

A Gift of Faith Book 12

Quotes
on
Qualities

Part 2

Quotes on Qualities

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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.



Photo by Chariane Quille

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



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.



Photo by M. McNally

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.



Photo by M. McNally

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.



Photo by M. McNally

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.



Photo by M. McNally

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.



Photo by M. McNally

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.



Photo by Francesco Moldavian

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.



Photo by Angela S.

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.



Photo by Fleur Celeste

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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!



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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!



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.

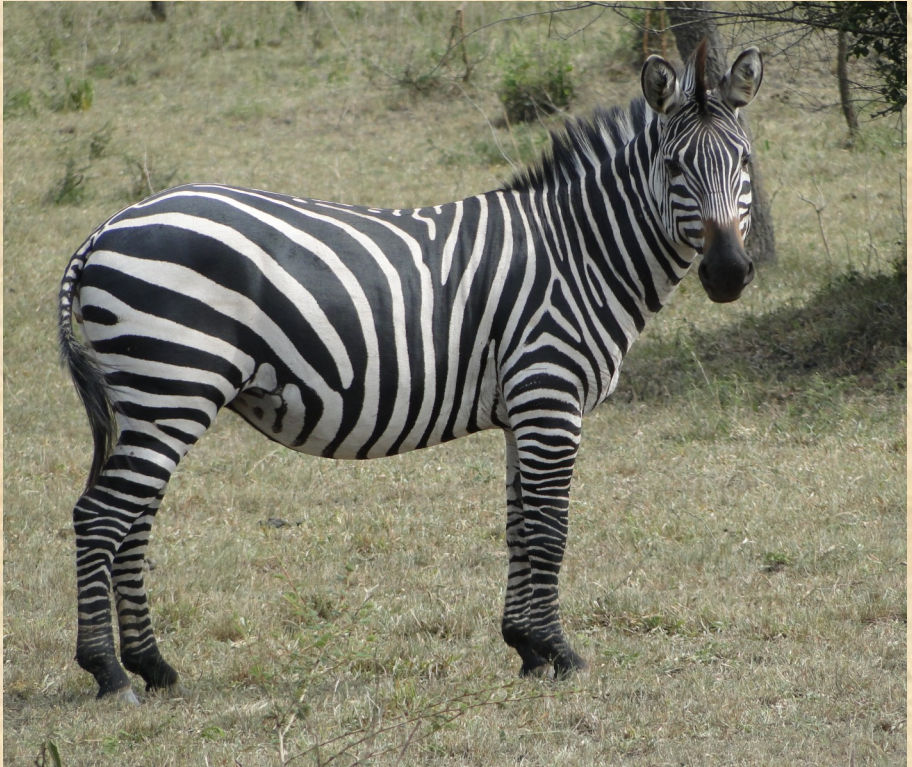


Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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!



Photo by M. McNally

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!



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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.



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.



Photo by Robin Yamaguchi

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



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.



Photo by Chariane Quille

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



Photo by Chariane Quille

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.



Photo by Jon Berg

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



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

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.

Continued in Part 3