

Compiled by Lila Briggs

"I used to think that God's gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character the more easily we could reach them. I now find that God's gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that it is not a question of growing taller but of stooping lower." - F.B. Meyer 1847-1929

Who practices hospitality entertains God himself. - Anonymous

"Man considers the actions, but God weighs the intentions." - Thomas A Kempis

Our notion of sacrifice is the wringing out of us something we don't want to give up, full of pain and agony and distress. The Bible idea of sacrifice is that I give as a love gifts the very best thing I have." - Oswald Chambers

"You are not accepted by God because you deserve to be, or because you have worked hard for him, but because Jesus died for you." - Colin Urquhart

"In God there is no was or will be, but a continuous and unbroken is. In Him history and prophecy are one and the same." - A.W. Tozer

"Beware of being in bondage to yourself or to other people. Oppression and depression never come from the spirit of God. He never oppresses, he convicts and comforts."
- Oswald Chambers

" 'Me' is always at the bottom of all sin. It may spell drink, lust, pride, covetousness, self will, but it is some form of "me." - Anonymous

"Use everything as if it belongs to God. It does. You are his steward." - Anonymous

"Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God and a scourge to Satan." - Anonymous

ADVICE FROM HORSES

- Take life's hurdles in stride
- Loosen the reins
- Be free spirited
- Keep the burrs from under your saddle.
- Carry your friends when they need it.
- Keep stable
- Spur yourself on to greater things

Strange Facts & Trivia

(from Joey Green's book *Amazing Kitchen Cures*)

- Owls are the only birds that can see the color blue.
- The common goldfish is the only animal that can see both infrared and ultraviolet light
- All United States presidents have worn glasses, though many chose not to be seen wearing them in public.
- Fingernails grow .02 inches per week—four times faster than toenails.
- As early as 3000 BC, Egyptian women stained their fingernails with henna.
- The Chinese invented enamels and lacquers as early as 3000 BC and used the color of fingernail polish to indicate social status. In 600 BC, the royal family of the Chou Dynasty had their nails painted gold and silver.
- In Ancient Egypt, Queen Nefertiti had her fingernails and toenails painted ruby red—a color forbidden to be painted on any other woman's nails.
- In 1952 Shridhar Chilla of Pune, Maharashtra, India, stopped cutting his fingernails. As of March 1997, he had the longest fingernails in the world on record. The fingernail on his left thumb measured four feet seven inches.
- The white, crescent shaped part of the fingernail is called the lunule (from the word luna, meaning “moon”)
- Approximately one tenth of the earth's surface is permanently covered with ice. If all the ice melted, the sea would rise by about two hundred feet and many of the world's largest cities, including New York, Los Angeles, London and Tokyo, would be underwater.
- Ice floats because expansion makes it lighter than water.
- Ice skating was invented as a form of winter transportation, most likely by the Scandinavians, who fashioned skates from the bones of elk, ox and reindeer some two thousand years ago.
- Abraham Lincoln's mother, Nancy, died when the family dairy cow ate poisonous mushrooms and she drank the milk.
- The average American consumes 1,500 pounds of food each year.
- Cows have four stomachs
- In 1804, French chemist Armand Sequin erroneously concluded that the ingredient in the bark of the cinchona tree that cured malaria was gelatin. Sequin published his wrong findings, prompting physicians to treat their malaria patients with clarified glue. The ingredient in the cinchona bark that cures malaria is quinine.

- The average housefly lives for one month.
- The praying mantis is the only insect that can turn its head.
- Scientists have discovered more than 900,000 different types of insects.
- Some insects taste with their feet, some have ears on their legs, and most smell with their antennae and breathe through holes in their sides.
- An ant can lift up to fifty times its weight.
- Humans spend a third of their lives sleeping.
- Fish sleep with their eyes open because they do not have eyelids.
- Armadillos sleep an average of 18.5 hours every day.

Some Prayers And Thoughts From Some of our Nation's Street Kids

- “Dear God. I just want someone to love me, someone to talk to when I need to talk, someone to cry on when I need to cry. Most of all someone to love me and walk as far as they wish through my life. Amen”
- “I do not consider myself to be a follower, just a lonely, deserted soul in a barbaric city, who walks his own treacherous path in life.” (Brian after 6 mo on the street)
- Learn to listen like a teddy bear, with ears open and mouth closed tight. Learn to forgive like a teddy bear, with an open heart, not caring who is right. Learn to live like a teddy bear, with arms open and imperfect eyesight.
- Do not ask for your life’s load lightened, but for courage to endure. Do not ask for fulfillment in all your life,. Do not ask for perfection in all you do, but for the wisdom not to repeat mistakes. And finally, do not ask for more before saying thank You for what you have already received. If you are looking for somebody to blame.....look in the mirror. There is no challenge that cannot be met and dream that cannot be achieved.
- My precious Jesus, I am hurting. To write everything would fill this book. You know my troubles, You know my questions and You know my answers. Please help me. Give me strength and please give me what I need to be happy. Please love and take care of my cats and all the hungry people and creatures of the world.
- Help me Dear Lord as I travel towards You. There are many detours which will try to distract me away from You. Help me as I travel my path to cherish the parents You gave me. Help me to do my best in all my endeavors, whether I may win or lose. Help me to never lose hope though there may be difficult times. Help me to choose good friends. Help me to choose the right mate so that

I may have a happy family someday. Help me, though I may fall, to continue on my journey towards You. Help me, dear Lord, I want so much to be with You. Amen

- If all lips spoke the truth, all pride was cast aside,
 greed was packed and stored away and jealousy subside.
If love could rule the universe, kindness was sown to every race,
 then one could glance into a mirror and view God in his face.
(by a 16 yr old girl)

God's Energizing Spirit

Taken from Dialogues with God by Frances J. Roberts

O My child, I will help thee and that speedily. I am nearer to thee than breathing. I am more real than all thy desires or thy fears. Yea, My Spirit is a quickening, life giving spirit. The letter killeth – the law condemns, but I say unto thee, I come to forgive; I come to restore; I come to bless and to heal. I come to be thy Light.

In My presence there is no darkness. Have ye not read that in the Eternal City there is no need of candle, nor of the sun or moon, because the Lamb is the Light of it? Surely if I can brighten all of Eternity, I have ample supply to flood thy heart and mind and thy body with My mighty power. My light, and My love—My deep joy and My energizing spirit.

Have ye not read (Rom 8:11) that the self same Spirit that raised the body of Jesus up from the dead dwelleth in You to energize your mortal body through His indwelling Spirit? Ye need not depend upon thine own limited strength and endurance.

My arm is not shortened that I cannot save. I stand ready to support thee. Yea, to thee I say, underneath are My everlasting arms. They are not only powerful arms, but they are arms of love and tenderness.

When you think of Me, disassociate thy thoughts from all that ye know of people, for I am Infinite. Think of it! In all My characteristics, I am not only far beyond all that ye could ever appropriate or need, but beyond all ye can even fancy.

Not in wildest imagination can ye guess the depths of My love. By no mental gymnastics can ye compute My power. Never mind! Just give Me thy hand and I will give thee Myself. Give Me every doubt, every fear, every heartache, I am here to help. I am here to carry the load and minister to thy need. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. I am thy God; be not afraid.

Food Stuff

PASTA....got leftovers? Don't toss that extra cooked pasta, transform it into a Mexican Pasta Skillet.

Heat 1 tsp oil in skillet. Brown 1 lb. ground turkey with 1 small onion, chopped and 2 tsp cumin. Stir in 1 can (10 oz) mild enchilada sauce, 1 can (11 oz) Mexican style corn and 1 cup cooked leftover pasta. Add 1 tbsp chopped cilantro to skillet and cook until mixture is heated through. Garnish with shredded Mexican style cheese blend.

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## Shelf Life

Make your produce last longer with these tips from chefs Matt Bolus , Charleston, S C. and Willis Loughhead, New York.

- Leafy Greens....store them in an open container in the fridge. If you opt to leave the vegetables in the bag, poke holes in the plastic to let them breathe.
- Bananas.....When you get them home, break them apart. Bananas rot in bunches, so if one browns first, it will cause the others to turn more quickly.
- Tomatoes....store on the counter, stem side down. Avoid the fridge, they'll lose flavor and texture. Never leave in plastic, they won't last as long.
- Broccoli, cauliflower....remove from the plastic bag and lightly wrap heads in paper towels. Store them stem side down in the fridge crisper drawer.

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## Health Issues

We try to be careful about carrying germs from one place to another or one person to another but there are areas that we sometimes forget about that can be real germ havens. Woman's Day gives us a list of some of them.

Colored coded as the threat levels ...they are:

Red = severe

Orange = high

Yellow = elevated

Blue = guarded

Green = low

✚ **The Kitchen sponge** (also dishrags, or hand/T towels used in the kitchen are places germs collect)

**Red** - The porous damp surface is ripe for bacterial growth, especially after you wipe up juices from raw meat and poultry. Wipe another cooking area and you risk spreading E.coli, salmonella and campylobacter, all of which lead to a sick stomach. To be safe, after wiping up whatever leaked on the counter, wash the sponge with soap and hot water before using again. Toss it regularly in the dishwasher for a real sanitizing rinse. You may microwave a damp sponge on high (no metal please) for 1-2 minutes, but be careful, it'll be very hot when done. (I also sanitize them with Clorox, which I sometimes use in the water when hand washing my dishes or when I am cleaning stains from dishes or sinks)

✚ **The counters and cutting board**

**Red**.... any place you do wet food prep can be a hotbed of germs. The biggest mistake: not properly sanitizing areas contaminated by meat and poultry.

✚ To be safe, use one cutting board for meats, another for ready to eat foods, like vegetables. Sanitize counters with a solution of 1 tbslp unscented liquid bleach in 1 gallon of water, says health and safety expert Debra Holtzman.

✚ **Your purse....**

**Blue**..if you keep it away from food prep areas. **Yellow**...if you frequently place it on the kitchen counter. Believe it or not, the bottom of your purse is a germ playground. Charles Gerba, PHD, an environmental microbiologist at the Univ. of AZ, studied handbags and found germs that cause skin infections, colds and diarrhea, among other ailments. Since most women don't carry their purses by the bottom (and the degree of contagion is based on volume and concentration) you probably don't need to worry much. But if you regularly toss your purse on the counter where you also prepare meals, stop now. To be safe...hang your purse on a hook when you use a public restroom. Likewise, keep it off the floor when you're out in public.

✚ **The shower curtain.....**

**Yellow**...just because water hits it every day doesn't mean it's clean. An unwashed vinyl shower curtain can get slimy and slime breeds bacteria, like sphingomonas and methylobacteria, says Allison Janse. Coauthor of the "Germ Freak's Guide to Outwitting Colds and Flu." These contribute to respiratory problems, particularly in people with immune disorders and allergies. So be safe...wash a vinyl curtain regularly with a bleach solution. (and FYI, glass doors are less likely to get slimy)

✚ **The bathtub/shower.....**

**Yellow** .. at home **Red**... at the gym. After the kitchen, the tub is one of the germiest places in the house. In a 2006 study, staph germs were found in 26% of the bathtubs tested (vs only 6% of the garbage cans tested) But generally speaking, you're not at risk unless you have open sores while you take a soak. A riskier tub bug, athlete's foot, a highly contagious, fungus.

✚ To be safe....clean out the tub with a disinfectant spray after use. If you take shower at the gym, always wear flip flops and be sure to dry your feet thoroughly,. You may want to apply an antifungal powder or spray before

✚ **The family phone and computer.....**

**Green**....Everyone in the house touches them. When one of you has a cold or the flu and coughs or sneezes on either or both...there's a small chance you could pick up a bug. Because some viruses can live up to 24 hours on a surface, but don't panic, contagion depends on concentration, volume, and whether you touch the infected area and then your eyes, nose or mouth. To be safe....Keep we wipes near the phone and computer and wipe the surfaces before you use them, or your hands after. Doing this may help you avoid one more cold this season.

✚ ATMs and pens at checkouts.....

**Yellow** to **Red**...Unless you stick your hands in your mouth, nose or eyes immediately after touching these things, you won't get sick. To be safe....consider using your own pen whenever possible. And give your hands a swipe with an antibacterial wipe after touching the ATM.

✚ A shopping cart.....

**Blue** – adult **Yellow** – child. Think about how many people touch a cart, how many baby bottoms sit on it and how many leaky packages of meat ride in it every day. Yes, carts carry high numbers of germs—from foodborne germs to cold and flu germs, to germs in feces. Still, the risk of getting sick is pretty slim unless you eat while you cruise the store. For babies who touch the handle and then put their fingers in their mouths, the risk is higher. To be safe don't eat while shopping, wash your hands when you get home. Before you put the baby in the cart, go over the seat with a saniwipe. Many stores now provide them near the carts.

✚ Bathroom doorknobs and handles.....

**Blue** ...at home **Red** ...in public. The germ threat level on bathroom doorknobs depends entirely on where that bathroom is located. At home, it's fairly low because you know who's touching it. In public, you may want to think twice before making hand to door contact. "A lot of people don't wash their hands after using the facilities," says Dr Schmidt, "so there's a wide variety of microbes, from E coli and salmonella to viruses that cause diarrhea." To be safe...if you can push the door open with your shoulder or use a paper towel to open the door, do it. If you have to make contact, use hand sanitizer right after exiting.

✚ The gym.....

**Blue**.... First things first...going to the gym far outweighs not going in terms of your health – that's how low your germ risk is. Nonetheless, MRSA, a bacteria that causes staph infection resistant to many antibiotics, can be transmitted if you wipe off your machine and then later wipe the sweat off your face with the same towel, says Haris Schlecht, MD, an assistant professor of medicine at Drexel Univ. College of Medicine. To be safe....Take a paper towel to wipe the machine and your own towel for face wipeups. Aif you have any cuts, cover them with a bandage before going to the gym.

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## Right Size Portions

A guide from "Woman's Day" magazine based on standards that most nutritionists follow, as to what one serving should look like, of a small number but a variety of foods.

Steak....size of iPod classic

Cheese size of matchbox

Pancake ..size of a DVD

Pasta ...size of an ice cream scoop

Potato....size of a computer mouse

Fish....size of a personal checkbook

Butter....size of a postage stamp

Salad dressing....size of a 1 oz shot glass

Brown rice....size of a baseball

Peanut butter....size of a golf ball

Beans....size of a regular lightbulb

Dark chocolate....size of a dental floss container

## Plants

I HAVE LISTED THESE BEFORE I THINK BUT IT'S BEEN SOMETIME SO WILL GIVE THE LIST THAT WOMAN'S DAY HAS PUT OUT OF THE TOP 10 AIR FILTERING PLANTS FOR HOME OR OFFICE.

1. BAMBOO PALM...(CHMAEDOREA SEIFRIZII)
2. CHINESE EVERGREEN...(AGLAONEMA MODESTUM)
3. ENGLISH IVY.....(HEDERA HELIX)
4. GERBERA DAISY..... (GERBERA JAMESONII)
5. JANET CRAIG DRACAENA...(DRACAENA DEREMENSIS "JANET CRAIG")
6. MASS CANE/CORN PLANT...(DRACAENA MASSANGEANA)
7. PEACE LILY...(SPATHIPHYLLUM "MAUNA LOA")
8. POT MUM...(CHRYSANTHEMUM MONFOLIUM)
9. SNAKE PLANT...(SANSEVIERIA TRIFASCIATA "LAURENTI")
10. STRIPED DRACAENA...(DRACAENA DEREMERISIS "WARNECKII")

*NOTE:* ALL OF THE ABOVE PLANTS ARE VERY EASY TO GROW AND MAINTAIN. I HAVE OR HAVE HAD AT SOME TIME ALL OF THEM AND THEY TAKE VERY LITTLE CARE, AND REALLY ARE HELPFUL IN KEEPING YOUR HOME (OR OFFICE) AIR HEALTHIER. ALSO, BECAUSE OF THEIR IONIZATION OF THE AIR, PLANTS HELP WITH YOUR DISPOSITION!

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## Sing Praises

"For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited:  
'I am the Lord, and there is no other.' "  
- Isaiah 45:18

Carl Boberg, a 26 year old Swedish minister wrote a poem in 1885 which he called "O Store Gud"—"O Mighty God." The words, literally translated to English, said: "When I the world consider / Which Thou has made by Thine almighty Word. And how the webb of life Thou wisdom guideth/ and all creation feedeth at Thy board. Then doth my soul burst forth in song of praise/ Oh, great God, Oh, great God!

His poem was published and 'forgotten"—or so he thought. Several years later, Carl was surprised to hear it being sung to the tune of an old Swedish melody; but the poem and hymn did not achieve widespread fame.

Hearing this hymn in Russia, English missionary, Stuart Hine, was so moved he modified and expanded the words and made his own arrangement of the Swedish melody. He later said his first three verses were inspired, line upon line, by Russia's rugged Carpathian Mountains. The first verse was composed when he was caught in a thunderstorm in a Carpathian village, the second as he heard the birds sing near the Romanian border, and

the third as he witnessed many of the Carpathian mountain dwellers coming to Christ. The final verse was written after Dr Hine returned to Great Britain.

Sometime later, Dr. J. Edwin Orr heard "How Great Thou Art" being sung by Naga Tribespeople in Assam, in India, and decided to bring it back to America for use in his own meetings. When he introduced it at a conference in California, it came to the attention of music publisher, Tim Spencer, who contacted Mr. Hine and had the song copyrighted. It was published and recorded.

During the 1954 Billy Graham Crusade in Harringay Arena, George Beverly Shea was given a leaflet containing this hymn. He sang it to himself and shared it with the members of the Graham team. Though not used in London, it was introduced the following year to audiences in Toronto.

In the New York Crusade of 1957, it was sung by Bev Shea ninety nine times... with the choir joining the majestic refrain: "Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art!"

### How Great Thou Art

*(Words by Carl Boberg and Music by Swedish folk Melody, 1885)*

O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder,  
consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,  
I see the sun, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.

When thru the woods and forest glades I wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook and feel the gently breeze

And when I think that God His Son not sparing,  
sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in.  
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
and there proclaim, "My God how great Thou art."

Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, My Savior God to Thee, how great Thou art! How great Thou art!

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## **The Power Of The Snow**

*(from a bulletin of C. of Christ in Ogalalla, Ne.)*

I watched the snowflakes fall without a whisper. Lighter than down, they whirled on the breeze and floated noiselessly to the ground. One by one, with gentle kiss, they blanketed the earth with a cozy coat of pristine white. In the soft glow of morning sun they bathed the world in a aura of peace, purity and innocence. The snowflakes still came down. I watched one settle on my palm and for one twinkling moment thrilled at the perfect beauty of its delicate crystalline form. Then in silence it melted and was gone. I pondered, "is anything more helplessly fragile than a snowflake?" The snowflakes still came down.

The hours passed and one by one they fell. The mighty freeway traffic slowed to a crawl. Men, be they strong or wise, glanced out their window and shivered, stoking with another log the fire. Rooftops creaked beneath the weight of snow and great trees bowed their bows in submission. Even the wind seemed to lower its voice in the over whelming presence of that cloak of white. Creation paused, the earth seeming to slow its rotation in obeisance and I marveled at the awesome power of the snowflake.

Then, I thought of my life which oft' seems frail and weak, so powerless, afraid and alone; and I glimpsed a vision of what power could be mine if I but showered on the world my flakes of truth and kindness with the same tireless persistence as the snow.

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## **Answers To Last Month's Quiz**

- |             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Mark     | 6. Daniel       |
| 2. Psalms   | 7. Exodus       |
| 3. Job      | 8. Ecclesiastes |
| 4. Acts     | 9. Hebrews      |
| 5. Ill John | 10. I John      |

## This Month's Quiz: The Anointed Ones

1. Who anointed a stone and dedicated it to God?
2. What holy man was anointed by an immoral woman?
3. What substance was usually used for anointing in Israel?
4. Who according to James, should anoint the sick believer with oil?
5. Who did Moses anoint with the blood of a ram?
6. What New Testament word means "anointed"?
7. What revered judge anointed Saul?
8. What priest anointed Solomon King?
9. Who was anointed by the Holy Spirit?
10. What Persian king was considered to be God's anointed one?

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## Our Nation's Godly Heritage

The following is excerpts from Bob Yandian's book One Nation Under God. He has some interesting thoughts to consider.

### **Blessed Is The Nation Whose God Is The Lord**

A nation's success depends on believers in Jesus Christ who rely and act on the Word of God as explained in the Bible. When a nation looks at God as its leader, that nation will succeed. Psalm 33:12 states: "blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

We who are believers in Jesus Christ....are the salt of the earth....We know that salt preserves and flavors. As believers, we are the preservers of the earth (the Greek word for "earth" – ge – refers to physical land) -we are the hands, the feet, the voice of Jesus Christ on the earth. And we are called by God to be conquerors and victors. (Rom 8:37; I Cor 15:57) As believers, we flavor "bland" conditions, causing them to change.

We... are the light of the world....(The Greek word for "world" – kosmos – refers to the world's order or the world's system) We believers have been placed on earth by God to dispel Satan's darkness which wraps the world's system. We are the salt of the physical land we stand on, but we are the light in a world of darkness.

We are exhorted to pray for our nation and leaders "for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. (I Timothy 2:2)

Throughout the bible we see that God has preserved nations for a remnant, a few believers who will trust in Him. Ezekiel 22:30 states that the Word of the Lord came saying "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none."

In that instance, the Lord found no one. But today He can find believers who will stand in the gap and pray for the nation that it will not be destroyed.

We in America have such problems as pornography, child abuse, and sexual permissiveness due to the cause of the disease that lies behind these symptoms; as a whole we as a nation have stopped relying upon the principles in the Bible. But in spite of our problems in America, we still exist as the strong nation we are today, because the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ has a remnant which refuses to lose its Savior.

America is not a great nation because its people as a whole pray. America is great because of the salt within the nation the remnant of the people who know the Lord God. The Bible does not say that if the whole nation prays, God will heal the land, it says "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Satan (referred to as 'the god of this world' in 2 Corinthians 4:4) has dominion and some authority as the ruler of this earth. He is the one behind the problems in our nation today. But when Jesus after being crucified rose from the dead, He gave us authority over Satan's power, and the Bible contains much instruction in how to use that power. Jesus said "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). He also said "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13).

"Occupy", a Greek military term, means to take over the land and keep it. We believers are in enemy territory. We are to take the land from the enemy, Satan; set up camp; occupy until the Lord Jesus comes -- and not be trodden underfoot. We are to put Satan under our feet (Luke 10:19). We also know that Satan's days are numbered because the Bible shows us that Jesus Christ will rule and reign in the end and Satan will be imprisoned.

The Bible says in Ephesians 3:10 that God is manifesting to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, through the Church, His manifold wisdom. We, the church are here to show the earth -- the demons, Satan – God's manifold wisdom.

In the midst of a world that is crumbling, filled with problems, that knows war, we can stay together we can bring peace to our nation. In the midst of it all we can bring individual peace because we are the salt of the earth.

Through hearing God's word and through prayer, we can make the difference.

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Since February is the month of Valentine's Day, hearts and flowers, love and cupids ..... perhaps the following story is appropriate to end with this month.

## **The First Valentine**

*excerpted from "Moments for Each Other," by Robert Strand*

The story of Valentine's Day begins in the third century with an oppressive roman emperor and a humble Christian martyr. The emperor was Claudius II, the Christian was Valentinus. Claudus had ordered all Romans to worship 12 gods and he had also made it a crime punishable by death to associate with Christians or worship their God. Valentinus was dedicated to the ideal of Christ and not even the threat of death could keep him from practicing his beliefs. He was arrested and imprisoned

During the last weeks of Valentinus' life a quite remarkable thing happened. The jailer, noting that Valentinus was a man of refinement and learning, asked if it would be possible for him to bring his daughter Julia, for lessons, for teaching. Julia had been blind since birth and was a beautiful girl with a quick mind. Valentinus read to her stories of Rome's history...he described the world of nature to her...he taught her mathematics...and told her about God. She, for the first time, began to see the world through his eyes, trusted in his wisdom and found a special comfort in his quiet strength.

"Valentinus, does God hear our prayers?" Julia asked one day.

"Yes, my child, He hears each one." He replied.

"Do you know what I pray for every morning and every night? I pray that I might be able to see. I want so much to see everything you have told me about."

"God does what is best for us if we will only believe in Him." Valentinus said.

"Oh, Valentine, I do believe," Julia said intensely. "I do!" She then knelt and grasped his hand. They sat quietly, she kneeling, he sitting, each praying. Suddenly there was a brilliant light in the prison cell.

Radiant, Julia screamed, Valentinus, I can see! I can see!"

On the eve of his death, Valentinus wrote a last note to Julia, urging her to continue her learning and encouraging her to stay close to God. He signed it. "From Your Valentine."

His death sentence was carried out the next day, February 14, 270. He was buried at what is now the church of Praxedes in Rome. Legend tells us that Julia herself planted a pink

blossomed almond tree near his grave. Today, the almond tree remains the symbol of abiding love and friendship. On the anniversary of his death, February 14, St. Valentine's Day, messages of affection, love, and devotion are exchanged.

**"They who love are but one step from heaven."**

**- James Russell Lowell**

**"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love,  
but the greatest of these is love."**

**- 1 Corinthians 13:13**

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May you be blessed every day, not just on Valentine's Day with love from those you love and in expressing love to others. May we recognize how great the love was, is and always will be, of the One who first loved us and sacrificed all to show us that love.....and Who continues to shower us with the blessings of His great love!! Because of Him....Lila