

A Gift of Faith Book 12

Quotes
on
Qualities

Part 1

Quotes on Qualities

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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.



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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.



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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



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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



Photo by Jon Berg

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



Photo by Jon Berg

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



Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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



Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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



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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



Photo by Jon Berg

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,



Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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,

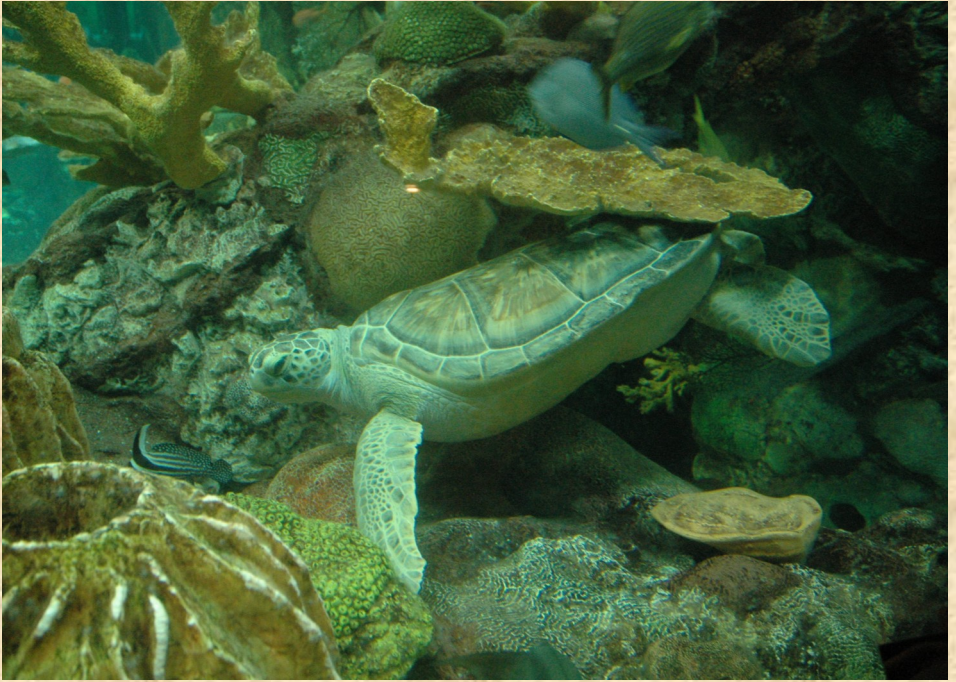


Photo by Jon Berg

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.



Photo by S.d.B.

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.



Photo by S.d.B.

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,



Photo by S.d.B.

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.



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.

Continued in Part 2