 86-87, written by Daniel Wolpert

“Life is short and we have never too much time for gladdening the hearts of those who are travelling the dark journey with us. Oh be swift to love, make haste to be kind.” Amiel, Henri Frederic (starter of what has become LP’s benediction)

“If what the Bible says is true (and we believe it is), then your life isn’t meant to be anything like **half a glass** of water. God created you to be so perpetually full of rich experiences, rewarding relationships, and abundant blessings that you can afford to pour out huge amounts of hope, comfort, and refreshment on others – and still have more than you’ll ever need!” Introduction p.2 of the book “Outflow: outward-focused living in a self-focused world” by Sjogren and Ping (given to me for Christmas 2011 by Sammy!) References to “The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14, Darby (Plymouth Brethren) translation

Through prayer you can give your love, your very self to any person, group of people, or nation. Prayer is the only expression of love which cannot be stopped or rejected. Prayer can give you instant entrance into any home, any hospital, any government office, any courtroom in any part of the world. Just as distance cannot hinder your reach or touch in prayer, neither walls nor "no entry" signs can halt your presence or stay your hand in prayer. The greatest way in which Christians can mediate blessing is through prayer. We have the opportunity to pray for those we can contact in no other way. From our family and closest friends whom we see often, to those we may meet once or only hear about - we can be God's agents of blessing. "Agents of Blessings by Wesley L. Duewel"

Jewish adage: at the end of our days, God will ask "Did you enjoy my world?"

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Frederick Buechner [Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC]

Blessing from Alive Now: "Where the hunger of the world beyond you meets the hunger of the world within you: may you find yourself in this place." Jan L. Richardson in [In the Sanctuary of Women: ...]

"No matter how the call comes, whether explosively or gently, the response has to be worked out in daily fidelity, in ordinary life. Keeping the focus in the midst of the seductive values of the culture becomes our life task." Elaine M. Prevallet, S.L. [Sisters of Loretto? (religious order)] from "Weavings: A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life"

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men. Colossians 3:23

"We are each of us angels with only one wing and we can fly by embracing each other." - Luciano de Crescenzo (1928-)

"All of the ore is not gold, but gold comes out of the ore." Lee Davis's dad talking about understanding the Bible from your own context

"The way is not in the sky. The way is in the heart." -Buddha

Philippians 1:3-11 3-4 I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you...9-11 And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

It is faith, and not reason, which impels men to action ... Intelligence is content to point out the road, but never drives us along it. - Dr. Alexis Carrel

Faith, like a muscle, grows stronger when it is used. - Abe Baxter

“There is really nothing we need know
Or even try to understand
If we refuse to be discouraged
And trust God’s Guiding Hand . . . “ Helen Steiner Rice

Philippians 4:4-7

4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

4:5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

4:6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

“My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.”

Thomas Merton, “Thoughts in Solitude”

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Romans 12:2

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pains. It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” C.S. Lewis

“Dear God, I wanna take a minute, not to ask for anything from you, but simply to say “Thank You” for all I have.” sign in Ft. Wright restaurant called Pee Wee’s (one of our hole-in-the-wall places)

Be a “detective for the divine” – discussion with Dick Yund about his conversation with LP on Jeremiah 29:11-14

11 For I know what I have planned for you,’ says the LORD. ‘I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope. 12 When you call out to me and come to me in prayer, I will hear your prayers. 13 When you seek me in prayer and worship, you will find me available to you. If you seek me with all your heart and soul, 14 I will make myself available to you,’ says the LORD. ‘Then I will reverse your plight and will regather you from all the nations and all the places where I have exiled you,’ says the LORD. ‘I will bring you back to the place from which I exiled you.’

Frequently remind yourself that God is with you, that He will never fail you, that you can count upon Him. Say these words, "God is with me, helping me." – Norman Vincent Peale, best-selling author and minister

In his book, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*, Frederick Buechner writes: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

We shall come one day to a heaven where we shall gratefully know that God's great refusals were sometimes the true answers to our truest prayer. –P. T. Forsyth, writer and theologian

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. - Romans 15:13

The cheerful heart has a continual feast. Proverbs 15:15

Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. Romans 12: 3-6

Eight thousand, seven hundred and sixty marvelous hours are waiting for you this year. My prayer is that each one will bring you closer to God. –Norman Vincent Peale, pastor and author

Bumper sticker: "Hark if you love Jesus" (hark is to listen) – Bill Brammer (Christmas message 2013)

LP sermon on 2014-01-05: it's okay to have a few foolish dreams!

"I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that he didn't trust me so much." – Mother Teresa

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." – Jim Elliot, famous missionary and martyr

Bumper Sticker: "Forbidden fruit creates many jams"

"My own behavior baffles me. For I find myself doing what I really hate, and not doing what I really want to do!." - St. Paul, Romans 7:15-16

It is only in the foreign land that we understand what home is. It is only in the face of death that we sense the uniqueness of life. It is only in strife that we know how to appreciate peace. It is in our encounter with the difference of others that we experience the character of our own selves. Among people who are like us we do not notice ourselves at all. We are so much a matter of course to ourselves that we are not aware of ourselves. It is first in the distance, even more in the difference, and then finally in the contradiction that we perceive the other, and in perceiving that

other at the same time perceive our own selves. [Experiences in Theology: Ways and Forms of Christian Theology by Reformed theologian Jürgen Moltmann] LP Jones reference in a Beacon Lite article

Sara Jo Sarchet's sermon of August 18, 1996 reminded me of Grama Long since the reference was to our lives as quilts... *All of us have "tough squares" in our lives. The key is to work through life to complete "The Master's Plan" instead of our personal master plan.*

"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying." Ephesians 6:18

"The older I get the more deeply I believe, but the less beliefs I have." Retired bishop mentions this to John Shelby Spong, as quoted in *The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic*

"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." 1 John 4:18

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 1 Corinthians 6:19

Prayer is a means of bringing you to a point where you will accept what God wants. –Norman Vincent Peale, best-selling author and minister

It is for us to make the effort. The result is always in God's hands. –Mahatma Gandhi, Indian political leader

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way." -- Minnie Louise Haskins

"I will persist without exception. I am a person of great faith." - archangel Gabriel. ("Does faith guide your everyday actions and emotions? All men are driven by faith or fear – one or the other – for both are the same. Faith or fear is the expectation of an event that hasn't come to pass or the belief in something that cannot be seen or touched. A man of fear lives always on the edge of insanity. A man of faith lives in perpetual reward." "Knowledge and wisdom that is applied will bring about a brighter tomorrow. A person who is depressed is spending too much time thinking about the way things are now and not enough time thinking about how he wants things to be.") – from *The Traveler's Gift* by Andy Andrews

"The church is ... universal, so are all her actions; all that she does belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that body which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me: all mankind is of one author, and is one volume.... No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in

mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." Anglican priest John Donne (seventeenth century poet) in *Devotions*

"Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything that is beautiful; for beauty is God's handwriting - a wayside sacrament. Welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and thank God for it as a cup of blessing." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"What I do is pray, how I pray is breathe." – Thomas Merton

Faith is like the radar that sees through the fog. –Corrie ten Boom, author

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. Galatians 5:22

The cheerful heart has a continual feast. Proverbs 15:15

"The soul friend honors the secrets of the heart and gently nudges one's dreams into being." describing characteristics of St. Brigit in the book *Holy Companions: Spiritual Practices from the Celtic Saints*

The impulse of love that leads us to the doorway of a friend is the voice of God within and we need not be afraid to follow it. –Agnes Sanford, author

Faith is about doing. You are how you act, not just how you believe. –Mitch Albom, author

Let all you do be done with love. 1 Corinthians 16:14

The Bible is not a science book, it is not a history book, it is a book about underlying truths of the stories, poems and text! - compilation of Kris Moore sermon comments (MWPC - 2/8/2015), Elton Trueblood (*The Humor of Christ*) and Steve Long

"There is no mode of life in the world more pleasing and more full of delight than continual conversation with God." - Saint John of the Ladder

"Let the memory of Jesus combine with your breath." Juliana of Norwich

"Religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever." William James

On Unceasing Prayer...

"In time we can come back and try again. The question is not whether we fail again and again - that is a given; the question is whether over a period of time we are developing a practiced habit of divine fellowship." - Richard Foster in his book *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*

"Sometimes your only available transportation is a leap of faith." --Margaret Shepard, author

“The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.” - Soren Kierkegaard

Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31

"Don't sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent." Psalm 4 (an injunction to be in more control of emotions. Also a nice reinforcement of the - write a note and then "pocket it" - philosophy!)

"When you were born, everyone was smiling but you were crying. Live such a life that when you depart, everyone is weeping but you are smiling." Prophet Mohammed, as quoted in *The Spiritual Gems of Islam*, p. 209

"The wound is the place where the Light enters you." Jelaluddin Rumi

"Prayer is putting oneself under God's influence." – Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor

“My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.” - Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude*

"A man who is intimate with God will never be intimidated by men." – Leonard Ravenhill, author [Steve's alteration: "Intimacy with God helps eliminate human intimidation!"]

"If you begin to live life looking for the God that is all around you, every moment becomes a prayer." – Frank Bianco, U.S. journalist and photographer

I would rather walk with God in the dark than go alone in the light. –Mary Gardiner Brainard, author and poet

John 6:32-35 Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

"Go where your best prayers take you." – Frederick Buechner, writer

"He who sings prays twice" [Steve's alteration "S(he) who sings prays twice"]

"I like your Christ. I don't like your Christians. They are so unlike your Christ." - Gandhi

So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! -James 3:5, NRSV

Tame Thy Tongue! (James 3:5 translated by SAL, and probably by many others before me!)

To pray is to listen, to move through my own chattering to God, to that place where I can be silent and listen to what God may have to say. -Madeleine L'Engle, author

We shall come one day to a heaven where we shall gratefully know that God's great refusals were sometimes the true answers to our truest prayer. -P. T. Forsyth, writer and theologian

"No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great." - early Christian mystic John Chrysostom (frequently quoted by Pope Francis)

"I came that you may have and enjoy life and have it in abundance, until it overflows." John 10:10

"Faith will lead you where you cannot walk. Reason has never been a mountain climber." -E. W. Kenyon, pastor

"Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life's problems fall into place of their own accord." - J.I. Packer, Christian theologian

"⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.⁵ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ **And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.** ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. ⁹ Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."Philippians 4:4-9 King James Version (KJV) - read at Leland Davis celebration of life

"To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything He has given us—and He has given us everything." -Thomas Merton, writer and poet

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." -C.S. Lewis, author

To rejoice is a choice - church sign

"Be still and cool in mind and spirit." George Fox

"When I look across the Christian landscape in America, I see a powerful reservoir of energy just waiting to be unleashed. I see enough talent, creativity, compassion, money and strength to transform our culture. I see true believers in every sector of society genuinely concerned about the condition of their communities, but feeling powerless to do something significant to change it." Bob Buford in *Halftime*, page 164

"Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God." ~ De Chardin

"All shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well." ~ Teresa of Avila

"Joy, it must be remembered, is nothing like happiness, its milquetoast cousin. It is instead a vivid and extreme state of being, often arrived at in the aftermath of great pain." ~ Novelist Ayana Mathis

"The holy is a wheel with many spokes" ~ attitude of many Eastern religions, quoted from Tom York sermon, but can't find reference immediately on internet

"Want to find gifts from God? In all things, seek God's presence (and then the presents are apparent!)" ~ Steve Long, November 26, 2017

"I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that He didn't trust me so much." ~ Mother Teresa

From an article by Mitch Horowitz in 10/2017 Guideposts about sayings his mother-in-law, Terri Orr, had written on the backs of business cards and placed all around the house to help transform her from a pessimist to an optimist (haven't researched the origin of the sayings, at least not yet):

- "Being too serious about all I have to do can make me unrealistic"
- "If anyone speaks badly of you, live so that none will believe it"
- "When you cannot pray as you want, pray as you can"
- "I can choose to be right or to be happy"
- "My helping hand is needed. I will do something today to encourage another person."
- "Abstinence is not difficult; withdrawal is!"
- "I am able to feel my feelings and not think something is wrong if I am not happy every minute"
- "Waiting has more power than an ill-timed decision"
- "Faith in God + Mental Reeducation = Modern Miracle"

"He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast" ~ Proverbs 15:15

Dear God, as we go throughout our days, may we worry less of credit, and focus more on praise! Amen. ~ Christian Playbook 2018-02-07 posting about "We Shall Overcome" and copyright confusion

"Proclaim the gospel; use words if necessary" ~ St. Francis of Assisi

"May you go forth tranquilly, joyfully, briskly...in that wholeness with which the Spirit of God has called you." ~ Clare of Assisi

Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in spring-time. ~Martin Luther

"Your mind can deceive you and put all kinds of barriers between you and your nature; but your body does not lie. Your body tells you, if you attend to it, how your life is and if you are living from your soul or from the labyrinths of your negativity. . . . The human body is the most complex, refined, and harmonious totality. . . . Your body is, in essence, a crowd of different members who work in harmony to make your belonging in the world possible. . . . The soul is not simply within the body, hidden somewhere within its recesses. The truth is rather the converse. Your body is in the soul. And the soul suffuses you completely." ~ John O'Donohue (1956-2008), Irish poet and priest in *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*, 48-49.

***** NEWEST QUOTES HERE *****

"To put it plainly, our unconscious is God. God within us. God has been with us all along, is now, and always will be." ~ M. Scott Peck in *The Road Less Traveled*, p. 281

"If the Lord is indeed our shepherd, then everything goes topsy-turvy. Losing becomes finding and crying becomes laughing. The last become first and the weak become strong. Instead of life being done in by death in the end as we always supposed, death is done in finally by life in the end. If the Lord is our host at the great feast, then the sky is the limit." ~ Frederick Buechner in *Clown in the Belfrey*, p. 116 [read as part of Nancy Mathew's commentary on her dad - one of Dean Shupe's favorite books]

"What would become of us if we did not obstinately cling to hope, and if our minds did not hasten along the paths lit up for us by God's Word and Spirit right through the darkness, beyond this world?" ~ John Calvin as quoted in *At the End, the Beginning*, p. 90

F. D. Moule pictures hope as "faith on tiptoe."

"We are all faced with a series great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations." ~ Charles R. Swindoll

"Even in our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God." ~ Aeschylus

Celtic writer Esther de Waal writes (on the Celtic tradition): "This is an approach to life in which God breaks in on the ordinary, daily, mundane, earthy. It is very much a down-to-earth spirituality. The sense of the presence of God informs daily life and transforms it, so that at any moment, any object, any job or work can become the time and the place for an encounter with God. It is ultimately a question of vision, of seeing. So the Celtic approach to God opens up a world in which nothing is too common to be exalted and nothing is so exalted that it cannot be made common."

The wise man in the storm prays to God, not for safety from danger, but for deliverance from fear. It is the storm within which endangers him, not the storm without." ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Journals*

"develop the paradoxical capacity to go for it 100 percent while letting go 100 percent" ~ page 244 in *Finding Serenity in the Age of Anxiety* by Robert Gerzon

"All shall be well, all shall be well...For there is a Force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go." ~ Julian of Norwich

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better." Maya Angelou [paired with Galatians 6:9 passage "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up."]

A Christian is one who points at Christ and says, 'I can't prove a thing, but there's something about His eyes and His voice. There's something about the way He carries His head, His hands, the way He carries His cross – the way He carries me.' ~ Frederick Buechner

In the gospel we are shown that real power is not the power of domination but rather the power of love. And that looking at life from the vantage point of love, we see our being and our joy increase to an extent that we give it away. ~ Adam Bucko

"Oh, Lord, let me feel at one with myself. Let me perform a thousand daily tasks with love, but let every one spring from a greater central core of devotion and love." ~ [Etty Hillesum](#)

"Coincidence is God's way of staying anonymous." ~ Albert Einstein

"I am nearer than you dare believe, closer than the air you breathe" ~ Sarah Young in *Jesus Calling* p. 247 [and reference to this song, Breathe by Michael W. Smith: <https://youtu.be/AbQSniiHOps>]

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God." ~ Gerald Manley Hopkins

Take one step toward God and discover that God has taken a thousand steps toward you

"You can have the other words-chance, luck, coincidence, serendipity. I'll take grace. I don't know what it is exactly, but I'll take it." ~ Mary Oliver (shared by Joan S. when discussing "synchronicity experiences")

"In one of her revelations, she heard God say "you shall suddenly be taken from all your suffering, from all your pain and from all your woe. And you shall come up above and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss." " ~ Julian of Norwich's *Revelations in Divine Love* (shared by Pastor Lisa B.)

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee. ~ John Donne, part of Meditation 17, in its entirety here: <http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/meditation17.php> (a favorite of Leland Davis, LP Jones, Steven Bruening, Steve Long and numerous others!)

LOADS OF GOOD QUOTES IN "THE BOOK OF JOY," INCLUDING THESE [HERE](#)

"We should tend to the area of the garden we can reach" ~ Buddhist proverb

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 receive from God. 5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. 6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. ~ 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (Lisa B.'s comfort/sufferings reminder)

Ecclesiastes 8:15 So I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun

"The brute, the bigot, and the batterer are all children of God whether they know it or not. And I'm supposed to treat them accordingly. And it's hard and I blow it all the time." ~ Dr. Maya Angelou

"Compassion without justice is the mother of weakness. And therefore it is necessary that they be joined together according to Proverbs 3:3: 'Compassion and truth will not forsake you.' " ~ Thomas Aquinas

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." ~ [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

"Enlightenment is an accident. But spiritual practice makes you more accident-prone." ~ Buddhist saying

"You have to be really aware of the difference between fruitfulness and success because the world is always talking to you about your success. Society keeps asking you: "Show me your trophies. Show me, how many books have you written? Show me, how many games did you win? Show me, how much money did you make? Show me. . . ." And there is nothing wrong with any of that. I am saying that finally that's not the question. The question is: "Are you going to bear fruit?" And the amazing thing is that our fruitfulness comes out of our vulnerability and not just out of our power. Actually it comes out of our powerlessness. If the ground wants to be fruitful, you have to break it open a little bit. The hard ground cannot bear fruit; it has to be raked open. And the mystery is that our illness and our weakness and our many ways of dying are often the ways that we get in touch with our vulnerabilities. You and I have to trust that they will allow us to be more fruitful if lived faithfully. Precisely where we are weakest and often most broken and most needy, precisely there can be the ground of our fruitfulness. That is the vision that means that death can indeed be the final healing—because it becomes the way to be so vulnerable that we can bear fruit in a whole new way. Like trees that die and become fuel, and like leaves that die and become fertilizer, in nature something new comes out from death all the time. So you have to realize that you are part of that beautiful process, that your death is not the end but in fact it is the source of your fruitfulness beyond you in new generations, in new centuries." ~ Henri Nouwen [HERE](#)

Early the morning of September 15, 2023, in the midst of a wearisome task - fundraising efforts for a worthy non-profit - it seemed worth reading the day's devotional. WOW. This one hit me "right between the eyes!"

"There is many a Christian who feels the irksomeness of the duties of life, and feels his spirit revolting from them. To get up every morning with the firm resolve to find pleasure in those duties, and do them well, and finish the work which God has given us to do, that is to drink Christ's cup. The humblest occupation has in it materials of discipline for the highest heaven." ~ F.W. Robertson; Page 259 in *Daily Strength for Daily Needs* (book of Hettie Miller's, Steve's great-grandmother)

These Saint Francis of Assisi quotes come from September 18, 2023 Silent Retreat reading of the book *Love Poems from God*:

- A kind face is a precious gift. ~ St. Francis of Assisi (Page 34)
- I hear you singing, my soul, but how can it be that God's voice has now become my own? "This is just a wedding gift from our Divine Union," my Beloved said. ~ St. Francis of Assisi (Page 44)

- Let us be your instruments that break every shackle, for do not the caged ones weep. ... Yes, I will console any creature before me that is not laughing or full of passion for their art or life; for laughing and passion - beauty and joy - is our heart's truth, all else is labor and foreign to the soul. ~ St. Francis of Assisi (Page 45)
- Does every creature have a soul? Surely they do; for anything God has touched will have life forever, and all creatures He has held. ~ St. Francis of Assisi (Page 46)
- The result of prayer is life. Prayer irrigates the earth and heart. ~ St. Francis of Assisi (Page 54)

[This Merrit Malloy poem](#) regarding love and "give what's left of me away," shared by Bill Tucker, read regularly at the end of worship

"Hearing a melody is hearing, having heard, and being about to hear, all at once. Every melody declares to us that the past can be there without being remembered, the future without being foreknown." ~ Victor Zuckerkandl, "philosopher of music" quoted by Rabbi Sacks in [The Spirituality of Song](#) HA'AZINU

"Music is a form of sensed continuity that can sometimes break through the most overpowering disconnections in our experience of time." ~ Rabbi Sacks in [The Spirituality of Song](#) HA'AZINU

"There's an old expression: 'God never wastes pain.' I can see now, years down the road, how true that was for me. My trauma was the soil from which something beautiful would grow; I simply had to trust, wait and keep responding to life with hope." ~ Mallory Weggemann, swimmer and five-time Paralympic medalist, as quoted in Guideposts Oct/Nov 2023 edition

"The first of these contexts was the "rigid Calvinism" in which Lincoln was raised in Kentucky and Indiana. Most of the reading Lincoln did as a youth, until his mid-teen years, was from the Bible or textbooks that drew heavily on the Bible for their lessons. Both the Bible and the textbooks were interpreted by Lincoln's preachers and teachers in a Calvinistic manner: the total depravity of man and absolute sovereignty of a God that predestined souls to heaven or hell." ~ Gordon Leidner's review of Alan Guelzo's book, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (p. 37 of *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Volume 44, Number 2, Fall 2023*)

Lincoln, it is obvious to this reader, in his four years of leading the nation through a terrible war diligently sought the guidance of the Almighty through his frequent prayers and frequent reading of the Bible. In so doing, he increasingly manifested a desire to live coram Deo before the face of God. Although he evidently considered his devotions essential to receiving direction from the providential God whose "will prevails," it is the fruit of Lincoln's leadership, rather than whether he was granted a place in heaven, which is most relevant to the free world today. ~ Gordon Leidner, in his review of Alan Guelzo's book, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (p. 41 of *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Volume 44, Number 2, Fall 2023*)

"Sprout a pair of wings and rise above this." ~ Janet Boyd to her friend Mary Lester from "The Memory Box" story in Guideposts, Oct/Nov 2023 edition

"A hurting heart has wisdom." ~ Janet Boyd to her friend Mary Lester from "The Memory Box" story in Guideposts, Oct/Nov 2023 edition "I also will never stop thanking God for teaching me that even in the midst of loss, love persists" ~ Mary Lester (concluding sentence from that story)

"Past and future veil God from our sight; burn up both of them with fire." ~ Rumi, the great poet and teacher of Sufism (quoted on page 53 in *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle)

"Time is what keeps the light from reaching us. There is no greater obstacle to God than time." ~ Meister Eckhart, the thirteenth-century spiritual teacher (quoted on page 53 in *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle)

"Right here, right now" ~ Leland and Patty Davis

"If not now, when?" ~ Zen tradition question (quoted on page 52 in *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle)

"Once you can feel what it means to be present, it becomes much easier to simply choose to step out of the time dimension ***whenever time is not needed for practical purposes*** and move more deeply in the Now." ~ page 53 in *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle (bolding and italics by Steve Long, with this note: "the amount of time needed" can vary dramatically based on personal choice and old habits dying hard for some of us!")

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." ~ Joshua 1:9 (reminder of Footprints poem)

"True pilgrimage changes lives, whether we go halfway around the world or out to our own backyards." ~ Theologian Martin Palmer

Elegant, passionate, and filled with the love of God's creation, Abraham Joshua Heschel's *The Sabbath* has been hailed as a classic of Jewish spirituality ever since its original publication--and has been read by thousands of people seeking meaning in modern life. In this brief yet profound meditation on the meaning of the Seventh Day, Heschel, one of the most widely respected religious leaders of the twentieth century, introduced the influential idea of an 'architecture of holiness' that appears not in space but in time. Judaism, he argues, is a religion of time: it finds meaning not in space and the material things that fill it but in time and the eternity that imbues it, so that 'the Sabbaths are our great cathedrals.'

"Worry is the warning light that God has been shoved to the sideline" ~ Rick Warren

"Worry is an obstacle to joy. Worry is forgetting that you're not in charge. When I can lean into that perspective, my worry starts to fade. ... Perspective is the antidote to worry." ~ Savannah Guthrie in Guideposts Apr/May 2024

"In Jesus' time, when the waters of the pool of Beth-zatha were troubled, it was believed they had been stirred up by an angel and endowed with healing power. Thus, there is a glimmer of hope in being troubled today. When we are troubled, it means we too have been touched by divine compassion and empowered for healing." ~ Matt Laney, [UCC post of 2024-06-05](#)

"Less thinking, More loving" ~ St. Teresa of Avila

Yesterday, I was so clever I wanted to change the world--today I am wise so I am changing myself. ~ Rumi

Whatever lifts the corners of your mouth, trust that. Be like a tree and let the dead leaves drop.
~ Rumi

Gratitude is the wine for the soul. Go on. Get drunk. ~ Rumi

"All shall be well, all shall be well...For there is a Force of love moving through the universe That holds us fast and will never let us go." ~ Saint Julian of Norwich (c.a. 1342-1416)

[Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.](#) ~ [John Wesley](#)

"Less thinking, more loving." ~ Saint Teresa of Avila

"I never lose. Either I win or I learn" ~ Nelson Mandela

"Kindness is my only guiding star. In its light, I sail a straight route, I have my motto written on my sail: 'To live in love.'" – St. Therese of Lisieux