

## **GOF 12: Quotes on Qualities**

Received by: CQ

**Honest**

**Communicate**

**Patient**

**Tolerant**

**Encouraging Others**

**Show Concern**

**Be Understanding**

**Put others first**

**Giving**

**Positive Thoughts and Words**

**Thankful at All Times**

**Prayerful**

**Tidy**

**Finishing Tasks**

**Respect and Obey the Lord**

**Self-control and Moderation**

**Confident in God's Help and Strength**

**Time with Jesus**

**Gentle and Caring**

**Calm, Easy-going and Nice to be Around**

**Remember the Good—Forget the Rest**

**Vision-Initiative-Courage-Faith**

**Facing Challenges**

**Mistakes and Buoyancy**

**Change and Moving On**

**Borrowing and Lending**

**Exploring and Discovering**

**Polite, Courteous, and Well-Mannered**

**Mindful and Thoughtful**

**A Time for Everything**

**Brave and Patient**

**Forgiving**

**Take Care of Yourself**

**Respect Life**

**Environmental Care**

**Thoughtful of Other's Needs and Time**

**Honest**

It's good to let people know the honest truth about the way you feel and what really happened in a situation. However, not everything needs to be said all the time to just anyone. You need to pray, and say things that are going to benefit those listening. But if someone needs to know how you are feeling and wants to find out something about you, or what you did, or what you know about a situation, it's best to be factual and let them know what would be helpful to them.

People feel that you love them if you trust them enough to be honest with them. It's a key to good friendships. If someone tries to make a person believe something that is untrue it can be very hard to earn that person's trust again. One of the saddest feelings to have is when people no longer believe you, because you haven't been honest with them.

If you can't tell someone something, or you are not ready to talk about it, you don't have to make up something untrue. Just honestly let them know you'd rather not talk about it then.

Make it easy for others to be honest with you as well, by showing thoughtfulness, acceptance and forgiveness when they admit their mistakes to you, or share their honest feelings. If you show love to others no matter what, then they will feel more comfortable being honest with you and letting you know the special things that are in their heart.

## **Communicate**

Everyone has lots of feelings inside of them, and thoughts running through their minds, all day long. The only way to know what somebody is thinking is through communication. Words help to express what someone is feeling. Some people like to type or write what they want to say; some people make songs or poems to put their thoughts into words; some people use sign language or show with their hands or facial expressions what they are thinking.

Sometimes people forget to say what they are really feeling and thinking, and instead of expressing it in words they just start to feel upset and act bothered towards others, or act roughly. People then wonder what's wrong, because the person never said what was on their mind. It's good to put our thoughts into helpful words, and to explain things.

Now, if people just always go around saying whatever comes to mind, that might not be such a good idea either, as words can have a real effect on those that hear them. It's wise to think about what we say before we say it. If our words help to bring peaceful solutions, or stop someone from doing something that is wrong, or if our words are encouraging to others, then those are good things to express. And we can choose to say things in nice and friendly ways.

It's good to take the time and effort to explain things to others, rather than just hoping people will all of a sudden somehow know what we are feeling without us explaining anything to them. Putting our thoughts and feelings into words that are good and helpful can make a big difference and bring positive results. It can relieve tension and clear up misunderstandings.

If someone is acting poorly towards you, maybe they have something they need to get off their heart, and perhaps you can ask them questions that will encourage them to explain things. Then you can pray and talk to Jesus together about it too,

and that will really help. Jesus has the answers and solutions to any question or problem.

If you find yourself in a situation where you wish you had someone to talk to, but for some reason no one is around or there's no one that would understand what you want to express, then you can always talk to Jesus. You can tell Him all that is on your heart and mind, and He'll understand and listen very well to anything you have to say. And best of all, He'll do something to help you, and you'll know what a great friend He is.

## **Patient**

Have you ever planted a garden and were waiting for the plants to grow? Maybe it took a week or two or even longer, until the tiny shoots began to peek through the soil. What was it doing under there all that time? Well, even if it looked like it wasn't doing all that much, it actually *was* growing—not up to the top where the light is, not right away, as it was first of all growing its roots downward.

It needed to have roots to help soak up the nourishment from the soil, so that it would have what it needed to grow taller and bigger. You probably had to have patience while you waited for it to grow, and it seemed like nothing much was happening. However, all along it was working hard to grow as fast as possible, and at the same time as strongly as it could grow, so it would be a good and healthy plant, or produce food for you to eat.

It's a good illustration to remember the next time you are waiting for something to happen that you really want. Perhaps you have prayed for something and it's taking time for it to be answered. Jesus goes to work right away when you pray, to bring all the best things your way. Maybe you can't see what He's doing right that minute, but you can be sure that in time you will see the good result of your prayers. You'll be glad that you waited in faith.

Another good time to be patient is when others are doing things that you don't like, and you wish they would change and do things that make you happy. You can be like that plant growing and find out what would be the best thing to do that would make the "plant" of your friendship grow strong and healthy.

Just doing things real fast and getting what you want right at that moment doesn't always bring the good fruits of fun and friendship later on. So sometimes we need to wait awhile, pray a bit more, be patient, and then when the time is right, the good will come and people will be ready to change or do what we were hoping for.

## **Tolerant**

When you are tolerant you can handle situations and the actions of others that aren't to your liking without getting all upset, or reacting in unkind ways. It's a bit like a rubber band. You can stretch and help to hold things together by helping people to stay calm and happy, and by being forgiving and patient.

Of course, just like every rubber band has a snapping point, where it just can't stretch anymore, even so, every person has their limits as to how much they can cope with and still remain patient or calm. When things seem like they are too hard for you to take, and you feel like "snapping" back with unkind or angry words and actions, why not pray for Jesus to extend your temper's "rubber band" and to help you to

stretch just a little bit more. He can help you to hold yourself together, to wait, to be “longsuffering” and stretch patiently a bit longer.

### **Encouraging Others**

Just like water helps drooping plants to perk up and to revive, so do words of encouragement help people to cheer up and to have the faith and courage to do what they need to do. Have you ever seen this happen? Why not try it, and see for yourself if it works! The next time you see someone feeling rather down, or acting grumpy, try to think of something good that they have done, or that they can do well, or something that you like about them. Then tell them about it, and see if it makes a difference to their mood.

True and kind words that are said at just the right time can make a real difference to someone. People need love like plants need water. Your mouth can be like a spout on a watering can that pours out the refreshing words of encouragement. How does the water get into the watering can in the first place? Well, it had to hold still under the tap and wait until it was all filled up. If we are still and quiet for a few minutes to pray and listen to Jesus, then we too can be filled up with the right kinds of words to pour out on others. Jesus always knows the right thing to say at the right time—just what He knows will help people to know that He loves them. Jesus can tell us what to say to cheer someone up.

### **Show Concern**

It's easy to be busy with what we need to do, but taking time to notice the people around us, and to see what is happening around us, is a good habit to have and cultivate. A very appreciated one too! People need other's help from time to time. You will need help at times too, and you'll be so glad that someone stopped to look around and notice your needs and help you out.

Why do people admire the firemen, the paramedics, and rescue workers so much? Because they spend their work time doing nothing else but being on call to help others. When there is someone in need of help, they put that as their top priority. They don't worry about how they look, or if they even get to finish their meal. When someone is in need of help, it's the most important thing to them.

You can have the same love, care, and focus too. When someone needs help, react as if it's your most important job right then—if it's something you can do, and it's the right and safe thing to do. Even if it's a small and humble thing like helping your little brother or sister turn on the light, or wiping up a spill of water that you notice on the floor so that no one slips and falls. Be on call, and show that you care. You'll be loved and appreciated for showing concern and doing something to help whenever you can.

### **Be Understanding**

Have you ever seen a new piece of equipment and wondered how it worked? Perhaps your mum got a new blender and she read the instructions to help her get an understanding of how it worked. Once she knew what to do and how to do it, and knew what each part was for, then she was ready to operate and use the machine. She could then assemble it correctly and use it to make nice things for the whole family.

To be understanding about things is a very helpful tool.-- Being understanding of people—like why they might do things differently than you, or why they couldn't come to your party, or why they can't eat certain foods—can be a real help. If you aren't trying to understand others it makes you get bothered at people more easily, or act unkindly. It helps to realise that you—and everybody—has special needs, abilities, likes and dislikes. It makes for a peaceful and pleasant relationship with others when you don't expect or wish for everyone to be just like you, or to always do things the way you want them to.

Being understanding is a bit like being forgiving too. You don't get upset about things that others can't avoid or do anything about. You let them be who they are, and you trust that when the time is right, if there are things that they should be doing better in, through prayer, love and the help of others, that they will change. As you show understanding and tolerance to others, they will want to show the same to you, too.

### **Giving**

Why does the shopkeeper not worry when someone comes to their shop to buy something and takes it away to their house? Well, the person taking the needed items gives the shopkeeper money in exchange. So the shopkeeper knows that they will be able to restock their shop and refill their shelves again using that money. They aren't worried that the more people get from the shop, the less it will have.

That can be a bit how it is when we give to others. Jesus is the one that restocks us again as we give to others. We don't need to worry every time we share something, that it will mean we'll have less and less and soon we won't have enough for ourselves. We can give knowing that Jesus will reward us. And His rewards are much more valuable than the wealth of the world that people think is the way to get happiness and all that they need.

When you give to others in love, it's like giving to Jesus. And what He pays you back is far better. Sometimes you notice what He gives you in return right away, and other times it comes to you as a secret surprise. Perhaps you are rewarded for your giving and sharing by being kept safe from an accident, or something that you lost was then found, or you are given good health. Maybe there was something you needed, and someone just happened to give it to you, without you having to buy it. Or maybe Jesus blesses you with a good friendship with the person you gave to. Giving to others makes Jesus happy, because it's like you are giving to Him—and He'll always give back to you in some wonderful way.

### **Put others first**

When you let someone else get what they want, before trying to get what you want, this is called, "putting others first" or "preferring others". It can be hard to not rush to get what you want, or to grab something first, but instead to let others have the first chance to get what they need or want. It's nearly impossible to do that, unless you have something in your heart that motivates you to do it.

Knowing that it makes Jesus happy when you choose to put other's needs above your own can be a good reason for making these unselfish choices. Or perhaps you've found out that when you make others happy, they seem to want to make you happy next time. Or maybe you don't feel right in your heart when you constantly

try to get the best, or be the first, or take the most for yourself, as God's Holy Spirit whispers to you that there is a better way.

The best way is the love way, and eventually the love will come back to you. Doing things God's way, love's way, is never going to be totally easy. It simply won't. But you can be sure that just as a good, caring father appreciates and rewards his children when they make good choices, so does Jesus, your Heavenly Father, do the same for you.

And you know what? The more you practice doing it, the easier it will seem, and the more benefits and rewards you will be stacking up for yourself—both here on Earth and in Heaven! Try to give a bit more love and care today than you were able to give yesterday. This doesn't mean you can never have anything that you need, this just means that you care about others first. You look around and see who you can make happy first, and then you can take care of yourself and your own needs.

It's such a good habit and the wise way to be. Just think, if everyone around you also did the same, and followed your good example, how much happier everyone would be—including you. Get the love in motion and put it into action through letting others have something that you wish you could have as well. The blessings you'll get in return will make you happier than just getting that one thing that you'd wanted.

### **Positive Thoughts and Words**

Have you ever tasted something that was too sour, or even food that wasn't good? What did you do? Did you swallow it and ask for more? No. You knew it didn't belong in your mouth, so you spat it out, rinsed your mouth, and put something good in it. That's how it can be with the words we say.

Sour words, ugly words, unkind words, grumbling, and impatient words don't belong in our mouths. They'll make us and others feel unwell if we speak them or even hear them said.

When we think of saying things that are negative, or even just begin to think unkind or ugly thoughts, it's time to get those thoughts out of our minds and far away from our mouths and voices. We need to swish them away with a prayer or a Bible verse, and then choose to fill our minds and thoughts with good, exciting, fun, inspiring, faith-building and heart-strengthening thoughts, wishes and ideas.

If we are choosing to think about positive things, those thoughts are what will come out of our mouth too. And if we think and pray before we speak, and don't just say whatever unkind, impatient or unpleasant words and ideas come to our minds, we'll be making the world a happier place and our own hearts happier too.

See the good. Think the positive. Say the kind words. Your words will make a big difference in your life, in your family, and on your future.

### **Thankful at All Times**

King David said, "I will bless the Lord at all times!" How much is all? If I told a group of children: "You can all come and play the game!" that would mean that no one would be left out and everyone could come along. All means everything. So if we are to be thinking about how wonderful and amazing Jesus is all the time, it means not only when things are going just the way we would like them to, but also when things aren't going well.

How can we do that? How can we be thankful and speak positive words, and tell Jesus that we are glad, even when things aren't the way we want them to be? Well,

no matter what is happening to you, Jesus is always the same wonderful guy that He is. He never changes. He doesn't just like us one day, and then not the next. He doesn't promise us a place in Heaven, and then forget about it the next day. He doesn't give us forgiveness one time, and then not the next time we ask. No! He's the same today, and always. He always loves us! He will always forgive us when we are sorry and ask Him for forgiveness. He will always hear our prayers and is always ready to always help. He will always be strong and able to do anything. He will always be in charge of our life and is always planning the best things for us. So there is plenty we can be thankful for, no matter what is happening. When we keep our minds and hearts filled with the good that we can be glad about, this will help to make things easier for us. When we praise Jesus for all His love and goodness, then He blesses and gives us great things in return, and makes our hearts happy.

### **Prayerful**

If you were going to learn something like ice-skating, skiing, or rollerblading, you'd probably first start out with holding on to something and trying to keep your balance. If you just moved quickly right away you'd fall right down, as it's too slippery. You'd need to think about what you are doing, and what each foot is doing, while trying to maintain your balance. You'd want to also be wearing any protective gear that would keep you safe while learning the tricky new skill.

This can illustrate the importance of being prayerful and praying as we go throughout our day. Every new day can be like a slippery or tricky experience. But when we pray for Jesus' help it's like holding on to something for balance, and wearing protective gear. Prayer helps us manoeuvre our way through the day safely and wisely.

Accidents can happen at any moment. There aren't just accidents with things that get us or others hurt, but we can slip and say things that we wish we hadn't. It might lessen our friendship with someone as a result, or affect our day. We might fall into bad habits and make the wrong choices that bring unpleasant results.

However, if we use the skill of prayer and stop to pray before we say things or react to situations, it can help us to maintain a good balance on our day. It can give us a smooth time—just like a skilled skier or skater can move quickly and easily, and seldom fall.

Prayerfulness, instead of trying to just zoom off on our own, is like the gear and skills that makes things go well. Getting in the habit of talking to Jesus and asking for His help in all that we do or are planning to do, is a great skill to have, and will make things go so much better.

### **Tidy**

It may be hard to help clean up when you are young and there are so many other things that you want to do. It can seem like it's not the most fun activity to do. But did you know that if you learn how to keep things orderly, neat and tidy, and you do your part to help clean up, it will actually make things easier for you? It will make things nicer for you and others, and you will be able to have more fun as you'll know where everything is and can find things easily.

A clean and tidy room can make your mind feel all fresh and makes it easy for you to get new ideas of great things you can do, build or invent. It can even help you concentrate on what you are reading or studying, because there aren't a lot of out-

of-place things around to distract you and take your focus away from what you want to be thinking about.

If you learn this good skill and habit now, then as you grow older, it won't be so hard for you to do it. Eventually you'll need to learn to clean up, but when you get older you'll also have many more things to learn and do. So if you learn how to tidy up now, then when you are older you'll already have that good skill, and you can do it more easily.

People will enjoy visiting you more, and you'll gain the respect of others, when they see that you put the time and effort into keeping things looking nice and clean. You'll find that you feel happier too, as what you see around you affects the way you feel. The Bible says, "Let all things be done in decency and in order." And that's a good tip to follow.

### **Finishing Tasks**

What if the bus driver stopped half-way to your destination and then decided he was tired of driving, and just quit? It would cause a bit of difficulty for each one that was depending on the driver to take them to the place they needed to go. Or what if your mother or the cook started to prepare the meal, but then got distracted with something else and forgot to come back and finish? Meal time would come and there wouldn't be food prepared, and you would be hungry.

Or what if someone started to clean the floor, and began to scrub it with water, but then decided they would rather go to play outside? The floor would be very wet and slippery, and it could cause an accident. It's great to have the initiative and idea to do a job or a project, but if it's left part-way done, and isn't finished, it can make things difficult for you and others later.

It's good to have the perseverance to finish jobs, even if you feel like stopping. Sometimes you can have a little break and take a rest from doing something for awhile, if it's safe to do so and isn't making it difficult for others. But when you don't forget that you were even in the middle of a job, and you get right back to work and finish it off, people will be real impressed and know that they can trust you to follow through on things.

When someone has an important job that they need help with, who will they ask? They'll look for someone who will do it well, won't give up, and will see it through to the end. Will you be someone that others want to have help them? It feels good to be trusted, depended on and be able to help others.

### **Respect and Obey the Lord**

When a mountaineer wants to climb a challenging mountain he knows there's more of a chance of success when he takes the time to learn all he can about it. He talks to people who have climbed it before, and listens to any advice. Then as he and his team are climbing he listens and obeys when the guide tells him to be careful.

If a new mountaineer just took off on his own, thinking he somehow knows everything there is to know, and thinks he is aware of all the dangers and will instinctively always know the right move to make, he's setting himself up for failure and accidents.

Our life is a bit like climbing a mountain. We can't just do whatever comes to our mind or seems to be right. We need to study the instructions and counsel in God's



Word, and we need to let Him guide us. He knows far more than we ever will, and He knows the best way to help us to make it to the goal of a life well-lived.

None of us just made ourselves appear on Earth. We were created and placed here by the One who loves us very much. God put each one of us here for a reason, and we need to find out, step-by-step, just what He wants us to do.

Jesus came to Earth to find out what it was like, so He can give us real good advice. He not only knows what is best to do, but He knows how we feel, and what is difficult for us. We can trust that when He tells us that it's best to do this, or not to do that, He knows what things are like for us on Earth and just what we need.

When we read God's Word each day, and when we take time to listen to what He wants to tell us, and we have the conviction to obey it, then we will have a safer and happier time. When the One who knows everything, and who made you and me, wants us to do a certain thing, or to follow different rules for happy and healthy living, then we ought to listen, remember it, and do it. It's the best and wisest thing we can do—to listen to and follow Jesus our guide.

### **Self-control and Moderation**

“Will-power” is when you want to do something or not do something, and you are determined to do it, or get it, or be a certain way, or work towards a goal. If someone wants to enter a long-distance bicycle competition they need to have a lot of will-power. They will need to do a lot of cycling practice, even on days when they don't feel like it.

They will need to have a good and healthy diet, and stop themselves from eating things that would make them feel weak or gain unhealthy and unnecessary weight. They'll need to stop doing other things that they might enjoy, so that they can get good rest at night. They have a goal in mind and it helps them to make decisions based on what would bring them closer to their goal, and makes it easier for them to speed along on their bicycle when the day of the competition comes.

Every one of us has to make choices every day. At first we may want to do whatever feels fun, or seems the easiest, or what takes the least amount of effort, or what we think might make others like us better. But those things aren't always the best ways to decide if something really is going to make us and others happier in the end.

Sometimes we have to do things that seem a bit hard at the time, but what would make things better for us later on. Take for example staying up late at night. It might seem fun to keep doing all kinds of things at night, but then the next morning you are grumpy, groggy and weaker, and many things in the day just seem hard to do.

Whereas if you had more self-control or moderation you would head off to bed before it got too late. And when you did, you'd find you could even wake earlier and feel refreshed. You'd have time then in the morning for quiet moments with Jesus before others start asking you to do this or that; perhaps you'd even have time for a bit of exercise too, and you'd feel happier and more ready for the day.

There are lots of things that require us to control ourselves and stop when we've had enough or done enough. We need to make wise choices on what we eat, on our

activities, on the things we see and hear, on what we use our time for. We need to wisely choose the words we say, and what we do. If we want to be happy and healthy we need to be able to say “No!” or “Stop! Don’t do it!” or “That’s enough!”, to ourselves and choose the things that will make us feel great for a lot longer than we would if we just did what we felt like doing at the time.

### **Confident in God’s Help and Strength**

Who feels the sturdiest—the person trying to walk on stilts, or someone standing on a huge slab of rock? Trying to balance on stilts on muddy sloped ground is like trusting in people to always be able to do what you want them to do. Sometimes they can, but not always.

Trusting in God is like standing on a very big and solid rock. You aren’t going to fall off of it, and it’s not going to turn into mushy wet soil. You can trust that it will support you. Praying for Jesus to help you in all that you need to do that day, and asking Him to do what He promises in His Word to do, is like choosing to climb up onto a big strong, flat surface. No matter what you need help with, it will never be too hard for Jesus, and He can also get others to help you.

When people do a good job and are able to do what you need, it’s easy to give them most of the credit, and start to depend on them only. When we do this it makes us get very unsettled and disturbed when mistakes and failures happen. But people are just people, and will always make! –We all will.

When you need to get the help of others, you will then pray for them, and when they are able to do a good job you will know it was because Jesus helped them in answer to your prayers. When you pray for your jobs, your projects, your play time, your trips out, and your needs, and you look to Jesus to be the one to help, then you’ll not get so bothered when people aren’t as faithful as you would like them to be, or they make mistakes. You know that Jesus can still work things out and will make things turn out even better in the end, as you keep on trusting Him, praying and finding His solutions.

### **Time with Jesus**

If you could measure the distance between you and the stars, and how wide Space is, it would give you a little example of just how much love God has for each one of us. When you love someone you want to be with them, talk to them, hear their ideas, and do fun things together.

Jesus loves each of us so much, more than we will ever know, but we can get little glimpses of it and be reminded of just how special we are to Him when we take time to be with Him. How can you be with Jesus, and have time with Him when you can’t see Him? Well, when you talk on the phone, do you see the person standing in front of them? No, but you can have a nice chat and feel like you had a visit from a friend. Jesus is closer than a phone call away, because He’s all around us, with us, and sees us all the time! He’s involved in everything we do and is eager to help us in all we do. To take time with Him means to tell Him what you are thinking, and to get quiet enough to let Him tell you what He wants to say as well.

Taking time with Jesus is like getting an empty cup all filled up with fresh water again, when you are thirsty. Have you ever been real thirsty and finally you got a good drink of water? It was well appreciated. When we go throughout our day and experience all the different feelings and problems, and do our work, it can tire us in body, mind and spirit. It’s like the cup of our spirit’s joy gets empty.

Then we go to Jesus, the fountain of life and love, and just one drink of His love and hearing His words can fill us up again to overflowing. When we know that God loves us it makes us smile and makes our hearts happy. He can show us His love in so many ways all day long, but when we sit still or get quiet for a little while, and read or hear what He wants to tell us, and we have some friendship time, then it fills us up with His strength and joy.

## **Gentle and Caring**

A gentle fluttering butterfly is a good illustration of something that is peace-promoting. Anyone can try to push their way, or speak roughly, as it's easy to think that is the best way to make people do what you'd like. But think of a butterfly, as it flutters and softly lands here and there. It cheers you to see it, and it's fun if it lands on you. It feels rather tickly and you know it won't hurt you. So you can relax and enjoy it being around.

Everyone feels differently inside of themselves in various situations. Even the same people can feel differently on one day when something happens, and then their feelings can change when that same thing happens to them on a different day. The way we talk and how we react to people makes a difference and affects the things they then say and do, and how they are towards us in return.

It's good to stop to think and pray about how to be around different people, and try to be aware of what they might be feeling. We should try to avoid speaking in ways that make others feel sad inside, and instead try to act with gentleness. When we act like we think we are better than others or we act boastful, instead of noticing and appreciating the good qualities of others, it's hard for others to be around us.

We should instead choose to follow Jesus' example when He was on Earth. We can make others feel that their needs and comfort are important to us. We can speak words of kindness. We can act humbly and not be pushy and puffed up with thinking how great we are, but act meek and gentle-hearted.

Will you be like Jesus, and let others feel that you care through the words you speak and the ways you act? Jesus wants to show His love to others through you. He can help you to do that if you pray, and pause to let His ideas and humility lead you.

## **Calm, Easy-going and Nice to be Around**

Have you ever sat down by a river or lake where the water was calm? It moved and rippled and was relaxing to watch and listen to. Perhaps you sat under a tree and looked up and saw all the pretty shapes of leaves, with all the varied shades and beautiful colours. You took a deep breath and it felt so good and refreshing to you. You felt like you could stay there all day!

When it was time to leave you wished you could return soon again. Maybe it felt hard to return to your busy life, noisy traffic, loud talking, and all the clamour and activity. King David said in the Book of Psalms, "He [The Lord, our Good Shepherd] leads me beside the still waters, and restores my soul." (Psalm 23: 2-3)

We don't always have access to a lake or a nice pretty spot out in nature to bring a sense of calmness to our spirits. But we can take quiet time with Jesus and become a bit like that refreshing and calming water to those that are around us. If we are always rushing around, impatient, and getting easily upset about things, we're being

like cars in a noisy traffic jam, or like bustling yelling crowds in a busy market place. No one finds those situations peaceful or enjoyable.

We can learn to act calmly, to be patient, to talk gently. When we do, we will be pleasant for others to be around. We can avoid pressuring others for things that we want and being pushy to get our way. We can make others feel important and show through our words and actions that we have faith that in good time Jesus will work everything out for the best.

If someone makes a mistake, we don't have to get upset and start to act ugly towards them, we can be understanding and do something right then to make them feel better and put at ease. If someone seems rather shy and is having a hard time talking to you, you can smile and show through your words that you like them and accept them as a friend.

You can talk softly so it's pleasant for those around you to listen. And you can be quiet and learn to listen more to others, and let your words be few and just what is needed. These things make you a calming and relaxing, enjoyable person to be around. –Just like a beautiful tree beside refreshing rippling waters.

### **Remember the Good—Forget the Rest**

Do you remember everything that you did every day of your life—right now? Some things we can remember for a long time, and other things we easily forget. It can be easy to remember things that were hard for us, or to remember the things that others said or did that we didn't like. But reviewing these things in our mind and continuing to remind ourselves of the negative and sad things that happened is the way to poor health and unhappiness.

Now you might not think that you can make yourself forget things. They just seem to pop up in your heart and mind, and it can be difficult to forget things that are bothering you. But there is one thing that you can do, and that's to flush the bad memories away with a good thought. You can make yourself focus on something wonderful that happened, or something good that the person did before, or tell Jesus something that you are glad He gave to you.

You can train your mind to “turn it off” when the video and feelings of unpleasant memories starts to play in your mind. You can instead put on the good thought-memory-videos and think of anything good that did happen—or good things that happened as a result of the difficult time.

You'll be a nicer person for people to be around, and you'll feel so much better too. What you are thinking about will affect you and those around you! Turn on the good memories, and praise Jesus for all the many great things He does and all the wonderful ways He has kept you safe, and how He shows you His love all the time!

### **Vision-Initiative-Courage-Faith**

When someone goes to cook a meal, they need to add the right ingredients if they want it to come out well. Have you heard of the four “ingredients” or qualities that you need to mix into your day if you want to happily make progress and learn new things?

First of all you need to have **vision**. You need to see in your mind or be aware of what you are trying to accomplish and why you are doing certain things. You need to have a reason and know what goals you are trying to reach.

The next thing is to have **initiative**. That is when you don't wait around for others to be the first to start on a project, or the first to obey something Jesus has said to do. You take the first step, right away, to start working towards your goals. You help to get things rolling and to inspire others to do what the Lord wants them to do as well. You set the example and don't worry if for awhile it seems like you are the only one doing it. You know that Jesus is with you and sees what you are doing, and you want to please Him most of all in what you choose to do.

When you add **courage** to the qualities in your heart, then this helps you to not give up even when the job or the project that you are working on seems hard. You don't care so much about the tough times, nor do you listen to any discouraging words from others. You know that no matter what you do in life there will be bumps and hard times. You realise this, and you just don't let it stop you or make you shy away from doing what you know in your heart you are meant to do. You are courageous and carry on in obedience and faith.

With **faith** you know that as long as you are doing your best to follow and obey Jesus, that He's going to work everything out for the best. You trust that even when things seem to all be going wrong, that eventually Jesus can and will make everything right again.

You believe that He's there with you and hears every prayer. You read God's Word and know that what He said He can do, He will do, when the time is right. Faith in Jesus' love and care will keep you going and give you the encouragement that you need.

These four good qualities are the key ingredients to making progress and living a happy, productive, and positive life.

## **Facing Challenges**

Scientists and doctors need persistence to find solutions and the cause of problems. If they just gave up they would never discover anything helpful or interesting. They couldn't do their job unless they challenged themselves to keep on going, no matter what problems and mysteries they face.

Inventors, engineers, and manufacturers have to keep the goal in mind of just what they are trying to do, and then the difficulties they face don't stop them from achieving what they set out to do. Everything you do in life has aspects of it that may be difficult, or even some things that seem impossible. If you look at the problem and think, "This is too hard!" then it will be—for you.

If instead you look at something that seems rather daunting or hard to fix, and just see it as an interesting challenge and something to be overcome, there's a better chance you can make a difference and find the solution to change things for the better. If you believe that Jesus is bigger and wiser than even the hardest and most impossible-looking problem on Earth, and that if you ask Him to help you He can and will, things won't seem too hard for you.

So when someone says, "Can you please help me?" and you look and see that it is something rather hard to do, you won't get discouraged. You'll get excited to see the amazing way Jesus can help you to overcome and win. And when you do, you'll be stronger and wiser, and have more faith to tackle hard things, than if you gave up and didn't even try!

We can't always get immediate solutions, and some things take time and lots of prayer and perseverance until you finally get them worked out. But patience and

perseverance can be a help to you as well, and help you learn things that you wouldn't be able to learn if everything was always easy.

Doing tough things with faith makes you stronger—in heart, in mind and in body. Just believe that things can and will get better, and pray the troubles away. Anyone can do that!

### **Mistakes and Buoyancy**

If you want to be good at doing something, and you want to learn new skills, there's one good way to learn how to do important things—and that's to give it a try and learn through your mistakes. If you just sit around and never attempt to do anything because you only want to have good success and perfect progress 100% of the time, it just won't happen.

How do you think any of the inventions that are around you were made? They were made by a lot of mistakes and tries, and finding out what didn't work, before they found out what did! We need to get out of the habit of thinking that a mistake or blunder is only a bad thing.

No one feels particularly great about it when something less-than-perfect happens as a result of what they tried to do. But just think, the moment you realise that you've made a mistake, you are smarter and wiser than you were the moment before!

If you were trying to do something good, but then things didn't go as you planned, the mistake shows that you were at least brave enough to try something, to say something, to attempt something. You weren't just lazily sitting around grumbling, wishing for everyone around you to do everything for you. You were active and trying to do things—and as a result you learned something new.

Do you know what it means to be "buoyant"? It's like when something floats back up to the surface of the water after being thrown in. When you make a blunder and feel embarrassed or upset about it, try to think of the good things that you learned through it, and let yourself cheerfully float back up again, wiser, smarter, and able to do an even better job next time. Be buoyant, and let your mistakes be your helpers in life.

### **Change and Moving On**

When you are going through a long tunnel and you are zooming along in a car or bus or train, it can seem rather dark. But then as you reach the end and the light is shining, it looks so very different. What if you just stopped in the tunnel and didn't keep moving? You wouldn't get to enjoy what was on the other side!

Moving through a tunnel is in some ways like moving through your life. Time moves on and things pass you by as you carry on. If you have had to give up something that was special to you, or your friends moved away, or perhaps you lived somewhere you enjoyed but then had to move elsewhere, maybe it can seem like you are going through the dark part of a tunnel. But if you just wait and give things time, eventually something neat will happen, and the light will shine and you'll be glad you kept on going.

Just about everything in your life that you see around you now will eventually change—just like the scenery changes outside of the car or bus window as you travel. But if you know you are going somewhere special, then you don't mind it so much, as you are looking forward to what you are going to enjoy.

Most everything will change in time, but Jesus will always be the same, and as you journey through life you can look forward to the great and interesting things that He has planned for you—as well as a wonderful Heaven to come. There you won't have to give up things that are special, and you'll then be glad for all that you learned while on Earth. You'll be glad that things didn't just stay the same all the time, as you were able to learn and experience so many new things.

Change can be hard at the time, and giving up things that you enjoy can feel really sad. But if you just keep your eyes on the light that is at the end of the tunnel—all the fun that you will yet get to enjoy as you keep on going in faith, then you'll be able to pass through it quickly and be on to new things!

Remember, even the best thing on Earth that you move on past while travelling through your life is nothing compared to the great and wonderful things that Jesus has prepared for all those that love Him!

### **Borrowing and Lending**

If you just received something new—maybe a new toy or book, or even something more valuable such as a microscope or mp3 player to use, would you want just anyone using it?

If you were to loan it to someone, who would you allow to use it? If someone asked to borrow it you'd probably think about it for a minute and decide if they were someone you could trust to be careful and wise with it. You might think about the way they took care of other items, or even how they treated things you had loaned them before.

If they were someone that took good care of what you let them use, returned it in good condition, and if they did whatever they promised to do, you might consider letting them use something again. It made a difference to you how careful, wise and diligent they were in the past, and it affected your decision to let them use something in the future.

When you want or need to use something that belongs to others, they also think and decide if you are a trustworthy person. They see how you care for your own possessions, and if you are careful to treat things well so that they will last a long time. It will make a difference to them and affect whether or not they choose to trust you to care for something that belongs to them.

Sometimes, even when you are trying your best to take good care of something, there's an accident or something breaks or gets lost. These things happen, and we can't always prevent every mishap. So, the best thing to do is to honestly explain what happened to the person whose item you were borrowing. This makes you trustworthy too. When you aren't afraid to tell the truth about how something happened, then people feel they can trust you as well.

And if someone borrowed something that belonged to you, and they mistakenly broke it or lost it, try to treat them like you want to be treated if it were you being honest about something that had happened. Be understanding and forgiving, and others will learn to be that way with you.

### **Exploring and Discovering**

Living on Earth is like going on one big long trek or excursion through time! You start your adventure when you are a baby, and you keep on going and keep on learning

all kinds of things as you grow up. By the end of your life, even if you live to be very old, you still haven't learned all that is possible to learn.

The world and the surrounding space hold so many mysteries, so many things to discover, that even every person who has ever lived hasn't found out all that there is to know. Because each person is different and has had different things happen to them. Each person lives at a different time in world history, and has different abilities and inventions to use.

What was possible to discover many years ago, is different than all that is now able to be explored. There are vehicles going through Space checking out the world's huge neighbourhood—the Universe. There are microscopes that can see the tiniest things that weren't noticed many years ago. But you don't have to have a space rocket nor fancy equipment to learn new things, and explore new places.

You could be sitting outside on your back step and get to see something real interesting, just because you took the time to stop, to look, to observe, and to listen to Jesus. You can learn something just by walking down the street seeing people and how they react. Talking to someone can be like exploring something new. Their thoughts and ideas might be totally different than yours—and their good ideas might be worth trying!

The whole world provides endless opportunities to learn vast amounts of things. But in the end, there is only one thing that is the most important that we learn—it's far more important than knowledge, or books, or being the first one to see or discover something. It's learning to love!

Many people still need to discover that secret to a happy life: How to show love. Have you learned that yet? If so, then the doors are open to you to explore all kinds of new things—because new friends and companions will open their hearts and lives to you, and provide you with many more chances to learn new and wonderful things.

### **Polite, Courteous, and Well-Mannered**

When people are being interviewed to see if they will be good for a certain job, there are things that they need to be able to do, and skills they need to have. Some jobs require good speaking skills—like jobs that involve a lot of talking to others, or plenty of speaking on the phone, for example a receptionist or customer care service person. They need to know how to treat people well through the kind and respectful way they talk.

Some jobs require knowledge in certain things—like a nurse who needs to know about proper care of illnesses and how to help people rest and recover. Those working at a shop need to be good at math and be able to calculate prices, as well as how to smile and be pleasant and relaxed. They need to listen and be ready to help people find what they need.

But did you know what the most important skill of all is, that many people require in someone they are recruiting for a job? It is how well people can get along with other people, and how they act with others. "People-handling skills" are real important to have.

When you are polite, speak kindly and treat others with respect, it helps others to get along with you well. People in charge of giving jobs will want you on the team if they see that you can communicate in pleasant ways, and you show consideration through your manners and actions.



## **Mindful and Thoughtful**

Different pieces of a puzzle fit into different parts of the picture. It would look out of place if you tried to fit the wrong piece into an area that it doesn't belong. Even if you pushed and squeezed and tried to make it fit, in the end when you looked at the picture you would be able to tell that the colour, pattern or design didn't fit where it was placed.

When you visit other countries, or even other people's houses, or if you are travelling on a bus, or any time you are around people, it's like you are fitting into a place on the puzzle. If you are mindful of the customs and manners of the country or people that you are around, and you try to be polite, it will be like a piece that fits in nicely on a puzzle.

But if you just choose to do whatever you feel like doing, and acting in whatever way you usually act, you might look rather out of place. And why is that not the best? Because acting in ways that are enjoyable and pleasant to those around you makes them feel respected.

It's easier to tell someone that Jesus loves them and understands them when they see that you are trying to show kindness through the way you behave. To some people it's real important how you greet them—using the particular way of greeting that is common in that country. Also keeping clean, and being mindful not to cough or sneeze on others, shows thoughtfulness. It shows consideration to give others the best place to sit, or to let them walk through a doorway first.

How you act makes a difference to people, and will affect how readily they will listen to what you want to tell them. We can't always do everything just the same as those around us, as we need to be ready to do whatever Jesus needs us to do. However, if we are mindful of the effect that our habits, speech, and manners may have on others, then we can show kindness—and that shows Jesus' love.

## **A Time for Everything**

Have you ever seen a sunflower? They are rather big compared to most flowers. The thing sunflowers like the best is... Can you guess? The sunshine! When it's not time for the sun to be shining, the sunflowers use that time to turn in the direction where the sun will be rising the next morning, so they can be ready at the right time and in the right place to receive the sun's rays, and get as much light as they possibly can. Then they grow and grow and get real big, as that's the way they are made.

There's a time for sunlight and a time for night. There's a time for it to grow and a time to prepare for growth. In our lives there are also times for different things. There's a time to laugh and play, and other times to be quiet and to respect the needs of others.

One way we can show love is by being aware of and sensitive to the moods and needs of others, and to know when it's the right time to do what. Sometimes it's the time to tell jokes, other times we need to prepare for what we are going to do next by praying and being more serious and careful.

Sometimes a smile and a lively game is just what someone needs; other times letting them have some peaceful time alone without being disturbed with noise or talking, is what they would most appreciate. We can be like cheery sunflowers, bringing a smile to those that are around us. And we can also realise that there's a time to be serious, to listen to others, to learn something, or to pray for others. There's a time for

activity, and a time to rest, or to prepare, or to be quiet and to do other things. Jesus and those caring for you can help you to know what would be best to do at the time.

### **Brave and Patient**

It can be so difficult when you don't feel well, or there is something wrong with your body, or you've had an accident. The hurting feeling is a good warning signal. It helps to keep you safe, as it makes you want to do things that keep your body in good working order, so that you don't have to feel that discomfort and pain. It also helps us to know just where in our body something isn't right so we can pray for it and get help to get it fixed up, if that's what we need.

Did you know that in Heaven there won't be any more pain or tears or sickness? Won't that be wonderful? You'll feel great all the time. But when we are on Earth and things aren't easy, and we aren't feeling well, one thing we can do that always helps is to pray! We know that Jesus knows right where we are, and He knows just how to fix the problem or lead us to get the help needed.

Jesus knows what pain feels like, and what it feels like to be sick, and just like He healed so many people while on Earth, He can and will help and heal you. But while you are waiting to be made all well again, you can pray to be patient. Being patient and brave when you are hurting is hard to do, but there's something special that you are given in times of sickness and pain; something no one can give you, and you can't get in any shop on Earth. What is it?

You gain special understanding and the ability to help and encourage others later on, when you talk with them and find out that they are experiencing just the same thing that you already felt. You can be a wonderful help to them, because you know what it feels like. When you see that they are feeling much better because of your encouragement, or they have faith to be patient through it because of what you can tell them to cheer them, it makes you feel very glad in your heart that you could be such a help to someone. And it was all because you experienced it too. One day you will understand the whole reason for having those hard times, and it will make you glad.

### **Forgiving**

Our bodies are amazing! No machine on Earth has the ability to heal and repair a scratch on its own. But our bodies can! If we get a scratch or bump, in time it heals and new skin grows where it's needed.

Did you know our hearts can get bumps and bruises too? Just in a different way. Something may make us feel sad, or bad, or hurt inside, and our heart may not feel as joyful as it usually does. Perhaps someone said or did something that saddened us, and we needed healing inside our heart and mind.

How can we get healed from things that hurt our feelings and lessen our joy? Well, even though it's easy to get angry and to keep bad feelings in our heart towards others who hurt or bothered us, that makes our hearts get even sadder! It's like making the bonk in our heart get bigger and hurt even more every time we choose to stay upset about something.

Everyone makes mistakes, and it's easy for people to make the wrong choices and have unpleasant reactions towards others. Each one of us will do things wrong

sometimes too, and we will want others to forgive us. So we should do same to others! We'll have more friends that way! Our hearts will heal quicker, our minds will be ready to think of new and fun ideas, and we'll be healthier and happier, if we don't allow our hearts to keep bad feelings inside.

The best way to do that is to be forgiving and understanding. Jesus can help you forgive others. He's good at that, since He forgives each of us all the time—every time we make a mistake and ask for His forgiveness, He gives it, and never stays upset at us. He has so much love and understanding, and just wants to be our best friend. He can help us know and feel His love and forgiveness for others too.

### **Take Care of Yourself**

If someone just drives and drives their car, with little or no maintenance, eventually it's going to break down, or at least run out of fuel and oil and the necessary things it needs to keep it going.

Your body is like a very amazing vehicle, your machine to get you through your life on Earth. It can get you places, and it can help you to do so many things—much more than any machine on Earth can do. But it does need care to keep it working well and to be in good condition. You need to choose safe activities so you don't have accidents easily. You need to eat the right foods—good nourishing, natural and healthful foods.

You need plenty of water—more than any other drink around. You need to get enough sleep. You need the proper amount and the right types of exercise to keep you growing and staying strong. You need to chase away worries and stress from your mind and feelings, as they bring sickness and hurts inside your body.

You need to keep clean, and especially keep your hands washed, as that will affect your health. You need to have fun and relaxing things to do, and take time to rest and not to only work. You need good and positive work to do, things that help you to enjoy each day and know that you are doing something important to help others. You need to take time to talk with Jesus and get His thoughts and instructions in prayer and from the Bible. This will help you to have the happiest and healthiest life you can have. Sometimes you will get sick, or hurt, or have parts of your body that don't work well. But if you are doing your best, then that's the best you can do. You can trust that Jesus will do His part to keep you in the best working order possible—and you'll be a happy and pleasant person to be around!

### **Respect Life**

Life is delicate and is a precious gift from the One who makes life—God. When someone gives you a very special, rare and costly gift, you want to take good care of it, so it will last you a long time, right? That's how it is with your life!

Being alive and having the chance to live on Earth happens just once. It's a rare and special opportunity—for you and for each person you see and meet. Once that time is past and it's time for you or others to leave and return to the God who made them, that is the end of your chance to learn what you could learn on Earth and to do what you could to make it a better place, and to make Jesus happy with your wise choices.

You need to be careful in what you do, and to make sure that you take good care of yourself, and make safe choices that are good for you and others. You need to be

wise and careful around others, or when you are responsible to care for others. It's their only visit to Earth, and they too will want it to be as fun and as long a visit as possible.

It's like if you got to see a unique place for an excursion—maybe the castle of a special king and queen. Pretend that visitors were only able to see it once in their life. You wouldn't want to do anything that would make you have to leave the castle early, because of your behaviour, and then be unable to explore all the fancy rooms and awesome gardens. You'd act real respectful, careful and wise. That's a bit like how it is while on your trip to Earth. God made this place, and God made you, and you have only one visit here. Treat others, and yourself with respect and care, so you can all enjoy it for as long and as happily as possible.

### **Environmental Care**

Everything you use around the house or find in a shop has been made using the natural resources or supplies found in nature. People have no way of just creating things from nothing—like God can! They have to use whatever is on Earth—wood (which can be used to make paper), sand, rocks, oil (which can be used to make plastic), food, salt (which can be used to make many types of chemicals), plants (which also grow products that can be used to make cloth and baskets), metal, rubber, seeds, water, clay and dirt, animal products, and so forth.

Even something like electricity is formed by using the things of the world—like coal, water power and wind. It's good to be mindful to not be wasteful. The more products that are made, the more new ones need to be created. Some things are being created in ways that aren't good for the environment, and they cause pollution, and put bad smells in the air and put unhealthy materials in the water and soil.

Some places in the world have so many pollutants that the people and animals living in that area are getting really sick. Some places are being used to gather too many resources from the land—like too many trees being cut down without new ones being planted, and the land isn't nice any more. Also, the animals that lived there don't have anywhere else to go.

It's sad, and one day Jesus will help to get things fixed up again. But for now, the best we can do is try to not waste and use unnecessary amounts of things, and try to not use products that are harmful for the plants and water, or for the people around.

We can pray and make wise decisions on what we use and how we care for the world that God made and gave people the responsibility of looking after and treating well.

### **Thoughtful of Other's Needs and Time**

When you are looking straight into a mirror all you can see is yourself, and it's easy to think only about yourself, for the most part. You can't see what is behind the glass or much of what is surrounding you. When you are standing in front of a clear and clean window you can see so many things. You start thinking more about what is going on outside and what other people are doing. You might think about what the weather is like, or new activities to do, or people to visit, or games to play and places to go see.

As you go throughout your day, try to be like the person that is looking out the window. Think more about the people and situations that are around you and how you can be a benefit and help. Try not to be like someone who is just looking in a

mirror, who, no matter what they are doing or whom they are around, they still just keep thinking about “What’s good for me?” and “I wish I had what they have!” and “I wonder if they like me?”

Instead, be more mindful of what others need, how they might be feeling. If someone is busy, try to avoid taking their time on things that can wait until later. If someone is grumpy, it might just be that they aren’t feeling well, and instead of getting bothered about it, pray for them—even just in your heart and mind. If someone is real hungry, let them get to the food first or have the biggest piece available, if there is a choice. That is being like Jesus. You’ll surely make Him smile when He sees that you are so caring, doing just the things He wishes someone would do to be a help to someone else.