

## INTRODUCTION

This commentary is written to aid and encourage maturing Christians who sometimes find the book by Oswald Chambers My Utmost for His Highest difficult to understand in his original language. I have observed that this book is owned and cherished but not customarily read. I believe there are words here that were inspired by the Holy Spirit and have been preserved for disciples of Jesus Christ.

After Oswald Chambers death in Egypt in 1917 at the age of forty-three, his widow began to assemble his teachings and publish them. In 1935 Dodd, Mead, and Company, published My Utmost for His Highest in the United States. I was introduced to this forty-five years later. When Barbour and Company published this book using the same language and providing space for personal notes I bought and used it.

Should you respond to my invitation to learn from Oswald Chambers how to mature as a disciple of Jesus Christ you will need one or the other of these books. The design of this study is that you read Oswald Chambers' words for the day and the scripture, then this commentary. It is not a theological study, nor is it written to be a daily devotional guide. This is written to encourage those who have read a few lessons and decided "*this is too deep for me.*" My aim is to correct that attitude. I think if you understand the teachings in this book, you will have hinds feet and be able to walk upon the high places as described in Habakkuk 3:19.

*Florine P. Childress*

I welcome your return response to this commentary.

E-mail address, [toberk@nehp.net](mailto:toberk@nehp.net) or

USA Postal mail, 222 Mtn. Heights Corcle, Scottsboro, AL 35769

Copyright © 4-2010, Florine P. Childress

January 1,

*Index: Crisis, Utmost for His Highest,  
Surrender, Abandonment.*

When we know we need to obey in a certain area or way, God just tells us to do that thing. We think we cannot. Chambers informs us that getting there is a question of the will. It is a choice of the will to obey or disobey.

In the second paragraph today he writes, "God's order has to work up to a crisis in our lives because we will not heed the gentler way." My family has been in some church circles, which makes this easy to believe. I have seen some people refuse the gentler way.

It is always God's intention that we grow from each crisis. He will assist to that end.

As you contemplate beginning a New Year re-read Chambers' words and this commentary for December 31<sup>st</sup>.

January 2,

*Index: Faith, Dependence on God, Worry,  
Surrender, Imagination.*

So many times we ask God "Why? Why has this happened?" About such questions, I have found Chambers to be correct. God doesn't answer many questions. Instead He shows us Himself. And that is sufficient.

Job had such an encounter with God. (Read Job 38:1 & 2) God begins by referring to "Words without knowledge, which darken counsel." When God finished, Job spoke saying, "I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see you." Job repents and God begins to replenish his losses.

This year we may all have some times of not knowing and questions we want answered. If we are fortunate and blessed we will find God Himself. Then the "not knowing the why of events" will no longer be important.

Some sentences in the Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> lesson harmonize with today's lesson.

January 3,

*Index:* Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Darkness.

I'm sure you will like this reading. Mario Rheinfurth once told our Sunday school class that nothing Jesus ever said was ridiculous or impossible to obey.

The last sentence is a teaching I learned long ago. Hosea 14:2 and Luke 11:2 are plain. Hosea instructs "Take with you words and Jesus said to His disciples "when you pray say". I have found that prayers require spoken words, not mental gyration, nor the best of thoughts unless they are spoken to God, Himself.

If you would like, you can read July 29<sup>th</sup> with this. That reading begins with the words "In the Bible clouds are always connected with God."

In my book I wrote on Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> "A cloud is not very thick. He can reach through it."

January 4,

*Index:* Providential will of God, Guidance.

The first two sentences in the study for today are vital to our peace of mind and growth in the Christian life.

I have had to fight impulsive actions almost all of my life. The impulse of feeling, if not accompanied with logic and sure leadership of the Holy Spirit, will bring disappointment somewhere.

His last sentence "Natural devotion will always deny Jesus somewhere or other" is one to delve into. He uses, I think, natural devotion to mean devotion not rooted in the Holy Spirit, devotion a person who is not a Christian might have.

January 5,

*Index: Self-sufficiency, Darkness.*

The entrance of Jesus Christ into a life can certainly be described as an invasion.

I have observed that some people have followed Jesus when they are young. As they learn more of life beyond their home turf there came times when they were invited - sometime compelled - to re-evaluate Jesus. He always stands just outside the door waiting until the person inside opens the door.

In line nine of the first paragraph there is a word '*saving*'. Use the word '*except*' if this substitution makes the sentence clearer.

A '*lodestar*' used in the last sentence is a star, especially Polaris that serves as a guide to navigators.

January 6,

*Index: Communion, Wait on God.*

We all have to find our own place to pitch our tent. My Bethel and my Ai are not the same as yours. I neither can tell you where nor how the altar in your home is to be. Nor how often to go there.

His first paragraph is one I have come to believe. This is one reason I write. I use permanent ink so that some day some one in my family will find things worthy of using.

I think this quotation from George Mac Donald fits Chambers' first paragraph for today.

#### Hoarding

In holy things may be unholy greed.  
Thou giv'st a glimpse of many a lovely thing  
Not to be stored for use in any mind,  
But only for the present spiritual need.  
The holiest bread, if hoarded, soon will breed  
The mammon-moth, the having pride...<sup>1</sup>

#### *This is my prose version of Hoarding*

God gives glimpses of many lovely things because of our present need. These glimpses are not to be hoarded in one mind.

Lack of trust that more glimpses will come or pride that I have been taken into a holy experience may cause me to hide and hoard this glimpse. Pride is a monumental thing which can erode that experience if it is not used and in turn shared with others.

Florine P. Childress

---

<sup>1</sup> George Mac Donald An Anthology edited by C. S. Lewis, Mac Millan New York © 1947

January 7,

*Index:* Friendship with Jesus,  
Intimacy with Jesus.

I need to remember what Chambers wrote in the second paragraph, "Fruit bearing is always mentioned as the manifestation of an intimate union with Jesus Christ." John 15:1-4. The fruit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, and faith. Gal. 5:22 & 23.

I am continually trying to learn how not to call attention to myself, not to make an impression of myself. I want to lead others to know and remember Jesus.



January 8,

*Index:* Identification, Living sacrifice.

Parents, especially must take note. God had no intention to take Isaac away from Abraham. God knew the sacrifice would be a ram caught by its horns. However, forever afterward Isaac was looked upon as being given to his father twice. Both times from God.

His title for today is significant.

Read Romans 12:1 & 2 along with his sentences today.

January 9,

*Index: Cleansed from sin, Introspection.*

In the beginning Chambers says, "The great mystical work of the Holy Spirit is in the dim regions of our personality which we cannot get at." I believe this.

One day last summer I kept making tracks putting up things, washing clothes, and the floors, doing housework, and gardening without having stopped for prayer. By late afternoon I was really feeling guilty because I had not gone to my closet with words to pray. Standing by the kitchen sink looking outside and down into the dishes that I was washing, I felt God speaking to me, "I know where you are, I have been walking around this house with you all day. I am with you more than you think." For the second time in my life I knew there was more of God in me than I know. Our spirit and God's, I believe, are doing hidden interactions.

There is another influence in our lives. Satan can gain access to our souls to the point that we believe a lie. We become certain that we are correct, regard-less of what others and God say. Such a person Chambers describes as obtuse. Watchman Nee would say such a one has deceived himself until he is obsessed. Nee's example was Saul before Jesus confronted him on the road to Damascus.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Spiritual Reality or Obsession, Watchman Nee  
©1970 Christian Fellowship Publishers, New York

January 10,

*Index: Conversion, Discipleship,  
Sanctification. Regeneration.*

I think I know how to talk about today's lesson. He is saying conversion means changing from one state to another as sugar is converted to alcohol. Nonbelievers convert from not believing that Jesus is the Son of God to a state of belief, which brings them to regeneration, in other words, a spiritual rebirth. I think an example of a person who became converted is Lew Wallace. He began to read the Bible to see why his friend was so anti-Christian. As a result of his reading he became a Christian and wrote Ben Hur. He may not have known much about regeneration nor salvation as other people understood it but God took care of that. He may not have heard about sanctification but God wasn't through with him when the public quit hearing about him.

As an example of one who did not, so far as we know, move into conversion and onto regeneration was the person called The Rich Young Ruler. See Mark 10:17-27, Matt. 19:16-23, and Luke 18:18-29. So far as we know The Rich Young Ruler did not receive the forgiveness of his sins which is given to those who convert from non belief to a belief that Jesus is the Son of God, and become, by choice of their own, reborn.

These are experiences Christians go through. It is possible and very likely most of us never realize we are passing through some of these steps.

(Continued on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>.)

(Jan. 10th continued)

But God knows what He is doing and He will finish the work He has begun in us. See Phil. 1:6

I understand that sanctification is not given to us at the time of our conversion when we become a Child of God. We will learn more about this as we move along.

In the last paragraph there is a typographical error in my copy. It reads "Then there follows the second mighty work of grace—"and' inheritance among them which are sanctified." The word *and* in this line should be "an'. Read Acts 20:32.

January 11,

*Index:* Spiritual stagnation, Pride.

I think missionaries must read this page often. Also Christians whose families cannot believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son.

January 12,

*Index: Pride, Alone with God.*

There is a phrase in the first paragraph "*spell out our own souls.*" Mother used this phrase '*spell out.*' It means to read letter by letter or with difficulty (to sound out); to make out or discern by close reading. The word *examine* might be a substitution. As we advance in knowing God, we understand more of Him and ourselves. *We 'spell out our souls.'*

I'll quickly admit that it is astounding how ignorant we are about ourselves.

January 13,

*Index: Alone with God.*

I am sure Joel McGraw, our pastor in the 1970s, read this more than once. Sometimes he would refer to whole tracts in our lives, which God had not yet conquered.

You may want to read Isaiah 51:1 & 2 along with this.

January 14,

*Index: Call of God.*

These ideas about *God's call* and *Isaiah's response* let me know that I could be an intercessor.

Isaiah heard *God* ask a question. He answered *Isa* 6:8.

January 15,

*Index:* Sanctification.

My first teaching about sanctification was from Joel McGraw who was the pastor of the church we were attending. I understood what he was teaching and I wanted to be a sanctified person.

I can tell the time fairly close and the place. It was on a Sunday night during the 1973-74 school year. Joel had preached, as I recall, using 2 Thes, 5:23 & 24 among other scriptures. We were called to prayer after the sermon. I was kneeling, Joel came to ask me if he could help. I said to him, "Do you mean to tell me that if I ask God to sanctify me he will?" His reply was, "Yes. It is God's will to do that and He will." I asked and I can tell you the results.

I was surprised the next day at the filth I found in that old school building where I taught and the control over my tongue. Inside I had caution, "Don't say that."

This was the beginning for me.

Chambers will have more to say about sanctification this year.

February 8<sup>th</sup> goes with this.



January 16,

*Index: Call of God.*

He uses a phrase today which we need to understand before we can understand the whole sentence. "It is the threading of God's word to us." Before we became so aware of the dangers of cholesterol, chefs and other cooks would push fat into a lean roast with a tube filled with fat from other portions of meat to tenderize and flavor the roast. This process was called threading. As it baked the fat would flow into the roast. The results would be a juicy, tender, and tasty roast. This may help to explain the intimate threading of Gods voice to us.

January 17,

*Index: Services, Call of God.*

There are days when I am "no better off" for having read the selection for the day. Today may be one of those days.

I read it anyway because it is like mortar between bricks. It holds the bricks of one idea to another. What will I find when I read it next year?

Don't worry if you get nothing out of some of his writings. They are not scripture. However I believe the Holy Spirit has preserved ideas for us in this book.

January 18,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus.

This is short but potent. Church women in their busy-ness need to read and heed what he writes today. To read again what was in yesterday's selection will clarify that service is because we love Christ not in order that we may please Him.

January 19,

*Index: Vision, Darkness, Self-sufficiency.*

Add this to your notes for the day. It is on page 49 of *The Hallelujah Factor* by Jack Taylor, publisher the Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn.

### El Shaddai

We have already viewed the meaning of El as "great and glorious." Shaddai occurs forty-eight times in the Old Testament and always is translated "Almighty." The prime suspect as a derivative means, "breast," implying nourishment, satisfaction, and supply. Putting the two parts of this name together we have El Shaddai, "the One who is mighty to completely nourish, satisfy, and supply us." In the Septuagint Greek the name Shaddai is rendered a number of times by the Greek word '*Ikanos*' which can be translated "all-sufficient." This is the name with which God approached Abraham in Genesis 17:1 to initiate the covenant. "I am El Shaddai" ["God Almighty"], He said to Abraham.

### *Addendum 2010*

I do not want us to forget that there are periods of great darkness which may come upon us and times of waiting for God's vision which He has given us to become reality. God affirms to us that He is El Shaddai.

January 20,

*Index:* Right relationship.

There are some wonderful lines here. I wonder which ones you will highlight. I especially like "Freshness does not come from obedience but from the Holy Spirit."

This seems a good day to give you a copy of this poem. I found it in Poems That Preach compiled by John R. Rice, Sword of the Lord Foundation, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Chamber's doesn't seem to have spoken to domestic servants but there is much in this book for women who are neither missionaries nor ministers.

### A Home Prayer

Lord of all pots and pans and things,  
Since I've no time to be a saint by doing lovely deeds  
Or watching late with Thee or dreaming in the dawnlight  
Or storming Heavens gates,  
Make me a saint by getting meals and washing up the plates!

Although I must have Martha's hands I have a Mary mind,  
And when I black the boots and shoes, Thy sandals, Lord, I find!  
I think of how they trod the earth, What time I scrub the floor,  
Accept this meditation, Lord! I haven't time for more.

Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and light it with Thy peace!  
Forgive me all my worrying and make all grumbling cease!  
Thou who didst love to give men food in a room or by the sea,  
Accept this service that I do — I do it unto Thee!

(This was written many years ago by a 19-year-old girl who was in domestic service, and was read by Dr. G. Campbell Morgan in Westminster Chapel, London)

January 21,

*Index: Memory's ministry, Devotion to Jesus.*

I tell myself to remember Chambers' words in the first paragraph "There is no joy in the soul that has forgotten what God prizes".

In the second paragraph we find "I remember....the love of thine espousals." This comes from Jeremiah 2:2. The word espousals have to do with the ceremony of becoming engaged or married.

"Give me to drink" were Jesus words to the Samaritan woman at the well. John 4:7.

The teaching that godly sorrow works repentance is found in 2 Cor. 7:10.

There are two sentences in the second paragraph "Does he find me recalling the time when I did not care for anything but Himself? Am I there now or have I become wise over loving him?" Perhaps he refers to loving the knowledge about Jesus and not loving Him, having head knowledge but not heart experience with Jesus. It is so easy to love knowledge and wisdom to an extreme.

I ask myself: Have I been kind to His reputation in my life. In all the words I have spoken and written have I always allowed Him to increase while I decreased.

January 22,

*Index: Concentration on God, Looking to God.*

I have found his observations in the first paragraph to be true. As you consider Chambers' exhortation to look to God, read Numbers 21:6 - 8 and John 3:14. God had a long time to teach His people the importance of a look and looking, and a glance and gazing.

January 23,

*Index: Concentration on God.*

Well, I've just had a new thought. As I age I must not become like a sullied mirror. A mirror whose reflective surface has become dulled. I have an example: a mirror I have had for 20 or more years. I can hardly use it because of the soil and deterioration. Chambers says that choosing the good things, which are not the best keeps us from reflecting the glory of God.

"We have to maintain ourselves in the place of beholding...." I have to learn how to "keep beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord." If I can do that, the reflecting surface inside me won't fade nor become dark nor flake off.

*Addendum 2010*

A worthy goal for me this year is to keep myself as a mirror without soil or tarnish. So that those who watch me can see Jesus and desire to become like Him.



January 24,

*Index: Vision, Bondslave of Jesus,  
Right Relationship.*

The scripture quoted at the close of today's reading is 1 Cor. 2:2.

Considering who we are and who God is I'd rather turn our attention for today to this selection I found in The Quest for Serenity.

I have meditated much on Morling's last two sentences.

Since God is **I AM** not I WAS nor I WILL BE, I find Morling's last two sentences are true. The circumstances of my life at the present are in His hands. I must deal with Him in the present and He with me in my present circumstances.

From "**The Quest for Serenity**"

"Remember this, busy and burdened disciples;

Man or woman tried by uncertain health;

Immersed in secular duties; Forced to a life of almost ceaseless publicity. Here is written. . . a guarantee, that not only at holy times and welcome intervals only, not only in the dust of death, but in the dust of life, there is prepared for you the peace of God, able to keep your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus . . . It is the secret of His presence.

Amidst the circumstances of your life, which are the expression of His will, He can keep you in it.

Nay . . . 'shall keep,' alive, and loving, and practical, and ready at His call."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The Quest for Security by G.H. Morling with notes and commentary by Ruth Bell Graham ©1998 Word Publishing

January 25,

*Index:* Surprise visits from God.

I think the first time I heard the phrase "*elbow room*" was when I read that this is the reason some pioneers pushed west when our nation was expanding (I was in grade school).

Today's lesson is important. I treasure the surprise visits of God. In another place in the book he wrote "Don't make a fetish of the rare moments." You will learn for yourself the balance between these two attitudes; To treasure, To make a fetish.

In 2002 I wrote in my book "So many people do not leave room for God. They get on the Internet to study all that is known of an illness or problem. They neglect the word of God with His counsel and promises of healing."

January 26,

*Index: Careful carelessness.*

Not many lilies get moved by wind, animals, or birds. They pretty much bloom close to their origin.

I really like Chamber's statement, "Jesus says if you are rightly related to Him and obey His Spirit that is in you, God will look after your feathers."

Anne Ortland wrote that women concentrate on three F's. **F**ood, **F**urniture, and **F**abric<sup>4</sup>. I believe Chambers used the word *feathers* to mean clothing, appearance, and/or reputation.

By the way, I don't find Chambers to be a man who negates women.

Chamber's last line fits the teaching that sanctification is a beginning and a process. I have found sanctification to be separate and subsequent to salvation.

---

<sup>4</sup> Disciplines of the Beautiful Woman, by Anne Ortland, Word Publisher, Waco, Texas ©1997 by Word Publisher

January 27,

*Index: Careful carelessness.*

Have you been reading the words of Oswald Chambers before my comments? I appeal to you to first read and meditate on his words.

The instruction found in Philippians 4:6 - 8 has been a consolation throughout my life. I brought my requests to God and found peace.

January 28,

*Index: Service, Oneness with God, Obstinacy,  
Self-will.*

I understand that when I am at one with the Father I will let myself be put upon, easily over-reached and easily ignored. Living like this will require the direction of the Holy Spirit because there will always be people who take advantage of us. We need discernment to know if these calls upon us are from God, Satan, or our own worldly desires.

January 29,

*Index: Circumstances, Duty, Faith, Service.*

The first sentence is from Isaiah 8:11.

Circumstances do speak to us and we have to deal with what they are and say to us. Our understanding is arrested. We don't know why the sudden changes come and how to suddenly re-act. I think of a friend. Within the space of a few days she changed from being full of joyous life to being a widow.

Chambers has presented us yesterday and today with the idea we can hurt the Lord. On January 28<sup>th</sup> we read "Obstinacy and self-will always stab Jesus Christ." Today we read "We have shown our ignorance . . . we serve Jesus in a spirit that is not His . . . we push His claims in the spirit of the devil." I've seen examples of this.

I don't want to hurt the Lord. I need to learn from these two lessons which Chambers has presented.

January 30,

*Index: Circumstances, Obedience,  
Amateur providence.*

Once again Chambers has Isaiah 8:11 in mind plus John 12:29. If the first paragraph speaks to you, you may want to read the July 16<sup>th</sup> lesson also.

I have observed a church staff member being, I thought, an amateur providence. Being able to control the circumstances of another's life he did so. My family may do a flash-back and find I was guilty of this when I was a young mother. I don't think I ever played God. But one of the hardest lessons I ever learned is "Don't get between God and the one I care about and love."

Since this is the first day listed in the index under the title Circumstances let's add this to our thoughts. A circumstance means a condition with respect to time, place, manner, or agent which accompanies, determines, or modifies a fact or event.

I read November 11<sup>th</sup> section with this.

#### *Addendum 2010*

Since there may be parents of wayward children reading this let me say that I found Chambers' teaching in *My Utmost . . .* when my children were making choices I did not think wise as we prayed for them. I was exhorted by such teaching as in today's third paragraph, "if you try to prevent suffering in another life, it may prove an obstruction between you and God." It will cause us agony and periods of learning for us to trust God and let Him peel our fingers one by one from the hold we have on our children. May I tell you learning how to do this and obeying it brings great blessings? We have been permitted to live long enough to see our children become obedient to the God we all serve.

January 31,

*Index:* Abandonment, Redemption,  
Redemptive reality.

Our world is spinning in such a changing whirl we must grab hold of the fact "that the gospel of God is the abiding reality," as Chambers writes.

I'd like to give you a copy of a song we sang at church at Happy Hill when I was a child.

### **Hold To God's Unchanging Hand**

If you want to meditate on Chambers' second paragraph think also about Math. 5:13 & 14. Unless we are willing to be salt we will not be the light of the world.



February 1,

*Index: Redemption, Call of God.*

When I read this selection I think of a group of Christians that I joined in the early 1970's. We were all so excited to learn that we could reach and grow beyond a beginning point of salvation that we thoughtlessly, carelessly hurt each other. I pictured us as the horizontal arms of the vertical cross. We were reaching toward God so intensely we were flailing others with our arms as we climbed.

February 2,

*Index:* Broken bread, Poured out wine,  
Call to preach, Call of God.

In the last part of Chambers first paragraph he gives us a contrast which we need to understand. When he writes "We are condemned to salvation through the Cross of Jesus." He is saying in different words what Jesus said to Nicodemus, "you must be born again." There is no option. However, discipleship is a choice. We may or may not choose to enroll.

After we decide to follow Jesus we are not asked if we like what He requests. Note this sentence; "God makes us broken bread and poured out wine to please Himself." The definition of broken bread and poured out wine is found in the last sentence of the July 15<sup>th</sup> lesson.

February 3,

*Index: Reality, Gospel of God.*

We neither read about nor do we know many who love Christ so much they willingly become as filth. Filth we avoid. Chambers said, "We have too many discreet affinities to allow ourselves to be made refuse."

This calls for a devotion to Jesus not many know.

Craven hearted means lacking the least bit of courage, contemptibly faint hearted.

February 4,

*Index:* Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Expressions,  
Abandonment, Witness.

This causes me to be quiet when I compare myself with Paul I don't like the level of my progress. I'd like to be the kind of Christian Chambers describes here.

*Constraint* is defined in the Merriam Collegiate Dictionary, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, as the act of being checked, restricted, or compelled to avoid or perform some action.

February 5,

*Index: Service, Source.*

This lesson is one to read alone, shut up with God. At the end of this page in my book I highlighted the last sentence and wrote the reference, Deut. 12:5-14.

Chambers is asking his students, "Are you willing to be like Paul?" Paul was in prison knowing that anytime he might be executed for his part in spreading the gospel. We need to remember that those who opposed the message that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, Messiah, and Savior were the ones who put Paul into the custody and dominion of Rome, the government which could and most likely did execute him.

When Paul referred to being poured out as a drink offering, he knew the sacrifices, as recorded in the Old Testament, often had wine, oil or other drink offering poured on the sacrifice. He is saying in Phil. 2:17 that he himself is the drink offering. The faith of the Philippians was the other part of the sacrifice to God "If I am to be killed I am glad. You be glad with me and share your joy with me."

In Chambers second sentence I think he is asking, "Do you say to God 'not here and not now and not in front of these people. They are not important enough. Let me choose the people who will watch me be killed'?"

Look at the second paragraph. Think of women care givers. We can get upset about being a doormat. Children from toddler's to teen-agers needing one more ride somewhere walk all over us and never think anything about it. Most of the time we endure this with graciousness because we love them. However, the Lord whom we love sometimes asks us to serve those whom we do not like, much less love, without immediate reward.

We need wisdom here. No person is sufficient for this. Only the Holy Spirit, God within us, knows the specifics and the extent of the services we are to give. He also knows when to step in and make us lie down in green pastures while He refreshes us.

February 6,

*Index: Crisis, Sacrifice, Self-pity,  
Transact with God.*

If I transact with God, if I choose with my will to be offered as He designs, I will not choose to untie the cords when the fire of the sacrifice becomes too hot for my comfort. Neither circumstances nor sentiments will cause me to untie those cords I previously tied with my will. I may not now walk away. God has become my stick-to-itiveness.

Psalm 118:27 is the scripture reference.

February 7,

*Index:* Duty, Discipline of dejection, Prayer.

More than likely we will return to this page at various times in our life. Not because it is a peppermint lifesaver but because we need a dose of this teaching. There are times when we will be in such discomfort we will feel that the wind chill factor is much too low for the safety of our own soul and spirit.

February 8,

*Index: Sanctification, Holy Spirit, Work.*

On two other days we have read about sanctification are January 10<sup>th</sup> and January 15<sup>th</sup>. When I first prayed to be sanctified, of course, I did not know what would happen but I trusted my pastor and the Lord. I can tell you it has been a process. One thing I desire when I speak of this is that I may testify to the truth of the promises of God and His faithfulness. These are teaching times to speak of sanctification, which is akin to holiness. My continuing desire is that neither I nor anyone else will be conscious of "my own whiteness." Outside of Christ I am like a garment so old and stained that no stain remover on the market can make it look respectable enough to wear.

Chambers speaks well on this subject.



February 9,

*Index: Spiritual exhaustion, Service.*

Note that the phrase "broken bread and poured out wine" is used again.

I trust you are paying attention to titles. Today is the only page listed in the index under Spiritual Exhaustion. The process of being made broken bread and poured out wine means that you have to be the nourishment for other souls until they learn to feed on God. There is no shirking this responsibility. Newborn children are totally dependent on others for nourishment. Jesus taught his disciples then he was the bread and blood produced the wine they needed. They were to become nourishment for other followers. To be drained dry was an expected condition. They were taught to return to God the Jehovah Jireh supplier for their own need and that which they would need to give to others.

You may want to read the first paragraph of Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> lesson with this.

February 10,

*Index:* Broken bread, Imagination,  
God in nature, Intercession.

This is a favorite page to me. I am so glad to know that nature to a saint is sacramental.

When I was growing up I learned to look at flowers, clouds, muddy water rushing in red clay gullies, small clear streams, trees, growing plants, weeds, and grass. I was never tempted to worship nature because I was learning about nature's creator. I did pay attention to my natural environment.

During one of the four years my brother was in the army during World War 2, we on Sand Mountain had three weeks of unusual thick, continuous fog. Visibility on one or two days was so near zero we had no postal service in our rural area. Small V-Mail communication from my brother was already slowing down. He was in the South Pacific with the U. S. Army hopping from island to island. The letters we received had many holes in them. My parents were anxious. Our home was as dismal inside as the weather outside.

Suddenly, it seemed, yellow jonquils in my mother's flowerbeds bloomed. Yellow waving flowers in gray fog. Like Wordsworth who encountered daffodils in England, I stored this scene for later reflection.

Nature to me is sacramental. It leads me to surprise, to thanksgiving, and to praise and worship.

February 11,

*Index: God in nature, Imagination.*

In the middle of this teaching is the sentence; "Learn to associate ideas worthy of God with all that happens in nature." Perhaps I have through the years learned to do this. When my daughter was fifteen years old a friend two years older repeatedly hurt her by her remarks and actions. My daughter tearfully said, "And she is supposed to have decided to be a real Christian." I wanted to explain the friend's actions by showing her some oak trees along the side of the road; "They keep their leaves until the new life in the spring pushes them off. Her new life has not yet had time to push her old ways of behavior away from her." This did not satisfy my daughter then but I believe she would understand the concept now.

February 12,

*Index: Hearing God.*

I learned from Peter Lord that God will not increase the volume of His voice. If I want to hear Him I must be more quiet.

David Wilkerson once wrote that we do not hear God because we did not heed the last thing He said, we quit listening, and we think God quit speaking.

You will find there are many people who do not want God to speak to them. They prefer to be as the Israelites to whom Chambers refers (Exodus 20:19).

February 13,

*Index: Obtuseness, Hearing God,  
Destiny.*

I've come to believe that if I am listening to God, and willing to hear, He may speak thoughts into my mind and spirit, which I do not understand. But if I keep them, think about them and ponder them I shall know when they are needed and what my response is to be.

The definition of obtuseness is "Lacking sharpness or quickness of sensibility or intellect."<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary,  
Tenth Edition © 1993

February 14,

*Index:* Darkness, Humiliation, Hearing God.

This is accurate advice for us in many of the experiences we will have in life. The last sentence of paragraph one doesn't mean that while we are in the dark God will give us messages for someone else. But the lessons that we learn for ourselves will be useful for someone else and we may share with credibility after we are in the light.

I'm not sure he describes a typical period of darkness and I'm not sure his evaluation of the after-darkness is typical for everyone. These times seem unique to each of us.

If I find Chambers' statements sounding like a "critical parent" I remind myself that my parent is God the Father. I review what I have learned about His nurturing heart.

February 15,

*Index:* Loyalty to Jesus, Responsibilities,  
Slovenes, Witness, Obtuseness,  
Broken bread.

If you do not want to answer Chambers questions read Jer. 6:30, Psa. 66:10, Eze. 22:18, and Zech, 13:9.

In the process of refining silver, lead was added. Apparently to attract the impurities to the lead so that these could be skimmed off, as we skim froth from boiling meat. These scriptures speak of the refining process within us. When there were too many impurities, the ore, the mass was rejected. Thus we have the term "rejected silver" and the exhortation to avoid becoming like rejected silver.

#### *Addendum 2010*

The first sentence in today's lesson is one each of us needs to answer regularly. He is telling us that we by the way we live among and by the way we react to our crowd affect the way they live. Their choices are in part determined by ours. We are indeed responsible for our brothers. John Donne taught us that no man is an island, living a life unaffected by others.

February 16,

*Index: Overcoming life, Spiritual initiatives.*

I keep coming again and again to the truth that we must take the initiative. "God does not give us overcoming life. He gives us life as we overcome." We make the choices to obey. He speaks; He calls. We move to answer yes and He gives us the ability to accomplish what is needed.



February 17,

*Index:* The Initiative against Depression,  
Inspiration.

My life has been so blessed that there has been only one lengthy period of depression. That was when I fell for Satan's lie that I was no good to the church because I was a woman. God extracted me from this pit, dusted me off, washed my face, and gave me freedom.

Doing the next thing may seem too mundane and not at all exciting but do it anyway. It helps me have patience during the gray cold days of January and February when only dull colored silent birds are at our feeders. I know patience is required before yellow birds and sunshiny days come.

February 18,

*Index:* Initiative, Despair.

This is Chambers' interpretation of Jesus' words to the disciples when they went to sleep in the garden just before Judas and the Romans came to arrest him. I find Jesus simply waking them, telling them what is immediate, and then taking them with Him to meet Judas and the Romans. I do not find him scolding them. Do you?

Because we belong to Jesus Christ who is full of grace and truth we can follow Chambers' advice in the last line of today's lesson. "Never let the sense of failure corrupt your new action."

February 19,

*Index:* Drudgery, Initiative,  
Temple of the Holy Ghost,  
Spiritual initiative.

Look at Chambers' first sentence. The reason why we must take the first step as though there were no God is because God wants us to make our choice. It is His respect for our own will.

Many task in life may become drudgery. A church secretary on Monday morning, for example, may realize that office tasks are drudgery compared with shining experiences of the previous day. The routine dull tasks must be done. It is a discipline. God approves when we do them pleasantly.

February 20,

*Index:* Initiation against dreaming.

In the second paragraph the word "moonning" is used. In Chambers' day and in my childhood it meant day dreaming, just contemplating but never actually doing what was dreamed. He will use the word again later.

February 21,

*Index: Value to God, Love, Devotion to Jesus,  
Abandonment.*

Read the first paragraph and consider women. I want each of my female descendants to know when she is befriended by such a man described here that she should not marry him. We keep learning about God's reason for calling the relationship He has with us like that of a marriage.

Chambers' sentence in the last paragraph is one to copy and put on the refrigerator until it becomes part of our soul. "It is never a question of being of use but of being of value to God Himself."

The word mooning used in the second paragraph means hazy dreaming just looking and day dreaming. Pipe dreams was used in the past for such contemplations.

February 22,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus, Patience,  
Spiritual tenacity, Tenacity.

This teaching is full of definitions for tenacity.  
They will fit any discussion beyond spiritual tenacity.

The term "going to be worsted," in the last  
sentence of paragraph one, means defeated or over  
thrown. You may want to read Ps. 84:11 and Rev. 3:10.

I like his sentence "If our hopes are being  
disappointed just now, it means they are being purified."  
To me this means He is purifying both our hope and the  
outcome, which may involve other people.

February 23,

*Index: Service.*

Every time I see Chambers use the word "doormat" I am going to think "stepping stone" because the two can be synonyms. Modern people resent being asked to be a doormat because of our concept of the word. But in my childhood I heard my mother testify in church "I want to be a stepping stone not a stumbling block."

A stepping stone is assistance to one on a journey. It keeps feet out of mud and makes it easier to move more swiftly toward a goal.

The last sentence in today's lesson is most important to remember. For one thing it will keep us from judging others.

Read Psalm 69:6 and Romans 14:13.

February 24,

*Index: Abandonment, Service.*

Consider the first sentence of paragraph two. We must not think that he means that being alone with God for part of a day is not a part of the Christian life. While Chambers was in Egypt he spent the first hour of every day in a separated tent alone with God. He is referring to one who chooses to cloister himself. Such a one will separate himself from people to whom he might be a reconciler and an ambassador for Christ. Near the end of today's selection he writes "We are apt to be devoted, not to Jesus Christ, but to the things which emancipate us spiritually." I think he means we prefer being busy teaching or doing "good works" which will make us feel satisfied. These actions would keep us so busy we would not face our spiritual condition, the scriptures, or Jesus Christ who desires our fellowship.



February 25,

*Index: Broken bread, Love, Service,  
Bond slave of Jesus, Poured out wine.*

My earthly father, a simple man, pastor of small rural churches was called upon to serve other people in many ways. Most of his good deeds were not extraordinary. However, a young father in one of the churches my father was pasturing in 1931 once needed an emergency appendectomy. It was a serious operation. Mr. Robinson refused the operation unless my father was permitted to stand by him in the operating room. The understanding doctor permitted Papa to be there. The patient lived and recovered.

It was an accepted practice for people during times of illness and other emergencies to come get Preacher Parrish and Papa willingly went. I watched this for years. Papa never complained nor would he let me if he knew.

February 26,

*Index: Limiting God, Unbelief.*

I have been guilty of saying, "You have nothing to draw with." I have also been guilty of walking away with an empty water pot. I am grateful for His relentless pursuit. He gave me another opportunity to accept that which I needed and that which He could supply.

February 27,

*Index: Limiting God, Abandonment,  
Human nature, Untroubled heart.*

Exodus 15:23 - 25 is for me a companion scripture for today.

I learned from T. W. Hunt's teaching on prayer<sup>6</sup> to appeal to God's almightiness, I can attest that it is a powerful way to pray for others and for myself.

*Addendum 2010*

Get intimate enough with Jesus Christ that you will learn and record the depths of your own personal deep need. Then let Him go to the bottom of your wicked needy wells and record His cleansing aid and help. You will need the record in your future.

---

<sup>6</sup> Walking in Fellowship with God, Disciple's Prayer Life  
by T.W. Hunt & Catherine Walker, ©1997 LifeWay Press  
Nashville, TN.

February 28,

*Index:* Walk in the Light, Resurrection life.

Chambers tells us today that it is easy to serve from a sense of duty. I have learned that I must rely on the Holy Spirit within me to direct my services. The church, as dear as it is, is second to my home and family. I could have become so involved in church activities my home would have been lost to me.

This lesson has much more to teach us. Before 2004 I would not have understood Chambers' first paragraph as I do today.

February 29,

*Index: Common sense surpassed, Faith,  
Identification, Limiting God.*

On some days we need to consider this lesson for ourselves. On others we need to read it with understanding, patience, and compassion for others. I know a woman who is a disturbance to some members of our church. Some of her acquaintances, who cannot help her and who doubt there is any help anywhere, would like for her to simply be quiet. She refuses. She will not hold her peace. She thinks God can help her and her tenacity may be the very beginning of the healing she desires.

Our family learned thirty years ago when we were in crises that there are miracles and there are healings.

Chambers' lesson is worthy of our study each year and each time we find ourselves to be the blind man in Luke 18:35 - 43 or part of the shushing crowd.

March 1,

*Index: Love, Personality, Sin.*

" . . . sin blunts feeling." The obtuseness of sin has sly deceptive beginnings. See February 13<sup>th</sup>.

Today's lesson and the two which follow are based on the interviews Jesus had with Peter as recorded in John twenty one.

The first sentence seems to say Peter was silenced.

March 2,

*Index: Devotion to Jesus.*

This lesson and the two, which follow, are based on the interview Jesus had with Peter (John 21). Peter had the night before told some of the disciples that he was going fishing as he did before Jesus ever came into his life. After a fishless night they returned to shore to find Jesus there.

This was a midnight time. The first two times Jesus asks "Do you love me?" He uses the word agape, which is the word for an unconditional love, the highest degree of love. Peter answers "You know I phileo you, I have an affection for you." The third time Jesus says "do you phileo me?" Peter is grieved, hurt, or as we sometimes say "cut to the quick." The questions go beneath all the layers of Peter's thoughts until the core of his being must face Jesus. The level of his love does not match what Jesus desires.

The life that Peter lived after this interview, the books he wrote, and the death he died tell us that Peter came to love Jesus with an agape love, an unconditional love.

March 3,

*Index: Devotion to Jesus, Oneness with God.*

I once read a book with the unforgettable title *Love Is Something You Do*, by Frederick Speakman. In the beginning of the book two older women advised their new young pastor that love is something we do regardless of our feelings. After questioning Peter about his love for Him, Jesus instructs Peter and us that if we love Him we will do, we will serve, and we will feed His sheep and lambs.

In his obedience Peter came to have agape love for Jesus.



March 4,

*Index: Service, Practical work, Vision,  
Abandonment.*

I understand we are not to judge but we can observe what appears to be the life style of the people who have not been gripped by Jesus Christ. Chambers describes such people for us in this lesson.

Being gripped by Jesus means I have come into His captivating presence. Now all I want is to stay in a receptive mood, to be there again not to serve nor please myself but just to be in His presence.

March 5,

*Index: Joy.*

I wonder about God's thoughts on this subject of women and the purpose He has for us in our day. For the vast majority of us I don't think God calls us to any unique out of the ordinary "ministry." There is no more open field for service than in our own home. If God has given us a family, a home, and children we have a very influential place to serve.

I've learned not to try to decide if my life is noteworthy. God keeps the record and what is done here on earth in cooperation with Him has an affect on the future of mankind here on earth. I believe it is continued in heaven.

John Newton, author of "Amazing Grace" had a mother who prayed for him while she washed clothes and did other chores to keep herself and John alive. I think she had only seven of his years to influence him.

It is generally believed that when John Newton entered the Christian ministry he began making history. There were many men who became influential in the shaping of England's whole culture and future who were converted to Jesus Christ as a direct result of John Newton's ministry. William Wilburforce who was responsible for separating England from being in the slave trade was in the direct line of John Newton's influence.

There are many unknown mothers whose sons and daughters did great work for Christ or whose life influenced others who followed them. You and I can live in such an exemplary fashion.

March 6,

*Index: Looking to Jesus, Drudgery.*

Stop and ponder the title for today and the scripture. When we meditate on the steps mentioned in the first paragraph we can believe patience should have been added to the index.

The second sentence in paragraph two uses the word flag. This means to become limp, to droop, to grow weak to lose vigor. When that happens to us we need Helen H. Lemmel's song "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus".

March 7,

*Index: Love of God, Tribulation.*

I am helped by the assurance that nothing can separate me from the love of God.

We are told in Matthew 22:37 to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind. Some times my body hurts so much it demands my entire mind. I haven't learned how to be able to forget it and feel love for God.

The scripture 2 Tim. 2:13 tells me that even if I am faithless He remains faithful. He cannot deny Himself. He has taken me for His own and I will not be separated from Him, even while my body and mind cannot meet the thought pattern I would like to have. I'd like to be conscious all the time of God's manifest presence.

Life is not all Southern Chess Pie.

March 8,

*Index: Crisis, Sin, Righteousness.*

From what I know of the Christian's way of walking with Jesus Christ, I can tell you this, "Relinquishment continues". The last sentence is as we Southerners say, the gospel truth.

March 9,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus.

Being devoted to Jesus, walking with Him, living as one yoked with Him (Matt. 11:28-30) is a discipline, a training, a course of study, and a life-long fellowship with him. We can choose to work for Him "spending and being spent" which means working and becoming worn out. By doing this we can maneuver to keep our selves out of being yoked with Him and out of fellowship with Him. Fellowship requires being alone with Him, being quiet, and submissive to Him.

The word '*yokefellow*' is used by Paul in Phil. 4:3.

March 10,

*Index: Call to preach, Pentecost, Preaching,  
Sacramental personality.*

Twice Chambers speaks of the sacrament of our message. The word sacrament has many meanings. The one we can use to understand his emphasis is that a sacrament is a sign, a symbol. Thus we can gather that Chambers advises us that our lives are to be the symbol of what we say. Remember the words "what you are speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say." This will explain his title and message for today.

March 11,

*Index:* Practical work, Leakage, Vision.

I don't think he is absolutely correct when he said, "The only way God sows His saints is by His whirlwind." However I like his warning about being an empty seedpod.

Add this, which I found in a Decision Magazine, to your thoughts,

*He will sow us—  
grain full-ripe  
and set to burst with life;  
He will tuck our tendered  
spirits where the tares grow wild,  
where God alone  
can know the yield.*

--Judith Deem Dupree

Pine Valley, California



March 12,

*Index:* Abandonment, Holy Spirit.

None of us will ever know where anyone else is in his or her area of abandonment. This is synonymous to taking up our cross daily, dying daily, and surrendering our all. There are twenty other days in this book that harmonize with the teachings on this page.

March 13,

*Index: Abandonment, Discipline of Dismay.*

I especially like Chambers' words "salvation means that the Spirit of God has brought me into touch with God's personality, and I am thrilled with something infinitely greater than myself . . ."

This lesson gives a good definition of abandonment to God.

March 14,

*Index:* Habit, Responsibility, Yielding.

Do you suppose the song we learned in the 1970's  
"Jesus Breaks Every Fetter" goes back to the time  
Chambers lived and was sung by English Christians?

March 15,

*Index:* Discipline of dismay, Following.

Oswald Chambers must have often meditated on the words of Isaiah fifty. Certainly I believe Jesus recalled these words as He went before His disciples to die. He knew their consternation as they observed His face like flint. They would change His plans if they could. I imagine since they could not they drug their feet or as the scripture records as they followed Him they were afraid.

Chamber's last paragraph sends me to Isaiah 50:10-11. When I read these verses I think of holy fire and fires that I can light for myself. I have held sparkling sticks as we celebrated some holidays. The sparklers burned my skin. When I am unsure, when Jesus is far out in front, when I don't understand Him, when I am not lit with holy fire I must not attempt to find my own solution and get burned. The last sentence in today's lesson is great admonition and encouragement to me.

March 16,

*Index:* Temper of mind, Sin, Walk in the light.  
I would add Judging to the index.

In paragraph one he uses the word confirmation. He also uses the verb form confirm. Consider this example of these words; The U. S. Senate will confirm or reject an appointee for the Supreme Court. Unless this legislative body confirms an appointee that person is not permitted to serve.

The word *confirm* can also mean to settle into place. When he speaks of sin confirming itself in the sinner and giving back full pay I think he means sin settles itself into place and captures its host. Though the person has pain and regret he cannot by himself become free of the punishment that sin brings to him, nor does he have the power within himself to stop sinning.

You may want to read Rom. 2:1-6 with this.

March 17,

*Index:* Spiritual ambition.

In his last paragraph Chambers wrote; "My worth to God in public is what I am in private."

E. M. Bounds wrote this truth in different words.

I wonder if Chambers had read Bound's writings. Bounds was older and an American. He was 78 years old when he died in 1913. Chambers, an Englishman, died in Egypt in 1917. He was 43 years old.

March 18,

*Index:* Holiness, Responsibility.

Chambers is correct. There is a human and a Divine side. Deut. 10:16 speaks of what God tells us to do and Deut. 30:6 tells of what He will do for us. Also you may want to read Ezekial 11:14 - 21 scripture today.

When Chambers uses the sentence "God educates us down to the scruple" he may refer to one or two different definitions of the word scruple. Perhaps both apply. A scruple is an apothecary's weight of twenty grains. Scruple is also used to show reluctance to decide or act because of questions of conscience. This gives new meaning to Jesus words recorded in Mat. 5:48. "Be ye therefore perfect." We have the responsibility to obey God without doubt, to remove every weight (Heb. 12:1) and move forward into maturity and completeness. The word for perfect in Mat. 5:48 is 'teleios' which means to come to full stature, to become like God, to realize the purpose for which we were created.

June 21, Sept. 1, and Oct. 20 are on the same topic as today's reading.

March 19,

*Index:* Faith.

God told Abraham to leave his country and his kindred. However he took his nephew Lot. This lack of total obedience caused Abraham and his descendents problems.

There is a separation "from" and a separation "to." Read verse twelve of 1 Tim. 1. In this scripture verse we are told to whom we are separated. We can trust the outcome when we follow Him.

I like Chamber's phrase "transfiguration of character." If we thrive in our Christian walk this will become true for us.

Chambers refers to Isa. 40:31. We know there are times we mount up with wings as eagles, we run at times but the steady walk, step after step, is what most of us consciously experience. "Waiting" in Isa. 40:31 means waiting neither for God to catch up nor for us to catch our breath. Waiting in this instance, based on word studies, means we walk with expectant hope. Therefore we continue to walk.



March 20,

*Index:* Friendship with God, Prayer.

As you probably know Chambers use of the word 'check' means to restrain, to control. When I was growing up I heard Popa use the word check in reference to the horse that was pulling the wagon. It is important to pay attention to God's checks when we pray. We need to learn the source of the check. Is it our lack of faith, or Satan's hindrance, or God who wants to educate us? In our praying we may be asking incorrectly. Chambers has some important teachings on prayer.

March 21,

*Index:* Identification.

Chambers discussion today is about maturing as a Christian. This is not a naturally occurring process. It is a decision, a moral decision as Chambers says. I make the decision to give to Christ my "rights" to myself then all that Christ wrought for me is wrought in me. The ability to decide this on continuing bases is possible and becomes a habit. Chambers says "I remain who I am, under new rulership." I agree.

The word *wrought* is an alternative past tense and participle of *work*. It means formed, fashioned, and made with great care.

March 22,

*Index: Emotions, Transact with God, Abiding,  
Surprise visits with God.*

You may want to review the scripture in Luke 24:13 - 32. The burning heart Chambers refers to is mentioned here. What Chambers describes, as "dull, bald, dreary days with common place duties" are what I call mortar days. They just hold other days in place as bricks are held in place with a neutral colored mortar.

In the second paragraph you find these two sentences: "The higher the emotion is, the deeper the degradation will be, if it is not worked out on its proper level." "If the Spirit of God has stirred you, make as many things inevitable [certain to happen] as possible let the consequences be what they will." In some circles one may be ostracized, criticized and beat over the head with condemnation by others who can not understand nor accept physical, vocal, and emotional expressions of praise and adoration to God.

However when one is filled with the emotion of praise and adoration toward God that emotion must be expressed or that very emotion will sour and become degradation within the heart. This will show itself outwardly and verbally with complaints and constant fault finding. We call them crabby people. If you ever tasted an old fashioned crab apple you would understand the sourness of hearts which refuse to praise God even after biblical knowledge has come to them and the Holy Spirit has tried to educate them.

March 23,

*Index: Carnality.*

Carnality, I learned from today's reading is not one thing or two but anything that is present in one's life which the Spirit wars against to remove. It could be, as Chambers writes, being contentious and easily bothered by trifles or as Paul wrote jealousy and strife. Whatever is in our lives, which the Holy Spirit wants to remove, shows itself on the outside. Such sins may be like hangnails and cracked fingers. Picture and feel, in imagination, hands that have worked in dirt and water. People who work outside in cold winter weather get cracked fingers.

Fingers with hangnails cannot handle delicate fabric nor can weather cracked hands endure strong pressure without much pain and perhaps bleeding.

Sins inside of us, which the Holy Spirit wants removed, are carnal. These things present in our lives cause damage to fragile members in the body of Christ. Our weather cracked fingers may bleed causing us pain while adding confusion to situations needing correction. These must be brought to our attention. As hangnails and cracked fingers, we know they must be attended to.

The first sentence of paragraph three is comforting. God does not ask us to get rid of these hangnails and cracked fingers. He ask us to accept the light and He will put it right.

March 24,

*Index: Amateur providence, Devotion to Jesus,  
Friendship with God.*

This reading is a good explanation of being a friend of the Bridegroom.

However, the first time I found this reading I needed it because of personal trauma. This helped me to know I must stand aside and let God work. I have visited this lesson again and again. I pray you may never need the dose of medicine these directions give. This is too intense for further comment.

The words, "Amateur providence" are used again.

In other selections we will read Chambers' teaching that we are to pray on the basis of redemption, meaning that we should desire for God's redemption to come to those for whom we pray. The people we are concerned with may have to suffer if they continue to keep themselves away from the Bridegroom who is seeking them but we must not interfere.

March 25,

*Index: Crisis, Right relations.*

I like Chambers' sentence in the middle of paragraph two "Sometimes there is nothing to obey, the only thing to do is maintain a vital connection with Jesus Christ, to see that nothing interferes with that." Is this being at "Parade Rest?"

Once again he mentions "being an amateur providence."

March 26,

*Index: Innocence, Purity, Vision,  
Temple of the Holy Ghost.*

I like the definition of purity found in sentence two of paragraph one.

In addition to Chamber's last paragraph, here are two prayers I like to keep and pray. They give us suggestions for relating to others in ways that can keep us pure.

*Lord, help me to see this person as unique in your sight, as someone for whom you died, and who you love so much that you want to spend eternity with them in friendship. I have no resources to make our encounter meaningful without your Spirit. But in your presence, help me to be kind, giving territory to the uniqueness of the other person, awed by the mystery of being human together.<sup>7</sup>*

*Lord, I want to see others in the light of the good you do in them, not in the relation to the wrongs I have experienced from them. Free me from expecting the worst from old associates, so that I can receive them as the person you are making new in Christ, in whose name I pray. Amen.<sup>8</sup>*

---

<sup>7</sup> The Transforming Friendship, by James Houston  
©1989, Lion Pub. Corp. , Batavia, Ill.

<sup>8</sup> Praying With Paul, by Eugene Peterson, ©1995, Harper  
San Francisco

March 27,

*Index:* Temptation, Vision, Character.

Today furnishes much material for meditation. One word for meditation is similar to our word for a cow chewing her cud, ruminates. As a practice in meditation, read the first paragraph again. Question what you read, ask what it really means, agree or disagree, learn, expand on it. We are told that Satan carried Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple. God elevates us to wide spaces; Satan to precarious pinnacles.

I try to pay attention to Chambers' sentence in the second paragraph "Never let God give you one point of truth which you do not instantly live up to."



March 28,

*Index:* Faith, Obedience.

I do not understand what Jesus meant when He instructed us to petition God "Lead us not into temptation" but I pray it anyway. I think He answers. Most of the time I have no clue how but He does.

A friend of mine, a Bible scholar told his class once as they studied the Sermon on the Mount, "Nothing Jesus ever said is ridiculous or impossible to obey."

As you read today's lesson you may want to make a sign to place on your refrigerator with these words which are the last sentence of paragraph one in today's lesson,

**"Faith is not intelligent understanding,  
faith is deliberate commitment to a  
Person when I see no way."**

March 29,

*Index:* Surprise visits of God, Readiness,  
Practical work.

Ah, I pause and ponder what I read today. Having been a house wife for more than fifty years I do a re-think about surprise visits to my home. Sometimes my house isn't in a ready condition to receive guests, so how shall I consider a surprise-to-me visit from my Lord. For starters I think about who He is and why He comes. He always comes in love, with patience. He is truth so correction could be the reason for the surprise visit. He may be coming to help me. Surely, I can always expect help from Him. He has never come with condemnation. While I had rather people call before they come to 222 Mt. Heights Circle I have never been harmed by those surprise visits from our Lord. Quite the opposite happens to me. Even so, come Lord Jesus come.

March 30,

*Index:* Intercession, Mind of Christ, Worship.

The March 24<sup>th</sup> reading fits with this. We need to understand how to pray for others so that we intercede according to the instructions given in 1 John 5:14 & 15.

For twenty-five years I have been learning to worship and to intercede. I am continually finding God leading me to intercede when I am most conscious of His presence in corporate worship.

March 31,

*Index:* Intercession, Discernment.

This is one of the most important pages in this book.

I have some personal experiences with the truth of this lesson and 1 John 5:16.

April 1,

*Index:* Intercession.

I'm glad Chambers included the sentence: "God continually introduces us to people for whom we have no affinity . . ." There are strangers I meet and find in myself no desire to further the acquaintance. However, I have a responsibility to make Christ-like adjustments if these people are to be involved in my future. This may require prayer. Between Christians we are not to be like porcupines and be unapproachable or unfriendly for any reason. This fits in a lesson on prayer because prayer is usually required before amiable feelings become ours with these for whom we have no natural affinity.

April 2,

*Index:* Insight, Discernment,  
Character determines revelation.

I once read a book of questions from famous people on various subjects. I perhaps kept a few but the main thing I remembered thinking was "These were their best words and not one comment did I find about Jesus Christ."

My aim is to live with my attention so focused on Jesus Christ that no one who knows me will ever wonder if I highly esteemed Him.

April 3,

*Index: Memory's ministry, Responsibility,  
Chastening.*

Chambers wrote this before there was today's teaching about strongholds. But this lesson fits with the teaching about strongholds in our life. His last sentence of paragraph two could read like this, "and yet we slip out of the time of yielding to God like a wet skinless grape and leave the experience not reconciled to God but more guilty than ever."

He uses a word in today's lesson, "*culpable*." This means, "deserving blame, blame worthy." Then we read these potent words, "God holds us responsible for what we do not see."

His last sentence is one which shows the ability of God to redeem. God will turn the 'might have been' into a wonderful culture for the future.

Minnie Coleman at a 1991 Aglow Retreat in Gulf Shores, Alabama said "God can take what happened in our past and use it in our present for the future."

The following may be a poetic way to express this:

### **Filth**

Ancient debris, decaying food,  
Sifting, discarding, covering  
Bones, dirt, roots, rot.  
Planting, tending, protecting.  
Fragrance, colored cups for dew,  
Roses

Florine P. Childress Sunbelt 1986.

April 4,

*Index: Circumstances, Faith, Patience of God,  
Sanctification, Grit (Spiritual).*

Today we encounter words we are never ready to welcome as descriptions of our souls. I have underlined these words: . . . inner desolations . . . , Darkness comes by the sovereignty of God. Are we prepared to let God do as He likes with us—prepared to be separated from conscious blessings?

Near the end Chambers writes; "The sense of God's blessings is elemental." We need to add these words which are implied, "We need to go on so that the sense of His presence, not the consciousness of His benevolence, is primal".



April 5,

*Index:* Satan's onslaught, Cross of Christ,  
Gethsemane.

As you study this lesson today, pay attention to the contrasts. I can imagine Chambers writing on a chalkboard as he taught. He would write a concept on one side then a different concept on the other side of the board. Perhaps, he drew a cross down the middle and then explained why this teaching is so fundamental.

April 6,

*Index: Cross of Christ, Incarnation,  
Redemption, Sin.*

We may not think we study theology. However, call it what you please, we must understand and live in agreement with the information in Chambers' lessons for yesterday and today.

April 7,

*Index: Resurrection Life, Communion,  
Obtuseness.*

Observe what Chambers teaches today.

1. God cannot reveal anything to us if we do not have His Spirit.
2. An obstinate outlook, being sure we know all there is to know about a teaching or doctrine keeps God from revealing more to us.
3. As soon as the resurrected life has its way with us this "slow to understand (obtuse) stage" will end.

In today's lesson I believe the resurrected life is synonymous with yielding to the Holy Spirit.

April 8,

*Index:* Holy Spirit, Atonement.

Those lessons on April 5, 6 and 7 must have been part of a large teaching and today's lesson is another part.

The first paragraph of today's lesson is part of our basic learning. Oh! How wonderful to experience it! John 17:2, Heb. 2:10, and Phil. 3:10 are other scriptures Chambers uses.

No wonder the birth, resurrection, the Holy Spirit's coming, and all things that pertain to Jesus Christ are continuously contested by Satan and all who have swallowed his lies.

April 9,

*Index: Visions, Surprise vision of God.*

Heb. 11:27 and Mark 16:13 are the scriptures he quotes today.

A basic truth is taught in today's lesson.

"Severance takes place where one and not the other has seen Jesus. You cannot bring your friend unless God brings him." I pray that my grandchildren will learn this. If "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (NKJV, 2 Cor. 6:14) is not clear. Try these words; "Do not pair yourself discordantly with others."

April 10,

*Index:* Sin, Death of Jesus, Disposition of sin.

His title today "Moral Decision about Sin" is apt.  
His teaching is correct. Consider it carefully.

Pay attention to this sentence: I cannot reckon myself "dead indeed unto sin" unless I have been through this radical issue of will before God.

April 11,

*Index:* Holy Spirit's work, Heredity of sin.

I like Chambers' sentence; "The Holy Spirit cannot be located as a guest in a house, He invades everything."

C. S. Lewis writes of this:

The Christian way is different: harder and easier. Christ says, "Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want you. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. I don't want to drill the tooth, or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you myself: my own will shall become yours."<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> From The Joyful Christian page 179, by C.S.Lewis  
©1977 by Macmillan Publishing Company, New York.

April 12,

*Index:* Christ in you.

"If it is difficult to get right with God, it is because we will not decide definitely about sin." This truth needs to be insistently brought to the attention of those who can't seem to get victory and to be always needing counseling. There is a sin that they will not recognize, confess, and forsake.



April 13,

*Index:* Burden bearing.

Some things we carry are too heavy to move except by rolling them.

This must be the very very old KJV of Psalm 55:22 that my mother knew. She spoke often of rolling her burden onto the Lord.

Today and tomorrow both speak to us of burdens. May 6 speaks of being yoked with Jesus. I am burdened because I am a yoke-fellow with Christ. I can roll the heavy end onto Him. Of course and there are burdens we pick up which are better left alone. We must be careful not to burden ourselves with those cares of this life He cannot be a partner with us.

April 14,

*Index: Chastening, Joy, Praise, Pored out wine.*

The scripture about increased strength is Isaiah 40:29. Chambers' September 30<sup>th</sup> reading harmonizes with this.

Chambers can speak this lesson to us because he knew the experience of responding to Jesus invitation "Take my yoke upon you."

April 15,

*Index:* Concentration on God, Patience,  
Spiritual relaxation.

Chambers' reference in the last sentence, "clear the numberless ascensions" was no doubt in his day an often repeated phrase meaning advance from one spiritual level to the next.

April 16,

*Index:* Emotions, Keeping fit, Laziness.

There is a way to come down off mountains. Each of us needs to learn how to advance as we descend.

A few times I have seen a tall man settled comfortably in a cane bottomed, straight, wooden chair. He leaned back balancing his body with his feet on the mantel before an open warm fire. He was confident, content and thinking what a pleasant place to rest. That is my picture of putting feet on a mantel,

You may want to read March 22<sup>nd</sup> lesson again today.

April 17,

*Index: Abandonment, Crises,  
Emotions, Transact with God,  
Will to be committed.*

In today's lesson we read this question, "Have you deliberately committed your will to Jesus Christ?" This lesson is the first of six, which teach about committing the will to God. The others are June 6 & 11, August 18 and November 4 & 11.

As you consider your answer to this same question these scriptures may help you. John 7:17, Phil 2:12 & 13, Hebrews 13:20 & 21 and Romans 7:15 - 8:1.

In addition, consider these words of George Fox which I found in Mrs. Cowman's Streams in the Desert. They are easy to understand and they are instructive. They helped me to read again Romans 8:1 & 2 with gratitude and much praise.

**"I knew Jesus, and He was very precious to my soul; but I found something in me that would not keep sweet and patient and kind. I did what I could to keep it down, but it was there. I besought Jesus to do something for me, and, when I gave Him my will, He came to my heart, and took out all that would not be sweet, all that would not be kind, all that would not be patient, and then HE shut the door."**

George Fox <sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Streams in the Desert vol. 1, Mrs. Charles E. Cowman, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan

April 18,

*Index: Readiness, Surprise visits of God.*

For a wonderful work-out of your mind think of all Moses didn't answer when God called. I'll start you off. He didn't say, "Where were you when I needed you forty years ago?"

Pay attention to Chambers' definition of readiness.

April 19,

*Index:* Temptation, Introspection,  
Unguarded strength.

Chambers' words the "retired sphere of the least" must have been a common phrase in his day. We can understand today's reading without knowing the background of this phrase.

My daughter told me when she was twenty years old, "I have discovered that people who have great spiritual gifts are capable of great error". I know this is true.

*Addendum 2010*

I find I need to pray daily "Lead me not into temptation." To acknowledge daily my need for God to be a watchman over my soul is as important as asking for daily bread.

April 20,

*Index: Limiting God, Promise of God, Worry,  
Laziness, Spiritual capacity.*

Let me encourage you to make up your own mind about these thoughts of Chambers for today. The title is a question we need to answer for ourselves.

When he writes, ". . . the one who is lazy spiritually is captious with God" he is saying a lazy person is hard to please, finding fault with God.

I have made this notation in my Bible beside Matt. 25. "When you read the parable of the talents return to this lesson by Oswald Chambers." The longer I live the more truth I find in this lesson.



April 21,

*Index:* Now, Untroubled heart.

In the last paragraph Chambers states that "God never guides presently, but always now."

The words,

*"presently"* means "soon but not now."

*"Perturb"* means disturb greatly, make  
anxious or uneasy.

*"Implicit"* means implied but not stated.

If you glide over this lesson you may very well be  
pierced to the heart a few years from now or when you  
read it again.

April 22,

*Index: Alone with God, Faith, Looking to God.*

In 2002 I discovered that much of our life is singular. We don't need to share all our newly discovered wonders of God with others. Nor do we need to share our doubts unless they get too big for us to handle alone.

April 23,

*Index: Worship, Freedom, Sanctification,  
Circumstances, Worship of Work.*

Chamber's first two sentences present a sound warning for any of us.

I think you will like these words of F.R. Havergal which are found in the January 5<sup>th</sup>. selection from A Treasure of Wisdom, A Daily Devotion Book.<sup>11</sup>

*If we are really, and always, and equally ready to do whatever the King appoints, all the trials and vexations arising from any change in His appointments, great or small, simply do not exist. If He appoints me to work there, shall I lament that I am not to work here? If He appoints me to wait indoors today, am I to be annoyed because I am not to work out-of-doors? If I meant to write His messages this morning, shall I grumble because He sends interrupting visitors, rich or poor, to whom I am to speak, or show kindness for His sake, or at least obey His command, Be courteous? If all my members are really at His disposal, why should I be put out if today's appointment is some simple work for my hands or errands for my feet, instead of some seemingly more important doing of head or tongue?*

---

<sup>11</sup> Compiled by Ken and Angelu Abraham © 1996, a Barbour Book.

April 24,

*Index:* Spiritual wantonness, Without the camp,  
Devotion to Jesus, Hid with Christ,  
Discipleship.

In the first sentence Chambers gives a definition of that strange word in the title WANTONING. He often defines terms he uses.

We are to make disciples of Jesus not ourselves.

April 25,

*Index:* Inspiration, Rare moments.

I have a note in my book referring me to May 1<sup>st</sup> and Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. The reading on those days correspond to what he teaches today.

For me this is one of his most important pages. Without the rare moments life would be dull and hopeless. Part of the abundant life is having the memory of mountain top experiences and rare moments to sustain me when nothing exciting is happening.

*Addendum 2010*

For me to sulk because the rare moments are just that, rare, is to cut myself off from what I could learn from God and experience with God during ordinary days.

April 26,

*Index: Sacrifice, Faith,  
Character determines revelation.*

The only comments I would add to this excellent lesson are these: *God is never interested in our sacrificing a child. Nor does He want us to neglect a child, nor are we permitted to make an idol of one.*

*Chambers advises us, "Never ask God to test you." I have found it safe to pray as Jesus advises "Lead us not into temptation." I may not know what that means but God does and I can trust Him.*

April 27,

*Index:* Abandonment, Oneness with God,  
Perfect in Christ, Right relationship,  
Self-seeking.

As you meditate and mull over these words today  
read 1 John 5:14 & 15. You may find December 2<sup>nd</sup> and  
November 16<sup>th</sup> to be harmonizing with today's teaching.

April 28,

*Index:* Abandonment, Simplicity of relationship.

George McDonald wrote in his book Knowing the Heart of God, "People say they are tired of life. What they mean is they are tired of death."<sup>12</sup>

Life is always invigorating.

---

<sup>12</sup> Knowing the Heart of God by George MacDonald,  
©1990 Michael R. Phillips, published by Bethany House  
Publishers, Minneapolis, MN.



April 29,

*Index: Loyalty to Jesus.*

Eight lines up from the bottom we have this expression ". . . have the ban of finality." What he means is "we box God into our beliefs."

When we become fixed to an authoritative formula of beliefs about God and His dealings with man, we find it difficult to admit new truths, new authority from God, and new experiences.

If available see Chambers book Baffled to Fight Better.

April 30,

*Index: Love.*

It is enlightening and soothing to me to read Mr. Chambers words after I have read a small book of love poems written by various people in English and American literature. I have known love as eulogized in their verses. Beyond that I know the pure, shining, nourishing, empowering, everlasting love God pours into my life.

May 1,

*Index:* Saint, Duty, Insight, Emotion,  
Rare moments.

What Chambers has written here fits each topic in the index above. He admonishes us not to be a guilt-edged saint, but to perform our duty even if uninspired. We learn more about one of my favorite subjects "rare moments."

May 2,

*Index: Vision, Patience, Spiritual relaxation.*

I think you will like this explanation of the fruit of the spirit patience.

I have met a man to whom God gave a vision. He has endured for seventeen years doing his part to build a camp where counselors can bring youth groups for retreats. He told us of some of the times when he needed patience. He told us of times God encouraged and rested him.

I hope you know people who are such examples.

In the last paragraph the last quotation is from Phil. 3:12 - 14.

May 3,

*Index:* Discernment, Intercession,  
Identification.

Pray and turn loose. Let *God* answer our prayer, as He will. *Chambers* is correct. Our sympathy for the ones for whom we pray can interfere with our relationship to *God*, thus we may pray in error, or fail to even pray.

May 4,

*Index:* Blood of Jesus, Atonement,  
Spiritual stubbornness,  
Vicarious intercession.

I've seen spiritually stubborn people grab at a promise of God and insist that He keep it. This was putting God in a box and making His word, as they understood it, be above God Himself.

The first two sentences in paragraph two inform us that our own ideas of the "right and virtuous things" in our acquaintances and ourselves keep us from interceding. Our minds are packed with such ideas as, "They are good people; they just made a mistake. It will all work out to the good. This isn't serious enough to pray about." Or "This is too small to pray about. Let's just fix it." Thus if we pray at all we ask for God's mercy with no thought of God's desire to bring those people into atonement with Himself.

May 5,

*Index: Salvation, Judgement, Self-reliance,  
Gospel of God, Experience,  
Dependent on God*

Psalm 3:8, tells us that salvation belongs to the Lord. The longer I live the more I am unable to understand salvation. So I rely on the salvation which belongs to God.

Chambers writes "Never sympathize with a soul who finds it difficult to get to God . . ." If such a person will let God reveal His truth there is often a sin the person will not confess and forsake or an attitude God desires to change.

May 6,

*Index:* Liberty, Standard of Jesus,  
Yoked with Jesus, Patience,  
Conscience.

To me one of the most memorable quotations in this book is found in the middle of the second paragraph, "It takes God a long time to get us out of the way of thinking that unless everyone sees as we do they must be wrong."

You may want to think about the word *abyss*, the abyss of love and the gospel.



May 7,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus

One of my aims in these notes is not to interfere with what God may say to you on the unvarnished page.

May 8,

*Index:* Patience, Faith.

When I was young I began to pay attention to my father's affirmation of his faith in God. He, during sermons, would sometimes shout in a voice which could be heard from front to back and side to side in any size church "Though He slay me yet I will trust Him." I did not know about struggles my parents had. They never discussed them with me. However I learned that God was trustworthy in any and all circumstances.

Return to the May second lesson and read it with this lesson.

May 9,

*Index:* Vision, Ideals.

Chamber's first paragraph is very important.  
Read it until you agree with him or find valid reasons to disagree.

In the last paragraph Chambers has this expression "eating what we have out of our own hand." Think of the orphanages George Mueller could not have supported if this had been his attitude.

May 10,

*Index:* Habit, Crisis, Initiative.

If you have decided to will what *God* wills, to do what He directs you to do, you will find after this experience of obedience that once again you will know you can trust Him.

May 11,

*Index:* Habit, Love.

You may want to put a marker on this page so you can find it again. Here are very good instructions about love.

When you find his phrase ". . . you won't reach it on tip-toe." You can add "This is reached by bending low, way down on the knees."

May 12,

*Index:* Habit.

He writes well as he explains his title.

Can you imagine the strut of a spiritual prig? If you have time for a little intellectual fun consult old dictionaries and maybe a thesaurus or two. I see a rotund man in a dark suit, white impressive shirt and collar, head upright, chest puffed out strolling on a crowded street like a Charles Dickens' minor character. A few avoided him. His mind is fixed his opinions correct and he is prepared to tell them to you and prove he is right.

I really don't want to be like this spiritual prig so I'd best pay attention to what Chambers teaches about habits.

May 13,

*Index: Habit, Conscience.*

He gives an excellent definition of conscience.  
Once again he uses the sentence, "God educates us down  
to the scruple." See July 27.

I try to pay attention to the instruction in his last  
paragraph.

May 14,

*Index:* Habit, Obedience, Circumstances.

The title is accurate. This instruction is choice. I think I need a file labeled *Disagreeable? Enjoy it.*

On some page he is going to introduce the idea that we want to be made wine for the master's use but we object to the fingers squeezing the grapes.



May 15,

*Index: Circumstances, Habit, Broken bread.*

The process of becoming broken bread and poured out wine is not pleasant. Especially while other people are breaking and squeezing. But we have two choices. Submit to the Father or complain. We must recognize that God is the master engineer. He allows the difficulties to come to us.

We may choose to become broken bread and poured out wine. He doesn't expect us to whine when He begins to accomplish His purpose through us. Complaining hurts us, harms us. Accept what has happened and tell God, "It is O.K. that you did not prevent this. Help me accept it and let You use it as you desire."

What he says to us may not apply to those who are not God's own children. If we don't consider this we might think that Chambers is teaching that none of us have any choice about where we live or what happens to us.

May 16,

*Index:* Habit. Grace of God, Spiritual pluck.

A memorable quotation from this lesson is, "And He will tax the last grain of sand, and the remotest star to bless us if we will obey Him."

May 17,

*Index: Ascension, Discipline of Difficulty,  
Transfiguration.*

No comment needed from me. Just praise to God for the truth of the ascension and that the door of heaven is kept open for all humanity, all of us who will believe.

May 18,

*Index:* (None today)

Plants bear fruit and flowers bloom not by striving but by receiving from the soil, sun, rain, and atmosphere,.

May 19,

*Index: Love of God.*

I believe you will add material from your life to Chambers' encouragement in today's writing.

Alexis Carrel (1873 - 1944) a French surgeon biologist wrote, "The individual needs to be in constant struggle with his environment if he is to develop to his highest capacity. Hard conditions in life are indispensable to bringing out the best in human personality."

This seems to be a rule of nature. F.W. Boreham wrote that in the old days and in the old ways, fish were caught and put into a tank with perforated sides. The fish in this tank were returned to the water they came from. Still, most of the fish arrived at the market limp and lifeless. One fisherman brought his fish to the market in more excellent condition than all of the others and commanded the highest prices. He would not reveal his secret. After his death his daughter at his request told the other fishermen, "Father thought it wise to keep a catfish in the well of his boat. The catfish kept the other fish in a ferment of agitation and alarm. They were never at rest. They came to market as though they had just been dragged from the deep."<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Rubble and Rose Leaves, F.W. Boreham © 1933, Abingdon Press.

May 20,

*Index: Moods, Patience, Emotions.*

Read November 13<sup>th</sup> along with today.

When I was a student at Howard Collage I made some mention of moods to a preacher who had just become a friend. To me he was the most trusted of all the ministerial students, so I listened. His reply to me was, "A Christian doesn't have moods." We didn't discuss it further but I began at that time to learn what Chambers tells here.

I think moods can be triggered by events from our early lives, a fragrance, distinctive tone of voice, or the 'spirit' of a person we encountered in our past which is similar to one we meet in our present time.

May 21,

*Index: Careful carelessness, Faith.*

The last sentence is truth. It is extremely difficult for those just out of the nest of home to decide how to balance their efforts to put God first and grow up to be responsible adults in their natural world.

I remember!!

May 22,

*Index: Oneness with God.*

January 28<sup>th</sup> lesson may be a selection you will want to review.

In paragraph three in today's lesson there is a word "*captious*." It means to notice and apt to make much of trivial faults or defects, fault finding, difficult to please.

These scriptures are connected  
Psalm 57:2, 138:8, and Phil. 1:6. God will perform, perfect, and finish what He begins in a life.



May 23,

*Index:* Careful carelessness, Abandonment,  
Worry. Obedience.

Chambers says, ". . . worrying means that we do not think *God* can look after the practical details of our lives . . ." One definition of worry is to care beforehand.

Mark 4:19 and Luke 8:14 tell us what chokes the word, which has been sown into our lives.

May 24,

*Index:* Limit of the possible, Despair.

Chambers said "There are times when God cannot reveal Himself in any other way than in His majesty." If angels have to first quieten our fears when they appear to us, think what the enormity of seeing Jesus Christ would do to us. The last sentence is one to meditate on and hopes that the times we need to re-visit it are few. It is not easy to get to the delight of despair.

May 25,

*Index:* Rights, Natural into spiritual.

"Waive your rights and leave God to choose for you." Pay attention to Chambers and these words from the second paragraph, "The great enemy of the life of faith in God is not sin, but the good, which is not good enough. The good is always the enemy of the best."

Psalm 143:8, John 15:7, and Matt. 21:21 & 22 are scriptures we may read when we need to "transform the natural into the spiritual by obedience."

May 26,

*Index: Prayer.*

One of our misconceptions in life is that we think we know how to pray. We have learned how to ask so we think we know how to pray. Today's lesson is good instruction.

May 27,

*Index:* Ascension, Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

There are five lessons teaching on the Holy Spirit in this book. Other sources of Chambers' words about the Holy Spirit are found in,

**THE OSWALD CHAMBERS DEVOTIONAL READER**  
**52 Weekly Themes**

CHOSEN AND EDITED BY **HARRY VERPLOEGH**

Oliver Nelson  
A Division of Thomas Nelson Publishers  
Nashville, TN

\* AND \*

**My Utmost Devotional Bible**

© 1992 by Thomas Nelson Publishers  
Nashville, TN

May 28,

*Index:* Ascension, Purpose of God,  
Resurrection of life.

Pay attentions to the first sentence of paragraph two. It is possible to come to this level of trust in God. Some of us lag behind. Some advance. We can ask God to bring us to this quiet rest in any period of mystery and lack of understanding.

May 29,

*Index:* Intercession, Right relationship,  
Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Ascension.

Make notes for yourself in your book as you go through this day by day, year after year. We do have times of external perplexities.

May 30,

*Index:* Abandonment, Habit.

This is one of many pages in this book which substantiate that this is for maturing Christians. It is certainly not easy to cross over the line and obey what we think is a risky spiritual decision. We must decide and leap without doubt.

David Lloyd George once said, "You can't cross a chasm in two small leaps."



May 31,

*Index: Grace of God, Put God first,  
Trust in God, Will of God,  
Christ in you.*

This is an important lesson. I know that you have lived long enough and had experiences with God and mankind enough to realize that this is one of the lessons the Holy Spirit meant for us to read and ponder.

Eric Liddell said, "It is not willingness to know but willingness to do God's will that brings enlightenment regarding spiritual truth".

June 1,

*Index:* Experience, Holy Spirit, Human nature,  
Limiting God, Sinners made saints.

This lesson requires patience to understand. His explanation is complex. It seems that we must understand the whole before parts of it are clear. This is Chamber's style.

The bottom line is: If God has not done something in my life such as teach me to make peace with a neighbor. I will find it difficult to believe He can and will do that for another. Experiencing His comfort in sorrow will help us believe He can comfort another.

We need to believe that God can make dead men live. He can open graves and bring life. He saved Saul. He can save the most reprobate sinners. I can believe this when I consider what He has done in my life.

You may want to read Ezekiel 37:1 - 14 today.

June 2,

*Index: Circumstance.*

One of my grandsons when he was three told me, when I had him at my house for an afternoon, that his mother would know if he took a nap. "She will know." At the same time he told me that there was a connection between him and his brother. "Connection" was his word. This ability to be conscious of others is part of the ability God uses to help us to be conscious of Him. After our rebirth we do know our Parent.

Being haunted by God makes us privileged people.

When we learn that the spiritual life is one of trust, of freedom from anxiety and fear, we loose the sense of being imprisoned by circumstances.

June 3,

*Index: Friendship with God, Guidance, Joy,  
Will of God.*

When our family was in crises in the early 1970's I met a group of people who knew God more intimately than I did. They had experience with His power and healing. They loved God and He loved them. I began to rethink all I ever knew about God. I asked Him to tell me how He could love me intimately when there was such a gulf between us. God answered my prayer by showing me tiny parts of His creation. He began with a garden slug. Some days afterward He painted a picture for me using thin slender dry grass and tiny drops of moisture. He taught me that He surely knew about me and loved me.

I have had visual lessons since then and I have retained an interest in small parts of His natural world. He lets me know every day that He loves me.

I know the truth of this lesson. I believe you do and I think you will enjoy returning to this page year after year.

June 4,

*Index:* Difficult things, Drudgery.

On seven different days Chambers speaks of drudgery. Doing work that is menial, repetitive, or uninteresting can cause us to be less than full of praise and joy if we let it. Reading Deut. 31:6 - 8, Josh. 1:5, 1 Chron. 28:20, and Heb. 13:5 & 6 is a help.

June 5,

*Index: Fear.*

In 1997 in the margin of this lesson I wrote; "I am relying on *God's* word, *God's* say-so, about our son who is lost to us." In 1998 I wrote; "I am relying on *God's* word about our son." In 2002 I wrote; "Our son has been home a long time. I was right to rely on *God.*"

The reference to grasshoppers is Num. 13:33.

June 6,

*Index: Obstinacy, Will of God.*

This is a good lesson. We are reminded that sin is less powerful than our will. Our will was one of God's created parts of us that He declared good. Sin entered in as an addition to what God created. It is perverse, obstinate, but not permanent.

I like what Chambers tells me. "God is the source of my will." Philippians 2:13 is a comfort; God works in me to will and to do His good pleasure.

Near the end of today's lesson we have this sentence: "Obstinacy is an unintelligent 'wadge' that refuses to be enlightened; the only thing is for it to be blown up with dynamite, and the dynamite is obedience to the Holy Spirit."

I believe his word "wadge" meant to him this definition of 'wad' found in Webster's New Twentieth Dictionary. Here wad is defined as "a plug of hemp, tow, paper, etc., stuffed against a charge to keep it firmly in the breech of a muzzle-loading gun or in a cartridge." The soldiers to whom he often spoke while in Egypt would have understood the plug and the dynamite.

June 7,

*Index:* Intercession, Atonement, Prayer,  
Will of God, Abiding.

Chambers uses this phrase "ministry of the interior" more than once.

He has good instruction on praying here.

His last paragraph will be material for meditation.



June 8,

*Index:* Spiritual destiny, Discernment.

I think this is a wonderful lesson. I believe you will agree.

He uses a word "*stodgy*." It means dull, lacking interest.

You may want to consider this sentence from October tenth with today's lesson. "All God's revelations are sealed until they are opened to us by obedience." This whets our appetite to know more and to be more.

Read all of John 13:1 - 20. Jesus knew who He was. Therefore He could be what He desired and needed to be for the disciples.

June 9,

*Index: Prayer.*

We have read more than a third of these lessons. If we have not made a firm decision "to decide for Christ", we have given it serious thought. So, we are not unprepared for Chambers' first two sentences. People more wise than I have written about man's reluctance to ASK. I, also, find the reluctance within. I do not ask. I just stumble along alone and postpone prayer. So I made a note in my book. Read! Heed! Ask!

In the last paragraph when Chambers writes, "do not put the reasonable blinkers on again" he means don't try to understand within your natural mind what is a spiritual reality. Ask God to tell you what He means.

June 10,

*Index:* Experience, Self-realization.

In paragraph two he warns that building your faith on experiences will bring a censorious note. Censorious means severe in making critical remarks about others or of their speech or behaviors. This June 10<sup>th</sup> and June 11<sup>th</sup> are excellent teachings on Luke 9:10-11.

June 11,

*Index: Come unto me, Will to be committed,  
Surrender, Spiritual stubbornness.*

Mothers and other caretakers of young children have called children to come to them. All that was desired was for the child to be physically near. Sometimes the child would hide, sometimes just look and not draw near. Such experiences come to mind as we read today's lesson.

This year, 2010, when I re-read these lessons, I remember the beliefs I had thirty-five years ago. I had not known there was a freedom from the pull sin had in my life. I was a Christian. I lived by Christian rules because I knew them to be correct. Since I was thirteen I had wanted to grow as Jesus did "in favor with God and man." Then in the early 1970s I came to know a group of Christians who knew much more than I did about God the Father, Jesus his son, and the Holy Spirit.

The first sentence in today's lesson described what they were experiencing. I desired to be like them. I began to hear "Come unto me" and I began to understand that God was calling me to a more intimate friendship than I had ever known.

June 12,

*Index: Pride, Abiding.*

Please read this selection carefully. The teaching here and a constant reminder of a friend helped keep me from slipping into that habit of saying, "I'm no saint" or "We all sin". I do not say "I am perfect" but I do not drag His name in the dirt by referring to my failures. I carry His name. I respect His ability to take a human and make her a child of God. More than that He keeps teaching me that He is my perfect father.

One of those new things I began to learn thirty-five years ago was that God would make His home within me. If I wanted to be free from pride, self-sufficiency, and self interest He would remove this from me if I asked and cooperated with Him as He did this work within me.

I began to ask.

June 13,

*Index: Abandonment, Come unto me, Now,  
Natural affinities.*

The last sentence of paragraph one reads, "Never make a principle out of your experience; let God be as original with other people as He is with you." The way God handles me is just right for me. He should not find me expecting others to be like me. He is very original. I need to let them and Him alone.

Chambers taught me one thing. The one thing that I can consecrate to God is my right to myself. When I came to desire to be full of God and not full of myself, I listened to this "Come" which God was saying to me. I asked Him to make this transfer happen and He did. I keep hearing His voice and I keep following.

Do not let this be the only year that you read this book. It can be like a spiritual diary and growth chart for you.

June 14,

*Index: Abiding, Now.*

The first sentence tells me I have the Spirit of Jesus in me because of Jesus' atonement. I must construct my way of thinking which is in accordance with my Lord's thoughts. I have to do it myself. God will not do it for me. Yesterday's lesson taught us that God engineers our circumstances. Consequently the changes in/of my mind must take place where I am. So His abiding in me means I must order my thoughts and my actions so that I will neither offend nor grieve the Spirit in me brought to me by Christ's atonement.

June 15,

*Index: Circumstances, Habit, Drudgery,  
Grace of God.*

Today's lesson announces "You have inherited the Divine Nature." Chambers must have had his Bible open to the first Chapter of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter as he taught his students. "When you have accepted this fact by faith you are to add to your faith these character habits." Then he read verse 5 - 7 of chapter one. I think he would have explained to his students that they could indeed create within themselves these habits. Thus they would reveal to others they had been imbued / endued / endowed with / clothed with the Spirit of Jesus. They had the ability to do this because of the liberating power of Jesus who said he would send the enabler to them.

Chambers reminded them and us that this revelation of the Divine nature must be lived out in commonplace lives. Our daily tasks are often uninspiring, repetitious, and physically tiring.

I'm glad we have had lessons about drudgery. There are seven in the index.

Consider this word from H. Leo Eddleman who said "Christians must be salt before they can perform as light."



June 16,

*Index:* Salvation, Loyalty to Jesus,  
Sense of the heroic.

After you have read this lesson thank God for the brilliant moments you have known.

As I read this today I thought of the shining appearance of Moses and Elijah. The human Jesus had the heavenly brilliance that day. Do you suppose He for a short time that day remembered the shining splendor of heaven and what He had known there?

*Addendum 2010*

Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." We speak of the cross, His cross, my cross. I have to consider each day, "What does this mean for me. Jesus bore His cross each day He lived on earth. Day by day He lived in harmony with God in this life, then He donned the wooden cross and died suspended between heaven and earth. He has not asked me to die for Him but to live as He did obedient to His father daily. I have been given the Holy Spirit within to nourish and enable me to obey God always rather than succumb to the inclinations of the natural life.

When this dying daily, when this cross bearing becomes overbearing Jesus tells us to "Come to me. I will teach you. Take my yoke upon you, the heavier part is on my shoulders. I will give you rest."

June 17,

*Index:* Judging, Pride, Holy Spirit,  
Temper of mind.

I have a thickening file of quotations and articles teaching me about Matthew 7:1. This lesson is one of the most important on the subject of judging. I would add the word Prayer to the index for today because we must confess, repent, and forsake judging before we can pray.

June 18,

*Index:* Now, Reliance on God, Abandonment,  
Doubt, Circumstances.

In the second paragraph a sentence begins "If you are recognizing your Lord . . ." that clause could read "If your focus is on Jesus, or if you are abandoned to Jesus . . ."

We have seven other lessons that tell us that the Lord engineers circumstances. We are not to dispute with Him concerning the circumstances in our life at any time. When we suddenly find ourselves sinking we can take comfort in the hand of Jesus that reached out to Peter and landed him safely in the boat.

He is the I AM as was told in Ex. 3:14. He is with us, able to rescue. "He is the one with whom we have to do." Heb. 4:13. And He is the same and always with us.

June 19,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus, Discipline,  
Discipleship.

The first sentence tells us we are not to make disciples to our way of thinking. Chambers develops that paragraph well. The first sentence of the second paragraph calls for self-examination. Have I adopted an authoritative set of beliefs espoused by an official group of other Christians? Or do I have such a personal belief and acquaintance with Jesus that I am devoted to Him only. Will I accept being treated as a doormat for Him? If I live like that I will be unobtrusive. This means that I will not thrust myself forward or upon another person. I will be as quiet as the grain of wheat mentioned in John 12:24.

June 20,

*Index:* Intercession, Prayer, Atonement.

An important teaching of Chambers is that the atonement of Christ is sufficient. To understand this enables us to freely and joyfully sing the hymn "Jesus Paid It All."

A definition of atonement is found in the selection for Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. "The atonement means that God can put me back into perfect union with Himself, without a shadow between, through the death of Jesus."

Chambers calls intercessory prayer the ministry of the interior.

June 21,

*Index: Intercession, Prayer, Atonement.*

To answer Chambers' question at the beginning of today's lesson calls for a review of our lessons. Beginning with June 11, we were urged to come to Jesus and He would enable us with the spirit of life. On June 16 we are told God saves and endows us with the Holy Spirit. On June 14 we are told that God, the Spirit of Jesus, is put into a man by the atonement. June 15 reads we have inherited the Divine Nature. 2 Peter 1:4.

The source of the word translated imbued / endowed / clothed with informs us that there is put inside us a power, a nature, a love that enables us to be called a royal priesthood by right of the atonement.

In these lessons we have been taught to come when Jesus our Lord calls and the response we must make is the way we think and act. When we become sick unto death of anything within our lives which is out of harmony with this new nature Christ has put within us, we come to God in repentance and obedience. We learn who lives inside us and recognize that we are a child of the great I AM. Then we sing "Thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they are created. Thou art worthy O Lord." Then we move naturally into intercession for others cooperating with this triune God as He seeks to woo others so they may find rest for their souls.

June 22,

*Index: Judging, Humility.*

Once again I have to say, "I must oppose the willingness within myself to judge and criticize others."

When you read the last sentence think of the word atonement as *at one ment*. And the word justified in our Christian vocabulary as *just as if I'd never sinned*. Because of Jesus Christ we are seen differently after our re-birth.

June 23,

*Index:* Sin, Tragic losses of life.

We must pay close attention to what Chambers has written here. It is an explanation of the *Great Divide* of the human race. A. W. Tozar said, "There are two classes of people in the world, those who are once born and those who are twice born."

Until we recognize that sin is red-handed mutiny against God we will find no relief from the consequences of sin. We live in a broken, hurting world because of our sins and the sins of other people committed in the past and present.

Chambers teaching about this tragic fact of life is continued tomorrow.



June 24,

*Index: Self-seeking, Sin, Human nature,  
Tragic fact of life.*

You have learned for yourself the truth presented in yesterday's and today's lesson. Now it is your opportunity and responsibility to teach your children what this means in their own lives and the people in their own world.

The first sentence today is basic truth. All have sinned and all are capable of sinning. I know my generation has joined Satan in repeatedly excusing sin as just human nature. It is that but it is so much more. Jesus Christ is the remedy.

He speaks of the pure person, not the innocent, which is safeguarded. By innocent I think he means the untried, never tempted person. Innocence has had no choices, no past when the opportunity to choose to obey God or to choose to disobey has been presented. Pure people have faced temptation and chosen not to sin and are stronger than the innocent.

In the last sentence Chambers tells us that it is a blameworthy thing for a man or a woman not to be reconciled to the fact of sin. I think he means such a one has refused to face the facts. He has decided that it is too difficult. He chooses to be an un-enlightened person. He hides in twilight. However the shadows will fade away soon and the twilight will give way to a deeper darkness.

June 25,

*Index: Sorrow.*

Every line Chambers writes today is truth. Grief counselors of every ilk use their strategies to help us overcome denial when we are struck by sorrow.

You have observed that some people let themselves be destroyed by grief. There are so much better results available to those who will allow the Comforter to work with them on this road.

John 14:16 - 18.

When I was young; before I ever knew any sorrow I found and kept these words by Robert Browning Hamilton. They are a beginning introduction to viewing sorrow.

**Along the Road**

I WALKED a mile with Pleasure;  
She chattered all the way,  
But left me none the wiser  
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow  
And ne'er a word said she;  
But oh, the things I learned from her  
When Sorrow walked with me!<sup>14</sup>

--Robert Browning Hamilton

---

<sup>14</sup> The Best Loved Poems of the American People ©1936  
Doubleday & Company, Inc.

June 26,

*Index: Grace of God, Now.*

I have imagined coming before God on his throne. Before I could speak He raised his hand and motioned for me to go to a place on His right labeled *GRACE*. I like Chambers' assurance that I can always reckon (count) on the overflowing grace of God to be available for me. If I am a recipient of this grace I need never be distraught in any of the circumstances in which I find myself.

Think about this definition of grace. "Grace is a disposition of favorableness to humans that remains resident in God and colors much of what He thinks and does."<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> From Heaven's View by T.W. Hunt & Melana Hunt  
Monroe, ©2002 Broadman & Holman Publishers,  
Nashville, TN.

June 27,

*Index:* Self-pity, Justice.

Chambers uses Jer. 1:8. You can add these scriptures Jer. 38:2, 39:18, and 45:5 for additional understanding.

This selection is more suited to a person facing a career choice or a calling to dangerous experiences than to people my age. However it is rich reading and meditation material for me. I would like for my grandchildren to treasure this lesson.

His last line refers to Prov. 3:5 & 6.

June 28,

*Index:* Called to preach.

Philippians 3:12 could read "pursuing that for which God is pursuing me." I believe God must lay hold on us before we can lay hold on Him. Read Phil. 3:12 in every translation you can find and ask God to teach this verse to you for yourself.

June 29,

*Index: Discipline.*

To understand the first sentence of paragraph two read Genesis 32:24 - 32. The last two sentences of that paragraph will keep us from being a haughty judge. We will not put our personal convictions onto another and call it a Biblical absolute for anyone.

Chambers writes in the last paragraph "It is a maimed life to begin with." Look closely at the first sentences of paragraph two to understand Chambers use of "the maiming."

We must not criticize others if they have not accepted the restrictions God placed on us as a rule for their lives. Jacob's limp was for him not for the whole tribe. As Chambers taught at the end of paragraph two, "See that you do not use your limitations to criticize others."

I like to read Psalm 69:6 and 101:2 & 3 plus Romans 14:13 with this selection.

June 30,

*Index:* Now, Judgement, Self vindication.

Read scripture Matt. 5:23 - 26. If not in our own lives then surely in others we have observed people who procrastinated and even refused to obey this scripture. The gulf widened between the individuals and all manner of suffering resulted.

July 1,

*Index:* Now, Right to myself, Sanctification,  
Obedience.

When I read Chamber's first sentence in today's reading I stumbled over the words. My negative mind-set read "No corner of hell . . ." It may be necessary to read aloud, slowly, the whole of these words today.

In the December 1<sup>st</sup>. reading, his last sentence on that day is very similar to his sentence near the end of the first paragraph today. "The moment you realize God's purpose . . ."

I have written Chambers words, "These messages are for the will and the conscience, not for the head" in the flyleaf of Charles Allen's book **The Sermon on the Mount**. This is a good book. If you find it buy it even if it is used.



July 2,

*Index: Consistency, Devotion to Jesus,  
Discipleship, Holy Spirit.*

An important sentence of the basic training principles for Christians is found in the first paragraph. "There is a difference between devotion to a person and devotion to a cause." A relationship with Jesus is satisfying to the soul and spirit. Adherence to a cause is a draining experience. It saps one's energy without replenishing nourishment.

The words to be a devoted "love-slave" need to be understood. Read Lev. 21:1 - 6, Eph. 6:5 - 9, Col. 4:1, and 1 Peter 2:16.

The reference to the Holy Ghost's shedding abroad the very love of God in our hearts is Romans 5:5.

July 3,

*Index: Sin, Conviction of sin, Holy Spirit.*

I like the title and the lesson today. It caused me to write in my book, "Sins are down-right specific and personal. So is the conviction of the Holy Spirit."

Isaiah was not the only one who admitted the concentration of sin in his life. Jacob (*Gen. 32:27*) had to reveal his name, and admit his name, which told his nature to the One with whom he wrestled.

July 4,

*Index: Worry.*

In his last sentence Chambers uses a word *calculating*. This simply means planning.

I have learned that though my body when hurting occupies my mind and soul, my spirit can rest in singing "Yes, Lord, yes to your will and to your way." My spirit can endure without fretting at my present experiences.

July 5,

*Index:* Untroubled heart, Worry,  
Love, Put God first.

I think you will gain more from this selection year  
by year as you mature, re-read and meditate on this.

I do not think it wise to be without savings.  
However, we are to keep our hearts from being troubled  
about our future provisions.

I am finding that a person I love has this  
developing confidence in Jehovah-Jireh.

July 6,

*Index: Vision.*

In the last paragraph Chambers speaks of letting God put us on His wheel and whirling us as a potter does clay. I think he knew Robert Browning's words written in the poem "Rabbi ben Ezra" circa 1864. Perhaps Chambers learned these lines while in school.

"He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
of plastic circumstances  
This Present, thou, forsooth,  
would fain arrest.  
Machinery just meant to give  
thy soul it's bent.  
Try thee and turn thee forth,  
sufficiently impressed."<sup>16</sup>

Both men use the potter, wheel, and clay to teach God's way of shaping our lives.

Read Jere. 18:1 - 6.

---

<sup>16</sup> The Poetical Works of Browning  
©1895 by Houghton, Mifflin and Company,  
The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

July 7,

*Index:* Atonement, Salvation, Crises,  
Difficult things, Utmost for His Highest.

This lesson teaches truth today. To be a son or daughter of God requires discipline, repentance when we err, by choice or mishap, then repair by the Master before we return to this "glorious difficult life" which we are called to pursue.

July 8,

*Index: Will, Loyalty.*

Chambers writes, "With each new proposition other people get more and more out of it, that is where the strain comes." He means that more and more people fail to understand if we tell them the new way God is leading us. Even we ourselves may not immediately understand.

My former pastor, Joel McGraw, taught me to decide beforehand how I would react in the future. This lesson bores the wisdom of such a decision deeper into my life. Will to be loyal and be loyal willfully

July 9,

*Index: Will to believe, Reliance on God,  
Unbelief.*

Read today's lesson carefully. Note the title. Imagine yourself as a new student at this Bible College. You are young, you come with zeal but with hidden uncertainties. You would like to do great things for God. As you listen to the probing questions of Dr. Chambers you conclude, "I am at the wrong place. I can never do that. I'm out of my element". You began to think about going back home. Then some second year student encourages you. "Just wait. Don't quit. There is more to come. Keep listening you will understand that God can enable you and cause you to do what he ask of you".

Read other lessons on the call of God. End your steady with December 14<sup>th</sup>.



July 10,

*Index:* Spiritual sloth, Initiative,  
Self-realization.

I imagine that Chambers' teaching, which we read today, was given under a tent in Egypt. He read the scripture Hebrews 10:24 & 25 and began to explain the deeper meaning of these words. As you read you may need to think about these words and their meanings.

*Antipodes* - the direct opposite.

*Sluggards* - habitually lazy persons,  
in-active, slow persons.

In Chambers' writing we recognize that sluggish and slothful are synonyms. A sloth is a person who moves very slowly always.

When I read Chambers' word "realization" and "realize", they mean to me "be conscious of the person in a knowing way." If we realize Jesus we will know His presence and not just His blessings to us.

July 11,

*Index:* Abandonment, Holy Spirit, Initiative,  
Self-realization.

I can imagine how up-set Chambers would be at the emphasis on self-realization that we have been inundated with during our lifetime. It has become acceptable behavior to be selfish. We have been taught to study ourselves, to accept ourselves, improve ourselves, and make ourselves stronger. Then we have learned how to rule over others. This is not the way Jesus taught us to live.

When he washed the disciples' feet it was not work. It was devotion. Do you suppose as He bent over each, He thought, "This is the last time I will touch them. I can do this tonight and tomorrow I will die for them."

July 12,

*Index: Standards of Jesus, Word, Body,  
Abundance.*

This lesson is obviously in the same body of instruction as yesterday's lesson. It speaks to me in a general way but if I were a pastor or member of a church staff it would be quite pointed.

July 13,

*Index: Putting God first, Character, Revelation, Vision.*

I finally have my own words for Chambers word '*vision*.' My vision simply means that what I see happen in my mind is what I want to see happen in the future. The *vision* or *God's* vision means what we think *God* wants to see happen in the future.

With reference to Isa. 6:1 and this lesson, I want to tell you that we must allow *God* to subtract from our lives those we lean on. It is not wrong to have a Uzziah in our lives but the time comes when our maturity demands, as Chambers said, "*God* first, *God* second, and *God* third . . . "

Read Isaiah chapters 44 and 45.

July 14,

*Index: Duty, Justice, Second mile, Rights.*

Since I was a child I have wondered how to obey the teaching in Mat. 5:39. We used to get so angry because Papa let people take advantage of him. He never retaliated. He and Mother would not let us fight, certainly not with our fists nor even with words.

Only once did I know that Papa almost hit a man. He accused my father of lying. Mother managed to get Papa out of the man's business before the explosion came.

The second mile principle is part of our inheritance. We are to live by it. Chambers' instruction helps but the Holy Spirit guidance is essential.

July 15,

*Index:* Redemption, Spiritual honor, Word,  
Broken hearted, Poured-out wine,  
Broken bread.

Chambers uses the expression broken bread and poured-out wine often. The definition of that is in this lesson.

July 16,

*Index: Circumstances engineered by God,  
Intercession.*

Chambers' expression "Notion your mind . . ." to me means to set your mind, fix your opinion, and view every situation with the idea that God is there. 'Notion your mind' is an expression I grew up with. I like its simplicity more than any definition I might find for those three words.

Keep his last paragraph in your heart to remember when dark days come to you. Remind yourself that God is neither an unkind friend nor an unnatural Father.

There may well be days in my future when I will need my children to be my teacher and encourager. I want them to know the third paragraph in today's lesson. I request that they read it to me even if I cannot respond.

See the lessons of Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> for similar teachings.

July 17,

*Index: Called to preach, Belief, Fasting,  
Prayers, Preaching.*

Chambers sounds, in today's lesson, like a man who would agree with the book, Fresh Power especially chapter nine of that book.<sup>17</sup> I can't go around recommending that my pastor read and heed these words but I can recognize the truth and intercede. If God puts me in a church whose pastor needs to change to be a person the Holy Spirit can speak through it is my responsibility to pray for this to happen.

---

<sup>17</sup> FRESH POWER by Jim Cymbala, published in 2001 by Zondervan Publishing House.



July 18,

*Index: Obedience, Authority of Jesus.*

The last two sentences in today's reading are ones I want to remember always. You will want to read John 3:19 - 21.

We do not know whether Jesus spoke to Nicodemus personally and intimately again or if this is the last encounter they had before Jesus' death. We are not to judge and we may be too busy to speculate about Nicodemus' meditations and decisions after he came to Jesus by night. I think Nicodemus did not back away from the light of Jesus. He is the one who furnished one hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes to wrap Jesus' body after He was taken from the cross John 19:39.

July 19,

*Index: Obedience, Authority of Jesus.*

This is a "must" reading for one trying to understand obedience and that tacked on phrase "submission to male authority." I'm sure Chambers never thought of the consequences of the hierarchy many women face in today's ultra-conservative branches of the church. In the 1960's I was delighted to find these words, "We have to rescue the word 'obedience' from the mire. Obedience is only possible between equals, it is the relationship between Father and Son, not master and servant."

This lesson exalts Jesus. If I had in me a reluctance to obey my Lord I would repent after this lesson.

Read the lesson for September 22<sup>nd</sup> with today's lesson.

July 20,

*Index: Dependence on God, Pluck, Wait on God.*

You will be making your own notes as you read this year by year.

These words in the middle of today's selection helped me to be content on extended camping trips. "God's presence is not dependent on any place."

I like the last paragraph and I have come to depend on God's checks, that sudden impression that I must stop, evaluate, and perhaps change my actions.

*Addendum 2010*

Don't we all want to mount up with wings over our problems? We want to run when speed is necessary and not faint before the task is finished. But this is the promise I need most often, to walk and not faint.

This lesson is educational and comforting to me.

July 21,

*Index:* Redemption.

What Chambers has to say today is an accurate way to approach the Sermon on the Mount. If I have not let the Redeemer put into me the disposition that ruled His own life, it will be impossible for me to live as Jesus instructs here in the Sermon on the Mount.

When I know I am a pauper I am ready to come to Him as more than a teacher.

July 22,

*Index: Sanctification.*

A sermon our pastor preached on a Sunday night, probably during the 1974 - 75 school year, caused me to ask for this Sanctification spoken of in 1<sup>st</sup>. Thessalonians 4:3 and 1<sup>st</sup>. Thessalonians 5:23 & 24. He called us to come pray. We scattered around the altar and into the choir area. After a time the pastor came by. I looked up and asked, "Do you mean that if I just ask Him to sanctify me, He will?" He replied, "It is His will to do so. I believe it." So I asked and He did. A process began that night. It continues. The next day the school looked dirtier than I had seen it the Friday before. I had a restraint of speech within that I never knew before.

Chambers' last sentence explains what happened. It was Himself He put into me.

July 23,

*Index: Sanctification.*

The death side of Sanctification spoken of yesterday was accomplished in me because I had observed the holy goodness and love of God. Thus, all I had within me of myself, I was willing to die to in order that I might belong to Him and not to myself. The life side of Sanctification became mine. As Chambers wrote "The mystery of Sanctification is that the perfections of Jesus Christ are imparted to me, not gradually, but instantly when by faith I enter into the realization that Jesus Christ is made unto me Sanctification."

When the Sanctification of God is active in my life, I can say, "Examine me O Lord, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart" (Psalm 26:2) because I am not afraid of the one to whom I appeal. I will desire that all my heart be pleasing to Him.

July 24,

*Index:* Heredity of holiness,  
Standards of Jesus.

Read this lesson carefully. It is like information of a cure for a life threatening disease which we may have. Study it. It is a staggering thing to think Jesus can alter my entire heredity.

Each time I read Matthew 5:20 I want to read this page.

October 6<sup>th</sup> lesson fits with today's lesson.

July 25,

*Index:* Holy Spirit's work, Standards of Jesus.

I like Chamber's words that "the Beatitudes contain the dynamite of the Holy Ghost . . . they explode when the circumstances of our lives cause them to do so." Jesus knew there were blessings for us when we are poor in spirit, when we mourn, when we are meek, when we become hungry and thirsty for righteousness, when we are merciful and pure, when we become peacemakers, even when we are persecuted for righteousness' sake. To obtain blessings in these circumstances is as Chambers said, "the stern work of a saint."



July 26,

*Index:* Authority of Jesus.

Near the end of his first paragraph Chambers writes "If I have never been a blackguard . . ." this word originally meant the lowest servant in the kitchen in charge of pots and pans. [You can imagine how black one would become.] The derived meaning is a villain, a scoundrel, a coarse despicable person.

I want to always hand myself over to Jesus Christ so that his redemption will keep me from experiencing the terrible possibilities of my heart.

July 27,

*Index: Obedience, Insight.*

Today's lesson may be difficult to receive but it is plain and easy to understand. The October 10th lesson speaks of obedience and revelation.

A friend states that we will be tested within 24 hours after a truth of God is revealed to us. I have found this to be true.

Be cautious. Spiritual darkness can fall on any of us anytime we fail to obey scripture.

Two words you may need to know our meaning of; *humbug*, which means a hoax, a fraud, or an impostor, and a *scruple* means the smallest detail.

Based on the definitions of the word scruple I think Chambers is telling us that when God educates us down to the last scruple we have been examined and taught by God until we should have no hesitation in determining what is right and what is wrong.

July 28,

*Index: Word, Obedience, Purpose of God.*

As we begin this lesson it would be good for us if we use dictionaries to learn the meaning of *constrain*. Read all of Mark 6:45 - 52 along with this lesson. The disciples surely did not find "success" after they obeyed Jesus' command. They became afraid and confused, probably wondering if they were going to be deserted. They, as we, were still in training.

July 29,

*Index:* Clouds, Faith, Simplicity of relations,  
Sorrow, Darkness.

Along with today's lesson you may want to reread  
June 6 and 25.

One purpose I have in writing these comments  
daily is to explain and perhaps augment for you what is  
written and to encourage you to understand and  
appreciate Chamber's lessons. Pay attention to his  
definition of clouds in his second sentence. Today's  
topic is a favorite of mine. I've associated God with  
clouds all of my life. I began to see their beauty and  
dream dreams as I watched them from the cotton fields.  
They were a vehicle for my imagination.

Chambers states that "God does not come in  
clear shining." Sometimes He is very bright, though I am  
more accustomed to seeing Him in clouds.

**Seeing God**  
My Lord and my God,  
**Adoring you is climbing**  
**highest mountain peaks,**  
Glimpsing all the bright splendor  
**Imploring you for shadows.**

Florine P. Childress 2008

July 30,

*Index:* Discipline of disillusionment.

Disillusionment means we quit seeing ourselves and others as humans view each other. This lesson can reveal layers of false information we have about others and ourselves. We can use it to change the way we view others. We will experience "disillusionment." His teaching after the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph is like changing to a major musical key after doleful minor music.

Perhaps the following teaching I was given by a visiting singing group at Faith Chapel will help. It was titled;

***The Looking Glass Self***

You are not what you think you are,  
You are not what others think you are,  
You are not what you think others think you are,  
You are what God says you are,  
You are forgiven, free, loved, lovely, healed,  
victorious, righteous, complete, valuable,  
and precious in God's sight.

Author Unknown

July 31,

*Index:* Right relationships, Slovenliness.

Sloven means habitually negligent. Slipshod is a word mother used to use. She coupled it "with half-hearted way of doing things." I remember a few times she reprimanded me, using this word, after I had done the fieldwork carelessly.

I notice in one of my granddaughters a need to be independently individualistic. The need to be somewhat different from her twin expresses itself in small ways.

We are not permitted to be slipshod, sloven, nor insistent in obeying in an independent way, if we want to continue toward being entirely His as Chambers encourages us to be.

February 15<sup>th</sup> is a lesson I read in connection with this one.

August 1,

*Index: Amateur providence, Obedience.*

Chambers tells us today to vacate a place so that Jesus Christ may come in and preach and teach what is needed to those we move away from. Christ cannot occupy the place until we move.

Next we are told to be quiet. Once again we find the warning, do not assume the role of being the spiritual amateur providence in others lives. We may pray and we must but we may neither dictate to God nor to the ones for whom we pray. We are like Peter when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration. We think we know what is needed. He thought he knew how to prolong the meeting with Moses, Elijah, Jesus, and themselves. God didn't reprimand him. He just said, "Listen to my Son."

The last instruction is to wait. In times past I have found God to use one or more of His new, unexpected, ways to accomplish what needed to be done and all were benefited. Romans 11:33. Alas, waiting is often necessary!

August 2,

*Index: Overcoming.*

Chambers uses the word "fashionless" to describe some people. In politics a *fusionist* supports the party all the time. Before a person is born again he might not be able to ask for prayer when difficulties arise. To do so would be to admit, "I am not self-sufficient." Along with the new birth there comes a breaking of old loyalties and the new Christian is able to ask for help. Thus, when adversities and troubles come, fashionless Christians call for intercessors "Please pray for God to deliver me out of this painful situation." At such times the body of Christ needs to become a yoke-fellow with the weak Christian. All of us are admonished to accept the discipline of difficulty. The weaker younger Christian may need deliverance or he may need endurance to bear the present pressure.



August 3,

*Index: Jerusalem.*

The disciples may have discussed in complete consternation the plans Jesus was following. The scripture today "Behold we go to Jerusalem" and Jesus determination to go through Samaria John 4:4 surely puzzled them. However He was the leader, a compelling leader; they kept following.

He told Peter to expect the unexpected and gave instructions for how he was to lead after some large surprises in his life. I find comfort in the last three sentences in today's lesson. Chambers has in other lessons told us there is more than we have got at as yet.

August 4,

*Index: Jerusalem.*

Today I find in the church a predominating tendency to select leaders based on their natural abilities. Humanistic ways of finding a person's gifts and "possessions" won't transfer harmoniously into the church and kingdom procedures. Being a person who has no ability except his complete availability to God and being in a church with like-minded people will result in this Brave Comradeship with God.

It is vital to obey Chambers instruction, "We must never allow anything to injure our relationship with God; if it does get injured we must take time and get it right."

Mat. 5:23 & 24, Mat. 18:15 - 17 cannot be ignored. God cannot accept us if we will not be reconciled to His other children.

August 5,

*Index: Call of God.*

A young man in our church has been considering what he expresses as a call to missions. I would like for him to read this page in "My Utmost . . ." God may be calling him only at this time into an abandonment to God, to a comradeship with Himself.

The quotation in the last paragraph comes from Shakespeare's Hamlet, Act 5. The rest of the quotation is "Rough - hew them as we will."

The definition of explicit, which fits here, is leaving no question as to meaning or intent, definiteness. Implicit would mean involved in the nature or essence of something through not revealed, expressed, or developed. Synonyms are "implied", "suggested".

August 6,

*Index:* Prayer, Identification.

We find the word 'huff' and 'huffed' in the second paragraph. Huff means a sudden burst of anger or displeasure. To be huffed is to be petulant, peevish, in ill-humor. When I was a child I heard the word used. Often I was told "now don't get in a huff."

We have instructions as we pray. My husband and I have been told that we were asking incorrectly. God gave direction and correction then our prayers were answered.

August 7,

*Index:* Identification, Redemption, Reality,  
Common sense.

When we pray in the Father's House we will be asking for those answers which will fit life in the Father's house. We will be always looking for ways to help His will be done in our lives. We will sense needs in our own part of the kingdom and pray His will into existence.

I will get my attention off my own personal intense need of the moment and attend to the larger needs of all who are in His house.

This isn't all the lesson. To some people and in other years it will teach differently.

August 8,

*Index: Prayer, Common sense.*

I appreciate being reminded by Chambers that I have a right to be face to face with my Father.

Let's ask ourselves these questions, as we think about yesterday and today's lessons. Would the Virgin Mary let herself do un-worthy and demeaning deeds as she carried to full term the Holy One inside her? Would the matron, wife of Joseph, the mother of Jesus live selfishly always thinking narrowly? Would her pondering as she went about common place days and duties have been of the day when everyone, all in her hometown, all in Judah, Jerusalem even beyond would know Jesus as the Son of God.

"If the Son of God is born in my mortal flesh" let these words guide me as I live. Cause me O God to be ever conscious of who I am and to whom I belong.

August 9,

*Index:* Identification, Redemption, Reality,  
Common sense, Dependence on God,  
Prayer.

The first half of today's lesson tells me that I am to let Christ live in me so fully that in any situation I will ask God "What do you want to accomplish here with us?" And I will pray accordingly.

The second half helps me see the difference in a life led by common sense and a life led by the Holy Spirit. We need to understand and remember that "common sense has never detected the Father and never will."

August 10,

*Index: Sacramental, Personality, Saint,  
Self-pity.*

This lesson is full of sentences that call for highlighting in bright colors. They will be good to remember as we live and suffer. We should meditate on them as we consider how *God* is dealing with us and those for whom we pray. I especially like "Be merciful to *God's* reputation. It is easy to blacken *God's* character because *God* never answers back. He never vindicates Himself".

*God* calls some of his children to become saints in obscure un-noticed places. Such a one should remember that *God's* evaluations and his words of "Well done thou good and faithful" are more important than accolades from the church or affirmations from the world.



August 11,

*Index:* Responsibility, Initiation, Wits end.

Read all of II Kings chapter 2. It will enhance Chambers' teaching for today.

If our lives become a sacrament they will be either a means of divine grace or they will be a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality, much as being made poured out wine and broken bread.

August 12,

*Index: Wit's end, Crises, Rest, Sanctification,  
Trust in God.*

Read Matthew 8:23 - 27.

I am comforted and blessed to remember that I am a child of God. It has been good to read today's selection and pay attention to the other part of this relationship. God has a right to expect me to have confidence in Him.

August 13,

*Index: Crises, Walk in the Lord, Praise.*

My first introduction to this word *check* was when I was a child. Our means of conveyance was horse drawn. I heard the word 'check' and 'check rein' when the horse was being harnessed to the wagon and as we rode. It is such a rich word. I like to think about the checks of the Lord.

Woe be unto us if we ignore those checks and grieve the Holy Spirit so that He seems to be gone from our lives.

Read September 27<sup>th</sup> lesson with today's. If you want to explore further the meaning of Chambers' last two sentences you should read Chapter 11 in C. S. Lewis book The Great Divorce.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> In The Best of C.S.Lewis ©1969 Christianity Today, by Iversen Associates, New York

August 14,

*Index:* Sanctification, Chastening.

When I read this lesson I want to read also  
Hebrews 12:5 and the lessons for April 3, 14, and 24.

August 15,

*Index: Sin, Discernment, Rule of God,  
Regeneration.*

The life Jesus puts into us is so satisfying we  
need not sin. We do not need that which is not of God.  
He Himself and His choices are more than enough for us.

I like to sing this refrain from one of  
Ralph E. Hudson's hymns.

His yoke is easy; His burden is light.  
I've found it so; I've found it so.  
He leadeth me by day and by night  
Where living waters flow.

August 16,

*Index: Honest Doubters.*

Long ago God taught me that I was like Thomas. Whatever it takes to help the sincerely doubting person, God will supply.

A teacher once told a class about two ladies who could not be satisfied beyond doubts because they relished their doubts.

Instead of relishing his doubts, Thomas continued to meet with the other disciples. When Jesus appeared to them He spoke singularly to Thomas and provided what Thomas needed to believe. God is kind to honest doubters.

August 17,

*Index:* Discouragement, Hard words of Jesus.

Let me tell you about life on Sand Mountain where I grew up. When two people were arguing or trying to settle an issue of the present, which had its roots in the past, I would hear a phrase "Don't you throw that up to me." I suppose if we had been British we would have used "Don't cast that up to me."

Do not let the trivia of the sentences above keep you from carefully considering his title and meditating on this lesson.

August 18,

*Index:* Will to be committed, Devotion to Jesus,  
Discouragement, Sorrow, Self-pity,  
Self-realization.

It is no wonder I think of Jesus as a master psychologist. He keeps moving inward to probe our deepest motives. He is infinitely kind but he is also thoroughly strict.



August 19,

*Index: Self-consciousness, Come unto Me, Rest.*

I'm beginning to understand what he means about self-consciousness. My physical ailments draw me into introspection. This disturbs my spiritual rest. I must pray for a visit from Christ, not a quick casual encounter.

Chambers is correct in his first sentence. A sudden major change in circumstances, such as a relocation of employment, leaving home for college, or an extended association with unbelievers may cause a person to dispute rather than come to fellowship with Christ.

*Prayer: O God, have mercy. Be jealous. Return and restore this one to yourself.*

August 20,

*Index: Rest, Come unto Me, Self-conscious.*

It would have been good to hear Chambers teach. I can imagine a change of voice when he said, "Well I am not understood, this is a thing they ought to apologize for, that is a point I really must have cleared up."

Until this year I don't think I understood the teaching on "self-consciousness." Now I am learning from Chambers. This is good advice. "Take every element of dis-integration as something to wrestle against not to suffer."

August 21,

*Index: - - - - -*

Is it any wonder that Jesus began this discourse we call the Sermon on the Mount with "Blessed are the poor." This is the beginning of our relationship with Christ and our entrance into His kingdom. To believe we have even one good deed in our record disqualifies us.

I continually learn from and appreciate the last two paragraphs in today's lesson.

August 22,

*Index:* Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Repentance.

The second paragraph today tells the essence of repentance. Every sentence in this paragraph is valuable.

August 23,

*Index: Prayer.*

This could be titled, "First Lesson in Prayer." My only comment would be to put a large exclamation mark at the end of the selection.

August 24,

*Index:* Prayer, Right relationship.

In today's words Chambers digs around our habit of prayer. He looks at the roots and tells us why there is a lack of fruit from the experience.

His expression "turn up the index" means look at the relationship of one thing to another. In John 15:7, Jesus spoke of remaining in Him and His words remaining in us. God is not a force we may come to. He is our Father. If our prayers to Him are not answered we must ask ourselves about our relationship to our Father.

I am just beginning to learn about personal private prayer.

August 25,

*Index:* Surrender, Joy, Abandonment,  
Friendship with God, Natural affinities,  
Self-sacrifice, Holy Spirit.

In the third paragraph there is a word "Iodestar."  
This is a star by which a course of travel is charted, as  
the North Star to sailors. Wise men followed such a  
star to Bethlehem.

This is another lesson we will interpret  
differently as year by year we become more related to  
God in a friend to friend relationship.

August 26,

*Index: Peace.*

I like his statement "When our Lord speaks 'peace' He makes peace." I can of course reject His peace. When I reject His peace and any other word He speaks I become introspective. Then I dig and doubt. I have had friends who spent too much time and money with counselors who specialize in recovering for their memory what God had forgiven and forgotten.



August 27,

*Index: Self, Atonement, Indulgence.*

The title today and the lesson are apt. This is a good alive theological teaching.

"Dry rot" according to Webster's Second Unabridged Dictionary means any internal moral or social decay, generally resulting from lack of new or progressive influences.

I know by the time I get to this lesson that I have spoken of sanctification and that my life must show the testimony I have given.

August 28,

*Index: Prayer.*

We get the idea that anyone can pray. That is true but much that is sometimes called prayer falls short of Jesus' idea of prayer. Today's teaching is clear except perhaps the phrase "prayer on the basis of redemption." This means that I consider the people, their problems and needs and pray that the Redemption of God will be accepted and worked out in each person. I do not pray against the revealed will of God.

August 29,

*Index: Common sense, Faith,  
Intimacy with Jesus.*

Every giant of the faith I have read agrees with these two sentences in today's lesson, "Faith must be tested, because it can be turned into a personal possession only through conflict. . . . Believe steadfastly on Him and all you come against will develop your faith."

Recently I heard four women speaking of their problems, difficulties, trials, tribulations. Each different. Each painful. Each prolonged. I thought of this poem by Christina G. Rossetti which I found when I was a young girl, I memorized the first stanza. I have in the ensuing years asked her eight questions. Now that I am past my golden wedding anniversary I am affirming her eight answers.

I know I have a personal faith, yet I know also the testing will continue. I believe there will be even more than a bed in a safe welcoming inn for me when I arrive at the home Jesus is preparing for me.

### ***Uphill***

*Does the road wind uphill all the way?  
Yes, to the very end.  
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?  
From morn to night, my friend.*

*But is there for the night a resting-place?  
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.  
May not the darkness hide it from my face?  
You cannot miss that inn.*

*Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?  
Those who have gone before.  
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?  
They will not keep you waiting at the door.*

*Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?  
Of labor you shall find the sum.  
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?  
Yea, beds for all who come.<sup>19</sup>*

---

<sup>19</sup> The Best Loved Poems of the American People, ©1936 by Doubleday & Co., Garden City Books, Garden City, New York.

August 30,

*Index:* Right relationship, Joy, Satisfaction.

I want you to know that *God* knows you, where you are, those you are with, all the circumstances of your life. At any time you decide you want to be rightly related to *God* by salvation and sanctification you will be accepted by *God*. Then, as Chambers and I declare, "Remember that wherever you are, you are put there by *God*, and by the reaction of your life on the circumstances around you, you will fulfil *God's* purpose, as long as you keep in the light as *God* is in the light."

This is only one of the truths in today's lesson.

August 31,

*Index:* Sanctification, Right relationship,  
Source pay attention to.

Two sentences in today's lesson are important to me. The first as a warning. "Before we know where we are, we are caught up in the show of things." The second sentence is "The lives that have been of most blessing to you are those who were unconscious of it." I've received from many people who never knew how much they influenced me.

September 1,

*Index:* Holiness, Atonement, Natural affinities,  
Destiny.

Consider three concepts presented in today's lesson.

1. Preaching the gospel awakens resentment because it reveals that I am unholy. It is small wonder that Christianity meets opposition. We present the need but fail to connect to and feed the growing hunger.

2. A definition of Atonement is given at the end of paragraph two.

3. The last paragraph is an exhortation to live a holy life.

We are not commanded to be perfect and to be holy unless this is expected of us. We are never to faint before such an ideal.

September 2,

*Index: Self-realization, Self-expenditure,  
Devotion to Jesus, Rivers of water,  
Sacrifices, Abandonment.*

I know from experience that God will pour through me that which I need to give to others as He would give. While I was teaching school I needed help with a pupil. I had just read September 2<sup>nd</sup> selection when this rebellious fourteen year old boy came into my class for another troublesome hour. After he left I wrote in my plan book, "God, give me patience before I ~~er~~ ❖ Ⓞ this kid." Three weeks later he moved four states away. God does have a sense of humor. In the meantime I received patience.

In A.T. Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels three of the gospels tell of Mary's gift to the Lord. Mark 14:3 - 9, Matt. 26:1 - 13, & John 12:2 - 8. You may want to take time to read these accounts.

You and I may never have a rich box of ointment of spikenard to anoint Jesus. However we can always be open to receive what He wants to pour through us to others.

September 3,

*Index:* Self-satisfaction, Rivers of water.

I don't need to make *Pabulum*<sup>20</sup> of this for you. You can be blessed and taught as you read and meditate on this. Let your imagination expand as you think of his last sentence.

This lesson along with January 6th and Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> lessons has caused me to try to pour out myself in writing.

---

<sup>20</sup> The trade mark name of an infant cereal in 1948.



September 4,

*Index:* Discipleship, Holy Spirit's work, Witness.

This lesson is personal and inspiring to me. When I read the end of the lesson I want to say, "Yes Lord, I want to be entirely yours."

September 5,

*Index: Peace, Holy Spirit, Identification.*

Until I studied this lesson this year, I had never realized that I also might have Jesus say to me "Watch with me." When He wants to teach us about His desires in a new, and to us in a baffling way, Chambers' words will be a comfort. "The disciples loved Jesus to the limit of their natural capacity, but they did not understand what He was after." We live after the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ and after the Holy Spirit has been sent to and for us. When such a "Watch with me" time comes we can ask God to tell us more plainly what is going on and how we are to respond. He will not scold us anymore than He scolded his disciples for sleeping when He had asked them to "Watch with me." God will give wisdom without scolding us for not knowing.

James 1:5.

September 6,

*Index:* Right relationship, Rivers of life, Source,  
Pay attention to - Rivers of water.

As you think of the persistence of a river you may like to add this Spanish proverb to your meditations, "God writes straight with crooked lines." I understand why we can say this. Sometimes we sinned because of the lack of knowledge and we did not ask for guidance. We yielded to our wandering nature and just veered off the path. Sometimes we fell into traps set for us. Other times we just missed the mark. Each time God called us to return to the path He chose for us. Looking back we see that we have walked in a zigzag pattern.

When I read the last sentence of paragraph two I began to sing a song I learned at Happy Hill church when I was young. "Nothing Between My Soul and the Savior." The words and music were written in 1915 by C.A. Tindley. It is found in 'The BROADMAN HYMNAL' ©1940 and published by the Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee. I would not like for this poem in song to be lost and forgotten.

September 7,

*Index:* Right relationship, Rivers of life,  
Source pay attention to,  
Rivers of water.

Aren't we fortunate that we know the song  
"There is a River"<sup>21</sup> and that we know we are a fountain,  
which is being continually filled? We are not the river.  
We are not the water of life. We are the holders  
through which this water is to flow. We are like a water  
fountain or like a spring.

We had friends whose whole house received water  
from a spring. They told us of the many hindrances they  
had as they endeavored to keep fresh clean water for  
their use.

Water fountains are regularly cleaned and  
sanitized to make them desirable to be used. We can  
learn that a lack of vessel, restricted flow, and  
impurities can hinder the flow of the water of life from  
us to others.<sup>22</sup>

The word benignity in the title has one meaning,  
which is used to describe a climate, which is wholesome  
and healthy. We can use that for this lesson.

---

<sup>21</sup> David Sapp Music ©1969.

<sup>22</sup> 1 John 2:8 - 9.

September 8,

*Index:* Natural into spiritual, Sin, Character,  
Day by day choice, Discipleship,  
Innocence, Choice, Sanctification.

One reason I wanted to write these comments on Chambers' lessons is that the recorded knowledge he has gained from experience can help us. In his first paragraph he tells us there are some things in human nature we must starve out. Other things we do not have to fight against but stand still and see the salvation of God.

I cannot, even if I know what you are facing every day, tell you how to choose, which to neglect until gone and which to depend on God to accomplish while you wait in obedience. He instructs us as we abide in Him.

In the year 2000 on this date I wrote in my book, "Peter Lord said 'Life is a Swap Shop.' I am way out of balance now. I've been trading for flimsy stuff."

September 9,

*Index:* Rest, Discipline, Human nature, Impulse,  
Responsibility.

So much of church work, as I know it, is calendar planned in one week and executed when the date arrives. Or it is handed down from a central office to a committee and dealt out to the church members when time comes.

Chambers' second paragraph sounds like a description of many church members today.

How do I respond? By asking God continually "Where do I fit in? What do you want me to do?" Singing "Yes Lord Yes, I will trust you and obey." Being willing to say "No" when I am not led by the Holy Spirit to say "Yes."

September 10,

*Index: Crisis, Worship, Day by day choices,  
Discipline, Circumstances.*

Once again I imagine Chambers' change of voice tones when he came to this third paragraph.

*God deals fairly with each of us in our circumstances. He has no favorites. He gives abundantly. He loads us with as much goodness as we can handle without our breaking under the load.*

September 11,

*Index: Circumstances, Service, Crisis,  
Second mile.*

Contemplating Chambers question: "Can I use a towel as he did?" and re-reading this paragraph has influenced the way I live. On the last night he spent with them, Jesus did handle dishes, sandals, a towel, a wash basin, and dirty feet.



September 12,

*Index:* Spiritual confusion, Fatherhood of God.

The last sentence of paragraph three can be said in these words: "If there is now a deep shadow on the face of God, have faith keep believing that God will ultimately reveal Himself and you will understand why He permitted the shadows and confusion."

God does not ever ignore us.

September 13,

*Index:* Death of Christ, Surrender, Rest,  
Communion, Surrender.

There are church evangelistic services, which are organized to bring emotional ecstasy and extreme sympathy for the lost. If a decision is made during such a service and doubts come on subsequent days, remember that the devotion to Jesus Christ does not go unappreciated by the Father. If the decision is valid, God will speak at other times and more clearly. Testing the spirits includes examining our own decisions.

September 14,

*Index:* Humility, Holy Spirit,  
Simplicity of relationship.

The word '*cotton wool*' means raw cotton, cotton batting. In spiritual matters we can think ourselves into a soft nothingness which envelops our face but has no "body." It is quite smothery and blinding.

Chambers reminds us "The tiniest thing we allow in our lives that is not under the control of the Holy Spirit is quite sufficient to account for spiritual muddle. . . . Spiritual muddle is only cleared up by obedience."

September 15,

*Index:* Walk in the light, God's point of view,  
Utmost for His highest.

This is a lesson, which will require introspection and dialogue with the Holy Spirit. Read Romans 6:19 and 1 Peter 4:1 & 2. The Holy Spirit may direct you to abstain from some practice or do something differently than others. He is to be the one you obey.

When I was in school at Northwestern College, I met a woman who wore small caps on her head. She and I that talked about this. She told me, "I think if God directed you to wear a covering for your head, you would." This is an example of different practices among various Christians.

My father-in-law told me this about himself. "When my son was sent overseas during the Korean conflict, I was on my way to see a movie. It seemed like I was told, 'If you will quit going to the movies your son will come home to you again.' " This is an example of certain practices one person is directed to do but others are not.

September 16,

*Index: Prayer.*

I want you to be an educated pray-er. This lesson is a major teaching. Chambers has twenty lessons, which will aid you. His last sentence today is as if he were saying the words found in 1 John 5:14 & 15.

The word '*blether*' in the second line of paragraph three is also spelled *blather*. It means foolish nonsensical talk.

September 17,

*Index:* Temptation.

Don't you like the first sentence in today's lesson?

Set yourself to study this lesson. It will strengthen the roots of your life. When storms come to you or your family you can bend but grow upright again.

The definition of temptation in the first sentence of paragraph three is helpful. This reinforces the words "To be tempted is no sin; only yielding to the temptation is sin."

I think you would also like to read

Hebrews 2:14 - 18.

September 18,

*Index: Temptation.*

I believe I understand Chambers to teach two things in this lesson. Before we are born again we have one kind of temptation, afterward another. We become a believer/ we are born again/ saved/ become a child of God/ then the kinds of temptations change. Our natural life, our soul, our physical life begins to change. This is what re-generation means. "By regeneration the Son of God is formed in us, He has the same setting that He [our Lord] had on earth. Satan . . . tempts us in order to make us lose what God has put into us by regeneration, viz., and the possibility of being of value to God. Satan tempts us on the line of shifting the point of view."

Is this what Satan tried to do in the year 2000 when we waited month after month for our house to sell? Did he use the delay to try to tear our souls loose from our faith in God? I think so.

September 19,

*Index:* Temptation, Without the camp,  
Circumstances.

A conclusion for me in this lesson is: If I am called to go to Gethsemane, through the city gate, outside my comfortable settled life with no guidance except a voice saying "Follow me," I must obey and not let myself be deterred, regardless of the circumstances God has engineered. I must not let myself enter into denial and retreat. If I walk with Jesus I must face whatever His life within me faces.

If I walk with Him I will get to where He is going. I must have no agenda of my own.



September 20,

*Index:* Vision, Walk in the light,  
Natural affinities, Supernatural,  
Made into natural.

In 1997 I grasped what this lesson is teaching.  
"The secret of a Christian is that the super-natural is made natural in him by the grace of God, and the experience of this works out in the practical details of life." Some of those details may be showing love without alloys, patience, forgiveness, acceptance, understanding to others as God has shown these to me.

September 21,

*Index:* Prejudice, Love of God,  
Purpose of God, Sin.

I shall concentrate on the last six lines of paragraph two. This much of today's lesson is clear to me. "When once we realize that through the salvation of Jesus Christ we are made perfectly fit for God, we shall understand why Jesus Christ is so ruthless in his demands. He demands absolute rectitude [righteousness of principle or practice, correctness] from His servants because He has put in them the very nature of God."

September 22,

*Index: Authority of Jesus, Obedience.*

Do not stand outside God's household and observe the personnel inside, hearing and seeing God's direction to them. Chambers rightly, tells us obedience is not enforced. So long as you stand outside you cannot understand the holy ambience within.

If you do not understand this lesson of Mr. Chambers the first time you read it, try again. You will move more comfortably into the role of a contented servant of Jesus Christ as you live and learn.

I sometimes read July 19<sup>th</sup> lesson with this one.

September 23,

*Index: Will of God, Jerusalem.*

"The aim of the missionary is to do *God's will*."  
When we read this missionary's lesson, we may want to decide that doesn't apply to us since we aren't missionaries. Forget that. We are, all of us who belong to Him, to do *God's will*.

If we live long enough and think logically we will find ourselves as the people Chambers describes in paragraph three. This must never "deflect us from getting up to our Jerusalem." Our Jerusalem is the place of the culmination of our life. The Father chooses the place and time for that.

September 24,

*Index: Rights to myself, Sacrifice,  
Sense of heroic.*

I had an early education about these verses, Matt. 5:23 & 24. I remember part of the experience, though I don't remember Mother's exact words. Someone in Mt. Zion Church was hurt by something Mother said. Mother walked about a mile through the cotton fields and pastures to apologize to her. I went with her because I was old enough to walk with her. My older sister kept my younger sister at home.

Years later, I was in Dr. Vernon G. Davison's class. He taught us that the words of Christ were to be obeyed without question. I believe we need to pay attention to Jesus. He knew what His Father required.

September 25,

*Index:* Right relationship, Standards of Jesus,  
Supernatural made Natural, Discipleship.

Chambers speaks truth when he writes, "Our Lord's making of a disciple is supernatural. He does not build on the natural capacity at all." There is no human scheme whereby we can fit our natural gifts to His task. Anytime when the gifts of the Holy Spirit are discerned or taught we must remember, He does the choosing. We may neither neglect to follow Him nor work our way to bearing fruit. We are to choose to be one through whom the gifts of the Holy Spirit may flow. This is His choice. Then we are privileged to obey Him.

September 26,

*Index: Reconciliation to brother, Right's,  
Memories ministry.*

The lessons for May 25<sup>th</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup> may be read with today's lesson because they harmonize with the one for today.

It is costly to obey the instructions we have here. I know, I remember some instances in my own life, that were costly, when I had to obey. Though I did not know at the time, my obedience led to a friendship I have now. I did know an apology on my part was required.

*Prayer: Father, God help those who need to obey the instructions in today's lesson to be willing to take whatever actions are necessary without demanding favorable results. Amen.*

September 27,

*Index: Obedience, Purity.*

Read Matthew 8:23 - 27.

In my personal copy of *My Utmost* beside the last sentence of paragraph one I have a note which refers me to August 12<sup>th</sup>. To read these two lessons together makes each more meaningful. And beside the fourth paragraph I remind myself of a page from the diary of a fellow church member who told the tragic story of one who put family first.

Return to the August 12<sup>th</sup> lesson. Read the last paragraph. Knowing the super-natural and nurturing result of sanctification in our lives causes us to sing with George Beverly Shea and millions of others, "Oh the wonder of it all, the wonder of it all, just to think that God loves me."



September 28,

*Index:* Identification, Right to myself.

You may want to read Luke 14:25 & 26. Before I was twenty-one years old I had no inkling of what these verses really meant. Then in a class with Dr. Vernon G. Davison we studied the life of Christ using A.T. Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels.<sup>23</sup> Dr. Davison told us that Jesus used a common form of teaching, which was to throw out a contrast. This being true, we can say that the love we have for Jesus is to be of such quality that our love for our families though deep and excellent could, through the use of comparison of opposites, be called hate.

The additional teaching today by Chambers is an exhortation to give an allegiance to Jesus Christ which surpasses all other loyalties.

---

<sup>23</sup> A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS FOR STUDENTS OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST By A.T. Robertson, ©1922 by HARPER BROTHERS BROADMAN PRESS, Nashville, TN.

September 29,

*Index: God's purpose, Called to preach.*

Since I grew up in a God-called preacher's home I am somewhat familiar with calls of this nature. I used to think that preachers, missionaries, and other select people are closer to God, more blessed, more holy, and more valuable to God. The rest of us were less in His scheme.

I've learned God cannot be unfair. I had wrongly accused Him. The call, "Come unto me and I will make you to be . . ." is an unfinished sentence to each of us. After we open the door<sup>24</sup> and He is inside He begins to nourish, instruct, guide, steer, maneuver, and make us into sacramental personalities.<sup>25</sup> He will use us to be poured out wine for others.

He is the wine. I am the cup, created, shaped, and adorned by and for the master potter Himself.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Revelation 3:20.

<sup>25</sup> See the last paragraph in September 30<sup>th</sup> lesson.

<sup>26</sup> See Rabbi ben Ezra by Robert Browning.

September 30,

*Index:* Sacramental personality,  
Poured out wine, Broken bread.

The second paragraph is like hammer blows insisting that we submit to God's word as he makes wine for others out of our lives. April 14<sup>th</sup> and September 2nd lessons harmonize with today's.

There is an adjective "*sacramental*" which needs defining if we are to understand how to become broken bread and poured out wine for others. "*Sacramental*" describes a noun, in this case a person. A *sacramental personality* means a person whose life portrays the life of Christ as baptism and the Lord's supper do for us. God can use us to provide His love for His other children.

#### *Addendum 2010*

I must remember. He has other children. That He would like to make me into nourishment and refreshment for them is "mind-boggling." Chambers causes me to think that God would not serve less than excellent bread and wine. This can help to build patience into me.

October 1,

*Index:* Character, Rare moments,  
Character determines revelation,  
Spiritual selfishness.

The only comment I would make today is to assure you, as Isaiah 9:6 tells us, the government of our lives is on His shoulders. We can trust our Lord whether we are on the mountain or in the valley.

October 2,

*Index: Sense of the heroic, Drudgery, Vision.*

The question particularly for women - I know them best - is: Can we live victoriously with a mop in our hands, while we iron clothes, wash pots and pans, prepare meals for our family and do the many menial tasks homes require?

Peter was so jubilant on the mountaintop with Jesus that he knew just what to do. But Jesus brought him from that mountaintop to be with other disciples who were facing humiliation. They had been asked to help a boy and his father, but they could not.

October 3,

*Index:* Humiliation.

Perhaps we need to understand that prayer and fasting need specific directions. Prayer must include repentance and removal of what comes between our soul and the Savior. We jump to conclusions. We think that we live in rarefied air and have no need for such soul searching questions into our prayer and fasting. If there is anything between, then Chambers says, "face it, get through it<sup>27</sup> into the presence of Jesus Christ, then, that very thing and all you have been through in connection with it will glorify Jesus Christ . . . ". This is a mystery but I know it happens. Nothing absolutely nothing can outshine Jesus Christ.

The word "efface" in the last sentence means "make indistinct or to obliterate."

---

<sup>27</sup> We get through it by using His prescription, by having faith, making restitution, obeying, relinquishing, giving ourselves into His care.

October 4,

*Index: Repentance, Vision, Purpose of God.*

The word "verity" in his title probably meant to Chambers "the reality or the actuality." I am on a long-range planning committee at our church at this time. Therefore, there is a difference in the way I understand this lesson than when I read it in previous years.

There are other thoughts in today's lesson, which are nourishment for Christians. For instance "Learn to thank God for making known his demands." This is important to a friend of mine who has to wrestle with the many times her husband leads mission trips. She is called to help her husband prepare, to care for his needs, then collapse, alone, from weariness and wait until he returns from the far corners of the earth. God's call to her is as real as His call on her husband.

Another thought is Chambers' reminder that God knows us. I remember George McDonald's words about God's sheep dogs hunting us and Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven." Now I shall treasure Chambers' words that God will hunt us with a lightning flash when we crawl into kennels trying to escape from him.

This page causes me to return to the September 30<sup>th</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup> lessons.

October 5,

*Index:* Judgment, Redemption, Self-realization,  
Son made sin, Disposition of sin,  
Heredity of sin.

Today's reading is pure truth. We humans may choose to disregard and disbelieve this but that doesn't change the facts.

"God touches sin in redemption." Nothing else can obliterate sin.

The title of today's lesson, *The Basis of Degeneration* requires thought. As I read this lesson I thought of a young woman who seems to be unable to accept the truth presented here. She has a bias caused by the lack of Christ's redemption in her life. Until she realizes her need and that Christ will put a new disposition in her, she will remain with her disposition of sin and the wages of sin, which are so inadequate to satisfy her deep longing.

The reference of Chambers' last sentence today is John 3:19.



October 6,

*Index:* Redemption, Transact with God,  
Cross of Christ, Holy Spirit,  
Regeneration, Heritage of sin,  
Heredity of Holiness.

The reading on July 24<sup>th</sup> will be helpful as you read today's lesson. We were reading about the disposition of sin and of self-realization. Now we are reading about Jesus Christ's disposition of holiness being put into us.

Read aloud to yourself the last paragraph of today's lesson. The word '*unsullied*' on the last line means "unspotted, perfectly clean, correct, adequate."

October 7,

*Index:* Heredity of sin, Identification,  
Redemption, Reconciliation.

Today's lesson is a natural follow-up from our study on October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. If one can realize that sin is wrong being and not wrong doing, then if one will pay close attention to this lesson on reconciliation it will be like standing before God and being welcomed. All that remains is taking leave of one's self and taking Jesus as the savior.

October 8,

*Index: Patience of God, Holy Spirit,  
Holy Spirit's work.*

In the first paragraph he uses the term "spiritual impertinence." It means a view of ourselves, which does not lineup with God's view. We cling to what we want but God has other desires.

If I turn loose and come to Jesus I desert myself and admit that I need to come to Jesus, indeed I must come.

"The Holy Spirit will locate the one impregnable thing in you, but He cannot budge it unless you're willing to let Him."

C. S. Lewis in chapter eleven of The Great Divorce,<sup>28</sup> speaks pointedly of God's request to remove a red lizard occupying a place of prominence on a person's shoulder. It is a commanding, annoying, tempter always in conflict with the host it is riding. A flaming Spirit requests permission to remove it. The host after much reluctance and argument agrees. The results are, to say the least, is a promotion for the man.

---

<sup>28</sup> In The Best of C.S.Lewis ©1969 Christianity Today, by Iversen Associates, New York.

October 9,

*Index: Obedience, Atonement.*

One quotable sentence in today's lesson is  
"Beware of the piety which denies the natural life, it is a  
fraud."

October 10,

*Index:* Walk in the light, Obedience,  
Holy Spirit, Right relationship.

The teachings on July 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> harmonize with today's lesson.

In later additions of My Utmost there are words omitted which change the meaning. For the second sentence just before the last one, the 1935 Dodd Mead & Co. edition reads God will never reveal more truth about Himself until you have obeyed what you know already.

You may want to read the scripture text for today in the Amplified Bible.

October 11,

*Index: Prayer, Intimacy with Jesus,  
Purpose of God.*

This lesson is easier to understand after God has been silent. We needed Him to speak but He was silent.

I do not find another page which speaks of the silence of God as this one does. It is easier for us to understand after God has been silent. We needed Him to speak but He was silent.

It is my opinion that in some of these times for some of us we will not know why until we are face to face with Him. Will it be important to know then?

*Addendum 2010*

I have just read The Ultimate Refuge a re-issue of Oswald Chambers book Baffled to Serve. Job was in a long period of silence. He heard from God but not in the "voice" he expected. After he heard from God he was a different man and so presumably were his friends.

October 12,

*Index:* Character, Discouragement.

Chambers wrote today, "It was said of Jesus, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged' ". This is found in Isaiah 42:4.

Think about this: We have read about different places to walk with Jesus, mountains, valleys and all in between. Today we are directed to think of the length of time we walk with God. Take courage.

Read October 10<sup>th</sup> selection with this and remember that we are endeavoring to walk with God. He sets the pace, determines the goal, and the rest stops, if any. He determines the entire journey. We get into His stride. We don't join Him to change Him.

October 13,

*Index: Discernment, Discouragement,  
Communion.*

Pay attention to the title. I hope you have time to read the first four chapters of Exodus.

When Moses was permitted, even commanded, to rescue God's and his people, he was the same man in one aspect as the one who failed 40 years before. He was different inside. From the burning bush he was called to get in stride with God.

Chambers' last sentence today is an encouragement, a comfort, and one to bring refreshment during the hard parts of our journey.



October 14,

*Index: Circumstances engineered by God,  
Abiding, Authority, Come unto me,  
Missionary's master.*

A thought, a conviction of Chambers is that God engineers our circumstances. The word "go" in Matthew 28:19 is of such Greek construction that it can read, "as you are going make disciples." Thus today's lesson is also for us who are not classified as missionaries.

October 15,

*Index:* Propitiation, Missionary's message.

There are two words in today's lesson not commonly used, which we need to make simpler. The first, "predilections" means "preconceived, liking, partiality." The next is "coterie" which means "social circles or set." Then there is that word "propitiation" used only in our text today and 1 John 4:10 in the New Testament. It had a history of use in secular Greek. There are pages in commentaries to explain this word and its meaning. I've read some of them. However I have another woman's explanation of Christ as our propitiation. Let's read it.

I sinned. Then straightway, post haste, Satan flew  
Before the presence of the most high God  
And made a railing accusation there.  
He said: "This soul, this thing of clay and sod  
Has sinned. Tis true that he has named that name;  
But I demand his death. For Thou hast said:  
'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' Shall not thy  
Sentence be fulfilled? Is Justice dead?  
Send now this wretched sinner to his doom:  
What other thing can righteous ruler do?"  
And so he did accuse me day and night,  
And every word he spoke, O God, was true!  
Then quickly One rose up from God's right-hand,  
Before whose glory angels veil their eyes.  
He spoke: "Each jot and tittle of the law  
Must be fulfilled; the guilty sinner dies!  
But wait; his guilt was all transferred to me and  
I have paid his penalty! Behold my side, my hands,  
my feet! One day I was made sin for him, and died  
that he might be presented guiltless at Thy throne!"  
Then Satan fled away. Full well he knew  
That he could not prevail against such love,  
Since every word my dear Lord spoke was true!  
Martha Snell Nicholson

October 16,

*Index:* Prayer, Missionary's master.

Some words in today's lesson to which I pay attention are these:

1. "The key to the missionary problem is . . . prayer."
2. ". . . the harvest is produced by distress and conviction of sin, and this is the harvest we have to pray that laborers may be thrust out to reap."
3. "Our Lord calls to no special work; He calls to Himself."

October 17,

*Index:* Prayer, Self-realization, Redemption,  
Spiritual warfare.

I do not want to comment on this lesson. It is too important. I might diminish its effect on you.

October 18,

*Index:* Devotion to Jesus, Loyalty to Jesus,  
Identification.

"The key to missionary devotion means being attached to nothing and no one saving our Lord Himself, not being detached from things externally." I would choose this sentence to highlight. It is a cardinal rule for each of us.

We need to be so attached to Jesus that things of this earth aren't our utmost goal in life.

October 19,

*Index:* Practical work,  
Circumstances engineered by God,  
Right relationship.

Pay attention to Chambers' first sentence.

In the third paragraph he speaks about being put into soak. I wonder what Chambers had seen put into soak. Clothes to remove stain or beef brisket to absorb spices, which became corned beef? At any rate we get the picture.

October 20,

*Index:* Sanctification, Holiness,  
Transact with God, Will of God,  
Atonement, Repentance.

I don't think that I need to comment on today's  
lesson.

October 21,

*Index:* Impulse, Drudgery.

I'd like to know the context, the environment that led to this lesson. His words about impulsive action need to be considered. However, the last two sentences speak to me. I am one of those who live an ordinary life. I have many days of humdrum activity which are made into different qualities when I remember why and for whom I perform these menial task.



October 22,

*Index: Witness, Redemption.*

I have understood more clearly this year, as I have gone through these days with Chambers thoughts, the difference in the before and after of our new birth. Chambers tells us today that God cannot speak to us but He can speak to His own nature in us. I am reminded of A.W. Tozer's words that there are only two kinds of people in the world, the once born and twice born. The twice born have a witness within, that we are Christ's own. I wonder if Chambers ever heard this verse of song?

“I have a witness bright and clear,  
Since I have been redeemed.  
Dispelling it every doubt and fear,  
Since I have been redeemed.”<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> “Since I Have Been Redeemed”, written by E.O. Excell  
©1912 by E.O. Excell Renewal Hope Publishing Co. owner.

October 23,

*Index:* Surrender.

The word '*athwart*' in Chambers' first sentence means "crosswise so as to block or thwart."

This is a lesson that we cannot study, take a mental test on, and forget. This is one that requires frequent rumination.

October 24,

*Index: Bondslave of Jesus.*

When Chambers in the second paragraph speaks of other points of view I'm sure his voice portrayed the warning he was trying to give his students. He was using every means he could to teach that we are here to be captives of Christ, under Christ commands. "It is a shameful thing for a Christian to talk about getting the victory. The Victor ought to have got us so completely that it is His victory all the time, and we are more than conquerors through him."

The scripture used in the last paragraph is 2 Corinthians 2:14 & 15.

October 25,

*Index: Christ crucified, Purpose of God.*

Sometimes I try to imagine what my parents' lives and my life would have been if Papa had not let God direct him. He never told me about the call of God, which came to him before I was born. Perhaps it was too sacred for him to speak of. My father was one of those men God chose and kept. There have been many blessings, which have come to me because of my parents' obedience to God. I have been at times made keenly aware of this, as if God singularly reminded me.

God treats his chosen ones differently. We find His dealings with us to be tailor made and specifically fashioned for the work He designs for us.

October 26,

*Index:* Authority of Jesus, Call of God,  
Conviction of sin.

Today's lesson fits those who are contemplating missionary work. It also applies to anyone who is being asked to be a leader or a teacher in a church's educational department. What does Jesus say about this? I remember a time when I had to withstand all kinds of pressure put on me to fill a job others thought I should. There was a vacancy they needed to fill. I was sure I could not, indeed should not, try to occupy it. I wish I had been taught more about personal attachment to the Lord Jesus than the great need for missionaries and for people to take responsibility in the local church organization.

October 27,

*Index:* Belief, Right relationship, Discipleship,  
Successful service.

I would urge you to read each lesson to missionaries. There are good thoughts and exhortations for us who witness as we go about our daily living at home, in school, or in the market place.

October 28,

*Index:* Atonement, Regeneration, Justification.

When I read today's selection this year the picture I got was the cross. That cross on which Jesus died for me is the dividing line of history and the personal dividing line for me. The before and the after. We can be born again, we can obey, we can repent, and we can become a new creature. We can be justified, we can be sanctified because of the accomplishment of Jesus Christ on the cross. All of our experiences of growth are possible because of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

October 29,

*Index:* Righteousness, Atonement.

Yesterday's lesson and that for today are essential foundational beliefs for our children. I remember Papa bought a little red book containing the Constitution of the United States for each of his children. He told us to keep it that we might someday in the future need it. That's how I feel about October 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> in My Utmost for His Highest.



October 30,

*Index: Relationship, Circumstances, Faith.*

Reading today's lesson is like having a colorful length of rich fabric given to me to wrap around my shoulders to feel of and look in a full-length mirror. I imagine wearing a garment made of this. Then I read this selection a second time. The allusion is erased and I remember some of the times when I have had the faith I now have in God educated into me in hard times. I know also that my degree is not in my hand. I must continue to have faith when everything around me contradicts God's promises to me.

So will you. I am so glad my Heavenly Father is your Father also.

Add these words of Amy Carmichael to Chambers' words today.

“True access and communion with the Lord are not lightly obtained. There is nothing ever lightly won where the deep things of the Spirit are concerned.”<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> “Thou Givest They Gather” by Amy Carmichael, Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania ©1958, The Donhavur Fellowship.

October 31,

*Index:* Faith.

Yesterday's lesson belongs with the one today. I have underlined sentences in both which I will not tell you about. I want you to have the discovery of their teaching for yourself. I will explain one sentence; "Faith in its actual working out has to go through spells of unsyllabled isolation." This means that there will be times of hanging on to a promise we hope is for us, or believing against all odds that we can get through a trial when we hear not one syllable of assurance from God or anyone else to help us.

You may also want to read, Isa. 51:2,  
2 Chron. 32:31, and Duet. 8:2 & 16.

November 1,

*Index: Purpose of God, Redemption, Reality,  
Suffering, Self-pity.*

When I read Chambers' words for today I thought of the disciple's words recorded in John 6:60, "This is a hard saying who can hear it?" Today's lesson and the August 10th lesson re-enforce each other. They call for deep devotion, great faith, and a willingness to give ourselves without restraint to God's way of managing our lives.

I'm sure God knows the quality of those He chooses to "break up the private life and make it a thoroughfare for the world and Himself." If you know such persons intercede for them.

November 2,

*Index:* Right to myself, Value to God,  
Obedience, Destiny, Haphazard,  
Redemptive reality.

Some of Chambers' teachings are not generally presented today. Every time I read Luke 14:26, I think I should read this page.

My Utmost for His Highest is often like scripture. I find new meaning in words, which have been previously indistinct to me.

Chamber so often spoke of the haphazard circumstances that George Swan of the Egypt General Mission once called him "the apostle of the haphazard."

I will remember his last sentence in today's lesson.

November 3,

*Index: Self-realization, Loyalty to Jesus,  
Personality, Surrender.*

S.D. Gordon, teaching on prayer, said in his book FIVE LAWS THAT GOVERN PRAYER<sup>31</sup> "When God can reach in His hand and do as He likes with us, we can reach out our hands and do as we like with God. . . . If you can stand the tug on your life of the first half of the sentence you will have no bother about the second half."

---

<sup>31</sup> Published in ©1925 by Fleming H. Revel Company, New York, NY.

November 4,

*Index: Will, Come unto Me, Transact with God,  
Will to be committed.*

In his first paragraph today there is a sentence using an expression we must define. "Immediately I precipitate myself over into an act, that second I live; all the rest is existence." Based on dictionary help I think he means as soon as I cause myself to hasten myself into action on the truth of God, that quickly I begin to live. All before was a mere existence.

Yesterday's lesson and today's need to be taken together.

November 5,

*Index:* Spiritual priggishness, Suffering.

In Chambers' second sentence I can imagine his change of voice as he teaches. Remember he was a teacher.

During this month he is taking us into lessons that require our assent to the way *God* is maneuvering our lives. The selections require meditation each time we read them. Each year will bring to mind different memories and different challenges.

The word '*prig*' near the end of the reading may mean one who requires such strict adherence to moral righteousness and correct behavior they make everyone else uncomfortable. We sometimes call them prudes.

November 6,

*Index:* Intimacy with Jesus,  
Will to be committed, Doubt.

"Oh my" "I lay my hand over my mouth" may be expressions of our consternation once we are face to face with Jesus and His call for the emergence of our personal belief. As Chambers teaches, faith as a personal possession arises out of a personal problem, requiring that we look into His face and answer yes or no to Him about His power.



November 7,

*Index:* Haphazard, Circumstances, Intercession.

"The circumstances of a saint's life are ordained by God. In the life of a saint there is no such thing as chance." When I first found this I began to question, consider, ponder. The longer I live the more I take comfort in this word of Chambers and that of others. Refer to January 24<sup>th</sup> in these notes.

We must not be our own providence by refusing to obey God daily. Nor are we to become amateur providences for others. We are to keep the way between the Holy Spirit and ourselves clear, clean, and open, so that in the circumstances we are in, God is able to direct our actions and our intercessions for those in our daily lives. Thus, as Chambers indicates, we may not impoverish those among whom we live and work.

November 8,

*Index:* Intercession, Temple of Holy Ghost.

After you read today's lesson let me tell you that this inner part of us, this unconscious part of yourself has been made into the temple of the Holy Spirit to be kept by God, Himself. He will look after it. I have had a few times when I have reminded God that I am His responsibility, telling Him what Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:12 and 4:18. I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep me and bring me safely into His Kingdom. I was rested by the affirmation of the Holy Spirit. There is a holding on to God with my obedience and there is a holding on to me, which God does.

When our children were teenagers, all of us in Huntsville knew the Apollo 13 moon trip was in trouble. People who had contributed hours of work to help build the Apollo 13 were our families, neighbors, and friends. Now we were helpless in this flight situation. Hugh Haynie eloquently illustrated our sentiments.

Hugh Haynie's art  
(shown at the right)  
was published by  
"The Courier-Journal" in  
Louisville, KY 4/15/1970



The Prayer of Man the Word of God  
Hugh Haynie  
4/15/70

November 9,

*Index:* Regeneration.

On September 30<sup>th</sup> we looked at a sacramental person, what such a person is. Today we look at sacramental service for His ministers. Look for sentences, which would have been spoken in a change of voice as he taught.

Today's selection would be one I would assign to teachers. However, aren't we all teachers to someone in our lives?

November 10,

*Index: Choice of God.*

When we read today's lesson carefully, slowly, studying it, we can understand more fully why we should pray for our pastors and staff in our local churches. Especially we need to pray for students whom God has called into his work. It must be difficult to prepare to serve God, leaving the choice of location and service to God alone, with no thought of salary, prestige, environment, even the kind of service one would be in for a lifetime.

There are two words we need to define.

One is "*clog*." The first meaning I found was, "Anything put on an animal to hinder action such as a weight fastened to the leg.

The other is "*Let*." means, "Obstacle, hindrance, impediment" also used commonly in the legal phrase "without let or hindrance."

Either and both of them mean impediment or hindrance.

November 11,

*Index: Obedience, Self-sacrifice, Communion.*

When each of my children was born there was birthed in me a love for that child that began and grows so extensively, so deeply ----- how can I ever describe it? When my children were young I knew what God had asked of Abraham and faced the thoughts, "What if God asked me to release one of my children to Him." This led me to soul-searching and a quest for knowledge on this subject. What I have learned is that God is not part of hurting people. He is Lord of life, abundant life. Satan is the one who torments me with suppositions. When I release myself and my family to God the Father, His word and the Holy Spirit will guide me confidently into abundant life.

Oh how much this lesson can teach us.

November 12,

*Index: Sanctification, Regeneration.*

You will need to know the definition of touchstone. It means a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold and silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal. It is like a litmus test in some ways. So it is a test or criterion for the qualities of a thing.

I knew a teenaged girl who became a serious Christian while on a retreat in Cullman, Alabama. Since she gave God claim to her life early she has had some painful experiences. God's intentions to sanctify her wholly and entirely allowed some struggles. Reading Jeremiah 29:11 was some small comfort while she was young. It has been my good fortune to know this verse is now one of her favorites.

In the second paragraph second sentence is the word '*shuffle*'. It means to walk without lifting your feet or with clumsy steps and a stumbling gait, as the infirm walk.

November 13,

*Index: Moods, Sanctification, Haphazard.*

If Chambers' words today are hard to understand or are not what you need to hear, read the following scriptures.

Jesus understood man's weak and small faith.

Read Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8 and Luke 12:28.

Jesus helps even when doubt is present,  
Mark 9:23 & 24.

Sometimes the best way to consider a subject is to look at the opposite. Read this statement about faith and doubt.

*"Great faith has always to do battle with great doubt. We possess it only as we fight for it and recapture it day by day."*<sup>32</sup>

Ask yourself, "If Jesus told me to walk on water and I began to walk and sink, would He let me keep sinking"?

II Timothy 1:13, tells us that He remains faithful even when we are unfaithful.

---

<sup>32</sup> Robert J. McCracker, Putting Faith to Work, Guidepost Edition, Published with arrangement with Harper+Ron Publishers Inc.

November 14,

*Index: Consistency, Guidance,  
Oneness with God,  
Haphazard.*

In Chamber's second and third sentence he uses a term "the intuitive jar is the monition of the Spirit of God." 'Monition' means an official warning or caution notice. This is a check, a sign that we are to stop at once. Read Chambers direction in the first paragraph.

The word *check* was part of the understanding of the men who wrote our constitution. It was prominent in Hannah Whital Smith's chapter on guidance.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life by Hannah Whital Smith, Barbour and Company, Westwood, New Jersey



November 15,

*Index:* Amateur providence, Broken bread,  
Discernment, Permissive will of God,  
Spiritual stagnation.

You will find more teaching on spiritual stagnation and amateur providence if you go back to the January 11<sup>th</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup> lessons.

Another way we play God or act as an amateur providence is to reprimand, judge, or punish other people. We decide they are not suitable to work with us because we see their inadequacies so we, having power over them, interfere with God by trying to help Him correct their lives.

November 16,

*Index:* Right relationship.

I believe Chambers is teaching truth today. So does he also on December second. I had an example in a teacher who taught about the life of Jesus Christ using A.T. Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels. He believed so thoroughly in Christ that he winced when someone would praise him. The inner quality of humility revealed itself in his face. He wanted Christ to receive the praise.

Read December 2<sup>nd</sup> with this.

November 17,

*Index: Looking to God, Discernment,  
Come unto Me, Obedience,  
Character determines revelation.*

"The promises of God are of no value to us until by obedience we understand the nature of God." This sentence of Chambers has more meaning to me after these 80-plus years of living than it once did. I can tell you from experience that when we require more of the nature of God, we can know that He fulfills the promise we need. He created water before He created thirst.

I like A.J. Gordon's words,

    "When I knew nothing of God,  
        I was indifferent to him;  
When I knew a little of God,  
I mistrusted him and complained of him;  
        When I knew much of God,  
I trusted him and loved him."<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> This excerpt is taken from "Grace and Glory; Sermons" by A.J. Gordon (1836-1895) a Baptist minister, published by Howard Gannett © 1880, Boston, Mass.

November 18,

*Index:* Personality, Individuality, Identification,  
Freedom, Natural into spiritual.

When Moses was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, many times they complained and longed for the comforts they had left in Egypt. Their thoughts and words may have been "Egypt was fertile and green. Produce was abundant there. Nothing we need will grow here. We often do not have enough water to drink." God got them out of Egypt the trouble was they could not turn loose of the past.

To stop longing for the pleasant days of the past, and to begin conquering for the future is not an easy process.

You may want to read also the selections for December ninth, tenth, and twenty-eighth.

November 19,

*Index: Conscience, Love of God, Forgiveness,  
Conviction.*

When I was growing up I heard the expression "That's just her disposition" or "That's just his disposition." Since we are here speaking of the disposition of Christ, we need a definition and some synonyms. Disposition can mean, "a prevailing tendency, mood, or inclination, a temperamental make-up, customary mood or attitude toward the life around one." Synonyms are temper, character, personality.<sup>35</sup>

We have received not just the disposition of Jesus Christ. We have received the Holy Spirit within us. Chambers says God can speak to Himself within us.

---

<sup>35</sup> Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth edition  
©2002 Merriam-Webster, Inc.

November 20,

*Index: Forgiveness, Cross of Christ, Atonement,  
Sanctification.*

When Jesus said to Thomas, "I am the way the truth and the life" (NIV John 14:5) I think Jesus had "in His memory banks" Psalm 49:7 & 8 which tells us that redeeming the life of another is costly, no payment or effort is ever enough. He knew that within a short time He would surrender His life for sinners, even one, even me, so that forgiveness of sin and sinners is possible.

Once again we need to review the meaning of constraint.

November 21,

*Index: Forgiveness, Death of Christ, Conviction,  
Holiness, Sin, Atonement.*

Jesus words on the cross "It is finished" explain to us that our redemption is accomplished and because of the death of Jesus Christ we may be forgiven.

It is a mercy of God that we can have the gift of shame and penitence. This gift prepares our heart to come to Christ and be forgiven for our sins against God.

November 22,

*Index: Shallow, Pose.*

I'm sure Chambers' teaching about the shallow and ordinary things of life and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's<sup>36</sup> words "Only he who gives thanks for little things receives the big things" have steered me into looking for beauty in small places and being content, with appreciation, for the inconsequential things in our life.

This autumn I found four lavender mushrooms at the base of a tree. First ones I have ever found. When my son came home from work I showed them to him. (He and I take delight in such outgrowths of the earth.) They held their lavender color a few days before they turned dry and brown.

---

<sup>36</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945, a German pastor and theologian.



November 23,

*Index:* Discernment, Temper of mind, Worry,  
Self-vindication, Intercession.

We thought recently about the disposition of people. Today Chambers uses the term "our Christian temper." To me the two are similar.

Look at the third paragraph. I believe I know a person who has made some statements and now feels this lust of vindication. This has caused some formerly smooth operations to become fouled and Christian friends to become disturbed. Only the grace of God will change this. Chambers' last sentence tells me to join the intercession for the one who lusts for vindication.

November 24,

*Index:* Right relationship, Reliance on God,  
Spiritual leakage, Crisis.

When I read Psalm 123:2 I imagine a young servant girl, standing near her owner looking faithfully toward the master's hands and face for direction. There are many words expressed simply through the hands, the eyes, and the countenance one shows. Good teachers develop a variety of messages they convey without words.

This teaching hasn't been lost to me. I pray for a submissive attentive attitude as I wait for God to turn to me, with directions for service.

November 25,

*Index: Cross of Christ, Spiritual coherence.*

The meaning of coherence is integration of diverse elements, relationship or values. Chambers says, "When a man is first born again, he becomes incoherent . . ." It has been my privilege to see some young adults saved and become serious Christians. To hear them tell of the new way they relate to their work-a-day world would sometimes produces chuckles. A friend and I listened to the testimony of a new convert as he spoke of his work in the auto repair place. He was telling of the changes in himself and the reaction of his shop mates. We laughed with him and she turned to me and said, "Don't babies say the cutest things."

It is a struggle to integrate the Christian life with the natural life and not dilute the spiritual. Chambers advises us to get back [stay with] the bedrock of the cross of Christ. So that the energy of God may be let loose in our lives.

Tomorrow's lesson naturally follows this teaching.

The lesson on August 2<sup>nd</sup> is also about new Christians.

November 26,

*Index: Pay attention, Cross of Christ,  
Spiritual energy.*

We should consider today's lesson like this.

**The Tragedy of God,**

The death of His Son bearing all sins in His body actually becoming sin to satisfy the penalty of death for us all.

**Produces for us**

the gifts of salvation, sanctification, healing,  
fellowship with Himself and His other children,  
and more than we can think or imagine.

If I concentrate on the '**Produces for us**' above, I do not have the necessary concentration of energy in my witness. I am to lift Jesus up, tell '**The Tragedy of God**' stated above, then people will, even in judgement, have to face my words. Consider this as an explanatory example; A man has a job for which he is paid. If he spends all his energy, thoughts, and speech on how he will spend his money he may have a decrease in pay or even lose his job.

Chambers writes, "We have to concentrate on the great points of spiritual energy - the Cross, to keep in contact with that center where all the power lies, and the energy will be let loose."

November 27,

*Index:* Spiritual energy, Sanctification,  
Holiness, Cross of Christ.

Two words you may find unfamiliar in today's lesson. One in the first sentence and the other in the last sentence.

"*Pietist*," which means in this lesson dedicated, devout, being sure there is no dark spot visible on our character or reputation.

"*Antipode*," used in the last sentence means directly opposite.

So many Christians I know understand the consecration part but they have not been taught that God "takes them up on their offer and sanctifies them." A beginning point and a continuing life. They fail to come into this confidence.

November 28,

*Index: Pride, Holy Spirit.*

There is a real sting that comes to us when we realize we are all undone, naked without any thing at all good about us and we are in the presence of the Holy God. We are accustomed to believing we should be self-sufficient. We are confident we can be successful and we will not need anyone's help.

We are like the Rich Young Ruler who could not give up all he had. We don't want to be destitute. If we give up all we have we are not sure there will be more provisions for us in the future. How wrong we are. Chambers title is reassuring if we can lay hold of its promise.

The first sentence in the second paragraph is a jar to our psyche.

November 29,

*Index:* Blood of Jesus, Cross of Christ,  
Holy Spirit, Regeneration,  
Absoluteness of Jesus Christ.

I don't know what spiritual movements were happening in Chambers' day. Nor are the many approaches today easy to count. We must test each teaching. Does it recognize that Jesus' blood is sufficient and the only thing which will remove our sin? In my lifetime I have recognized the slow but steady emphasis on "the grandeur of man. We only need to educate him." Now we must regain much lost ground and correct many errors. There certainly is original sin in each of us and only Jesus Christ's propitiation can rescue us.

See the lessons for October 15<sup>th</sup> and  
December 8<sup>th</sup>.

November 30,

*Index: Right relationship, Humility,  
Sanctification, Grace.*

There may have been days between this lesson and the ones we just studied or perhaps this was to a different group of people. I notice a new subject coming up. Chambers has been emphasizing the necessity of the cross. Lay that aside as you would a cross-stitch you haven't finished. Pick up some embroidery.

Read the scripture verse accompanying this lesson and don't "throw off" on God's work in you anymore.

There are stages of construction and each is good. If one is embroidering a picture or pillowcase the leaves just finished may be perfect and the flowers not completed but they are good. God is a master artist. We aren't finished but He is working on us. Our piece of work is not finished but we can see we are doing good work. So, can God. Pay attention to the last sentence today.

December 1,



*Index: Obedience.*

Note the scripture reference James 2:20. He sounds as if he were in the middle of a study of Romans 7. In fact he quotes Romans 7:9.

About eight lines down he uses a word "*palliate*" which means to cause to appear less grave or to excuse.

The last paragraph speaks of the seesaw our souls go through when we are faced with obedience, which is difficult. I have heard my daughter express Chambers' sentiments in her own words, "In one mood I wish He would make me do the thing, and in another I wish He would just leave me alone."

I want to remember Chambers' last sentence always. It encourages me in the "hard" obediences.

The July 1<sup>st</sup> lesson has some lines which match today's teaching.

December 2,

*Index: Right relationship, Holiness,  
Abandonment, Perfect in Christ.*

The scripture Chambers uses today is one of my favorites. Paul in these verses, Philippians 3:10 - 14, speaks of knowing God. When I realize that God has laid hold of me to bring me to what He wants me to be, then I grab hold of that aspiration and begin to cooperate, by my choices, to become what He is wanting me to be. It is a vine and branches relationship. I am taught by this sentence in today's lesson: "I am called to live in perfect relation to God so that my life produces a longing after God in other lives, not an admiration for myself."

The lesson on November 16<sup>th</sup> gives more teaching on this subject. In it Chambers said, "It takes God's Spirit in us to make us so absolutely humanly His that we are utterly unnoticeable."

December 3,

*Index: Sanctification, Redemption.*

If there is one thing Chambers does, it is to teach us not to rely on experience. Experience appeals but the certainty of God's redemptive power must be communicated to others. An extreme reliance on feelings is neither profitable for an individual nor a church.

The second paragraph may require some study - even some years of living, before it is understandable. In the last sentence Chambers tells us we must give God our sanctified life in a deliberate way so that He can use our hands and feet for His service.

December 4,

*Index: Holiness, Overcoming, Virtue.*

I wish Chambers had learned how to live life without being in a war. Then maybe he could have helped the rest of us. Unfortunately, that first sentence of today's lesson is true and so are the rest of them.

His sentence, "I have to score off the things that come against me . . ." is illustrated on the basketball court or in other games by alert players. George McDonald in The Princes and the Goblin writes, "Curdies hindrances were always his furtherance's." This means that what was intended to stop the progress of Curdie, the child, simply became a help to move him forward. If someone put rocks in his path he used them to step upon and move forward. Chambers words, "No man is virtuous because he cannot help it, virtue is acquired" and his words, ". . . everything that is not spiritual makes for my undoing" are not ideas we like to hear. Much as we would like to be born differently, we are all born with the propensity to sin. "*We do not come into this world perfectly neutral, but imperfectly weighted in the direction of the wrong.*"<sup>37</sup> We're not born "good" and become bad through our choices. We came here non-virtuous. Even after we're born again we have to "fight" to make choices which fit our life in Christ. By "all things that are not spiritual" I think he means actions of others, events that happen, temptations we face, anything we encounter that does not contribute to the harmony of God's peace, will not help us but work the opposite in life. I have to learn to cooperate with Christ's way of overcoming. He is interested in making us as He is. He wants to make us overcomers.

December 5,

---

<sup>37</sup> David Seamonds in Healing for Damaged Emotions  
©1981, 1991 Chariot Victor Publishing of Cook  
Communications, Colorado Springs, CO.

*Index: Temple of the Holy Ghost,  
Responsibility.*

Chambers quotes from four of Paul's epistles in this order Galatians 2:21, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 9:27, and Romans 12:1. I am reminded once again that a friend of mine said she had not read much of this book because Chambers came across as condemnatory. I myself question his opinion that "every saint can have his body under absolute control for God." If he had known these lessons would be read by so many people, in different times and cultures he might have been fuller in his teaching.

This lesson has reminded me that I want to be careful in the stewardship I have over my body because it is the dwelling place of the Spirit of God. Some days it staggers me to think God dwells within me. Other days I fail to comprehend this and live and plan my days ignorantly.

December 6,

*Index: Oneness with God.*

Chambers sounds as if he had been having a conversation with someone who was always examining his spiritual life within, much as a child is often examining a sore or burn on himself to see if it is healing. The parent must admonish the child to leave the wound alone.

When I am healthy in body, my needs are met and all is peace round about me, I sometimes get a rush of feeling, "How good is my life." A praise wells up within me. When we are healthy in our relationship with God, our hearts do not condemn us, we know peace and joy. There is a sense of well-being and desire to thank and praise our God. Praise is not at this time a sacrifice of praise but a natural speaking to God our expression of well-being and thus gratitude and joy.

Let me help you with this December 6 lesson. Chambers states a truth in the first sentence. Then he, as it may have happened, moved physically and in a different tone of voice he spoke complaints he had heard. His students understood. Put yourself in his classroom that day.

December 7,

*Index: Repentance, Conviction.*

This is one of the best lessons on repentance I have ever read. The scripture quoted in the first paragraph is from Psalm 51. These are David's words. He specified his sin. Confession in general terms is not sufficient. Other scriptures you may want to read with today's lesson are Acts 5:31 and Acts 11:18. These teach me that I may pray for the gift of repentance. When I receive this gift I do not confess in generalities. I do not simply mumble "I'm sorry." I have been given a godly sorrow, an acute awareness of the enormity of my sin plus a regret which cooperates with God to forsake that sin.

December 8,

*Index: Propitiation, Blood of Jesus, Holiness,  
Atonement, Joy of God, Repentance.*

It is no surprise to find this lesson indexed under all of the subjects above. Jesus is made unto us, Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:30, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He could have continued if it had fit his teaching at that time.

Chambers today identifies the reason so many - all? - of us do not want to come from sin to Jesus. We "don't want to come that way it is too humiliating to be received as a sinner." That would be admitting, "I have been wrong, in the sight of God with whom I must deal."

December 9,



*Index:* Natural into spiritual, Right to myself.

Chambers is careful many times to define a word he uses in the same sentence. His first sentence today is an example. '*Apostatized*' means abandoned, separated from, having nothing to do with.

I imagine that he taught this lesson in response to a young missionary in training asking this question at the beginning of a class, "I need a new coat for winter. Is it a sin to buy one?" Another student adds, "Is it a sin to see that my natural needs are met?"

Perhaps, we all come to see that the good debates with the best. Add these words of George MacDonald to Chambers' words today.

### Deadlock

Man finds it hard to get what he wants,  
because he does not want the best,  
God finds it hard to give,  
because he would give the best,  
and man will not take it.<sup>38</sup>

We must not let Chambers last sentence, "It is not a question of praying but of performing" lead us back under the law, into thinking we can, by our own works, become super-natural. There is sacrifice involved and it will cost us everything, yet our good works will not buy spiritual experiences.

December 10,

---

<sup>38</sup> George MacDonald an Anthology. C.S. Lewis editor, Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., New York

*Index: Natural into Spiritual.*

If you read *Genesis* Chapter 15 through 23 this lesson will be more easily understood. Chambers wrote, "God's order was that the natural should be transformed into the spiritual by obedience. It is sin that made it necessary for the natural to be sacrificed. Abraham had to offer up Ishmael before he offered up Isaac." Ishmael was the child of doubting Abram and Sarai who provided Hagar to be the carrier of this child. Both Abraham and Sarai were out of the will of God.

A present day example of the natural not being transformed into the spiritual could be this. A person working in the garden past noon on an extremely hot day was warned and urged to come inside and wait until a cooler part of the day to return to gardening. If the person refused to quit obstinately insisting the job must be finished now, he would not be surrendering the natural life to God nor to common sense. This would be an unwise choice. Such a person may suffer (surrender to) a heat stroke. Submitting our will to interrupt the completion of a task until a more suitable time might prolong our usefulness to God and others.

December 11,

*Index: Individuality.*

I am accustomed to thinking that individuality is the particular way I am different from other people. Chambers seems to be saying individuality is the inside "me" that is my independence and self-assertiveness. Certainly, individuality needs to surrender to Christ always. On December ninth Chambers said, "Beware of refusing to go the funeral of your own independence." Could we not say the same of our own individuality?

December 12,

*Index: Personality.*

I think we would define the characteristics of people differently today.

I have written in my book, Jesus would never say, "Don't invade my space." nor "Give me my space."

Chambers gives us his definition of personality in the first sentence and of love in the last.

December 13,

*Index:* Intercession, Prayer.

If we are to be intercessors we must be thoroughly clean before the Lord and we must learn to pray as Jesus prays. This material for today has many lessons for us.

December 14,

*Index: Obedience, Reliance on God, Peace,  
Holy Spirit.*

If today's meditation does not interest you,  
expect it to in another time or season in your life.

I wrote James 1:12 beside the last paragraph in  
my book.

December 15,

*Index:* Expression, Poured out Wine.

Though I want to use two selections from others along side this lesson, I have struggled to obey Chambers instructions for today. I believe these words of Chambers and the two following quotations are beautiful words fitly spoken as Proverbs 25:11 tells us.

John Donne wrote, "If a man carry treasure in bullion or in a wedge of gold and have none coined into current money, his treasure will not defray him as he travels."<sup>39</sup>

F.W. Boreham wrote, ". . . the man who habitually views the world through the eyes of others eventually possesses no vision of his own."<sup>40</sup>

This lesson provokes me to try to express to other people truths that I have learned.

Read January 6<sup>th</sup> with this one.

December 16,

---

<sup>39</sup> John Donne (1573-1631), Meditation XVII.

<sup>40</sup> F.W. Boreham, When the Swan Flies High ©1931 by F.W. Boreham.

*Index: More than conqueror,  
Permissive will of God,  
Wrestling with God.*

Chambers' title is "Wrestle before God." Then he uses the word wrestle followed by three separate prepositions. I want to use another preposition, though perhaps it is incorrect grammar. This is instruction we need to pay close attention to, if we are to make advances in the Kingdom of God.

He uses a word in line nine "*hirpler*," this means one that walks in a halting, feeble, hesitating, wavering way. His direction in the last sentence about lazy praying is one I need to apply to myself. There are many times I do not know how to pray. If I stay long enough in my prayer place and study the words of God, the person, or the situation, and God Himself, I can get hold of His strength and pray according to His will. I do not want to be a lazy pray-er.

December 17,



*Index: Redemption, Intercession.*

Many of our words will not live more than a day and very few linger past this life. However, if by our words we lift up Jesus, the Spirit of God can create a need for the gospel. Those who thus aid in the rebirth and salvation of another will have spoken words that last eternally.

Remember these words of Chambers in this lesson, "By means of our asking, God gets processes into work whereby He creates the thing that is not in existence until we ask."

Does this lesson teach that if I live a redeemed life before others, it will awaken a hunger within them? Perhaps this hunger is akin to the thirst that salt causes. Matthew 5:13.

December 18,

*Index: Loyalty to Jesus, Practical work,  
Circumstances engineered by God.*

Chambers has many lessons indexed under Circumstances engineered by God. I believe a worthy goal for us is to be the kind of a person God could place in any circumstances of His choosing and we would not complain nor ask Him, "What in the world are you doing to me and with me?"

December 19,

*Index: Sense of need, Standards of Jesus,  
Peace.*

Chambers first paragraph today is illustrated in the surgical procedure called debridement. This is when lacerated, devitalized, or contaminated tissues are removed from a person's wound. It must be done. To be sympathetic with a person to the point of demanding that the procedure be stopped is dangerous for the patient.

"There must be a sense of need before your message is of any use." This need is created by the way we live, by our prayers of intercession, and by those words fitly spoken. These appropriate words come when we are daily led by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we speak peace. Then there is the cutting edge of the sword. Caution: The one that wields a sword must be a person who recognizes that truth is spoken in love not condemnation, and only in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

I once read that "He who would be a savior must have at some time, at some place been on a cross."

December 20,

*Index:* Christ crucified, Cross of Christ,  
Death of Christ, Second mile,  
Simplicity of relationship,  
Right relationship.

From the time of the early years of the 1900's until now we have been inundated with amiable religiosity. We accept any form of religious belief so long as one is sincere in his belief. This is a shame!

Once again we are called to lift up Jesus Christ. This means we must tell the truth of why He was crucified. Chambers wrote, "We have to probe straight down as deeply as God has probed us . . ." Many are officials in the church who have never let God probe until their own need of redemption, is realized. They have never made Jesus Lord of their lives. They are officiating in the church for other reasons.

December 21,

*Index: Experience.*

If we have confidence to pray based only on our experiences of the past we are not expressing faith in God, only in what He did. We are having faith that "worked" in the past.

Chicken Little, as we learned in childhood, had an experience. It was real but it became meaningless because she gave it the wrong interpretation.

Our Christian experiences with God are real. We need to let God continue to speak to us after the experiences. They are a call for attention and an invitation to hear more. Chambers warns us, "Never nourish an experience, which has not God as its Source and faith as its result."

*Addendum 2010*

Chuck Colson authored *A Dangerous Grace*. In discussing experience he wrote, ". . . the real solution is for all Christians to ground their faith in the objective Word of God in Scripture. For if we ground our faith in experience we open ourselves to every wind of mysticism.

<sup>41</sup>

Pay close attention to Chambers' closing paragraph.

December 22,

---

<sup>41</sup> *A Dangerous Grace*, Chuck Colson © 1994, Word Publishers, Dallas and London.

*Index: Surrender, Will to believe.*

Chambers' advice is that we never discuss with anyone when God speaks. In discussion we might question, is this really God? Am I hearing correctly? How can I obey these instructions? And does God really mean this for me? I would be asking another to comment on what God is speaking to me. It is necessary that I do only one thing. I must will to obey and begin to obey without consulting anyone else. This will demonstrate a high respect for the drawing of the Father. I can trust Him to put a check in my spirit if I need correction.

December 23,

*Index:* Will, Devotion to Jesus,  
Disposition to sin, Identification,  
Redemption, Reality, Sin,  
Cross-of Christ, Atonement.

This lesson is for those who have passed the neophyte stage of Christianity. Some would never want to understand beyond the mere beginnings of the Christian faith. We are speaking here of the death of the "old man", the death of sin within a person, the ease of obedience, a passionate, personal devotion to Jesus. Such a grown up Christian never walks around with the attitude, "I am just a sinner saved by grace, God does not expect me to be perfect . . . nevertheless, I will be saved at the end by the sacrifice of Christ. In the meantime don't expect much of me."

When we personally partake in the atonement, we move beyond the milk stage to partaking of the meat. Read Hebrews' 5:10 - 14.

December 24,

*Index:* Doubt, Hid with Christ, Peace,  
Will of man, Untroubled heart.

The hidden life is the secure life. I believe this lesson will provide comfort and peace to you. The word "*imperturbable*" in the last sentence means unshakable, and steadfast.

December 25,



*Index:* New birth.

Think of this. One reason Jesus gave the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18 - 20 is that our lives are made richer, more joyful, more abundant when we have like-minded people around us. **Christmas** is more precious to us when we are with others of His family.

Merry Christmas

December 26,

*Index: Conviction, Sin, Atonement,  
Blood of Jesus.*

My only comment is that I have written '**O, yes**' beside paragraph two and '**Yes, Yes**' at the end of the lesson.

The December 7<sup>th</sup> lesson may need to be re-read today.

December 27,

*Index:* Will of man, Wrestling before God,  
Abandoned.

This is a lesson perfectly fitted to be placed near  
the end of our study this year.

December 28,

*Index:* Natural into spiritual.

I like this lesson. It is perhaps another way of saying we are being saved. After a year of study in My Utmost for His Highest, I think you will understand this lesson. I like his sentence, "There are whole tracts of our lives, which have not been brought into subjection [submission to God], and it can only be done by this continuous conversion."

December 29,

*Index:* Standards of Jesus, Obedience,  
Backsliding.

Read this lesson. Then read the first sentence and the last two. Note the unity. Reread the lesson. This lesson would have earned an 'A' mark in an English teacher's composition class. In addition, he speaks truth. This is so fitting at the end of our year's study of the lessons in My Utmost for His Highest.

December 30,

*Index: Grace of God, Sanctification.*

There is much emphasis on spiritual gifts in our day. Many people study the spiritual gifts and match their strong points given by the accident of heredity or the education they have received. These they call their spiritual gifts. Chambers, I believe, would call these natural virtues. He wrote, "God will never build up our natural virtues and transfigure them, because our natural virtues can never come anywhere near what Jesus Christ wants." "The life God plants in us develops its own virtues . . . the virtues of Jesus Christ."

December 31,

*Index: Memory's ministry, Conscience.*

Read and keep all of Isaiah 52:12 as you read this lesson.

"God requires an account of what is past" (NKJV) is found in Ecclesiastes 3:15.

The word "rereward" near the end of paragraph two means 'rearguard.'

Latch onto the last sentence in the third paragraph.

On New Year's Eve we do contemplate the past. Our experiences of last year are like mulch. Pack them around your remembrances. It will nourish and protect the new year's experiences.

Chambers' last five lines of the April 3<sup>rd</sup> lesson are compatible with today's lesson.