

A Gift of Faith Book

16

Part 2

HELPFUL HINTS

—BOOK 1—

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Helpful Hints

—Book 1—

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Part 2

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Photo by Naomi

10.) Teeth and Mouth

Are you thankful for your eyes and ears, your mouth and teeth? Sure you are! Because without them you couldn't enjoy this beautiful world that God has created for us or all the yummy things there are to eat, or the beautiful places there are to see, or hear your parent reading you a story or singing you a song.

God wants us to enjoy life, and all the nice things in life are His blessings to us. But He also wants us to take care of our bodies so they will last a long time and work well.

That's why it's important to do things like brushing your teeth and rinsing your mouth with water after eating.



Photo by Chariane Quille

Teeth are very important and once you get your adult teeth, you won't get any more. (Your milk teeth or first teeth fall out and then the next tooth that comes in is called your adult tooth. When this one is lost, it does not come back.)

So if you learn to brush them and keep them clean and avoid eating sugary foods, your teeth will last a long time.

Nice clean teeth sparkling in a lovely smile is like a ray of cheery sunlight. A clean face and mouth showing a pleasant and happy expression is often the first thing people notice and will be affected by. And whatever affects the moods and actions of others will affect you, too!

But what people remember far more than the appearance of your face is what words they hear coming out of your mouth.



Photo by Chariane Quille

The memory of your words or songs can stay with others for a very long time. To do the most good in life, and to build a happy and strong life that is a blessing to others, we need to guard our mouth.

We need to guard what goes in—the food and drinks we take in; and we need to guard what words we allow to come out.

Words can not only affect others, but can affect the person speaking them, too. So good words and good food belong in our mouths. Rinsing our teeth with water, and letting the water of God's Word that we've committed to memory be spoken, are ways to keep our mouth clean and healthy—in body and spirit.



11.) Eyes and Ears

To keep our eyes working well and lasting a long time, we need to take care of them. Always be sure to read in good light because your eyes need light to focus. They also need sunshine and exercise just like you do. Believe it or not, sunlight or natural light actually strengthens your body and is good for your overall good health.

When you run and play outside, your eyes have to work hard so you can see things close up or far away. That's good exercise for them and keeps them strong.

If you sit inside all day and watch TV or a computer screen, your eyes will get weaker and weaker because they don't get the exercise they need.



Through our eyes and ears we can experience lots of things on Earth, and we need to also guard ourselves as we use them, from things that wouldn't be good for our heart and mind and spirit.

We have to choose what to watch, what to look at, and what to read. Whatever we use our eyes for will have an effect on us and how happy we are, or how much good we can do for others and how much Jesus' love can shine through us.

The same is true for our ears—what we listen to will affect our feelings and moods, and make us want to do all kinds of things, or not feel like doing some things. If we want to make wise decisions, and do things that help us have a great life, we have to make sure that what we listen to is going to help motivate us to do what is right.

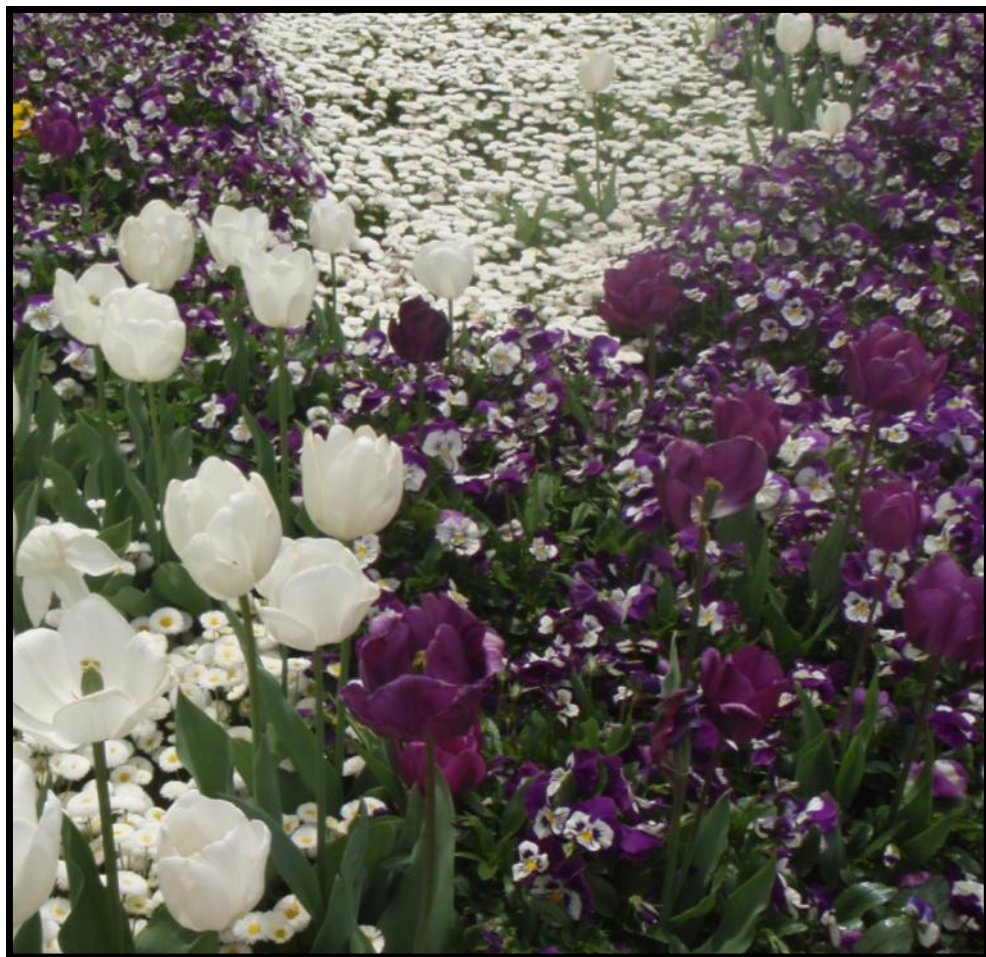


Photo by Chariane Quille

We have to choose good and uplifting music with a positive and Godly message and “feel” to it.

That means that it somehow builds up, encourages, cheers you or others or brings peace, happiness, joy and lets others know they are loved!

We need to talk with the kind of people who will be a help to us, or whom we can help.

We need to listen to audios that build our faith and teach us things that are good and true, and that make us feel inspired.

So if you’ve been feeling a bit down or sad lately, stop to pray and check what you have been watching, looking at, or listening to—and change your input if you need to! You’ll feel so much better.



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

Hearing and reading God's Word, and looking at nature are wonderful ways to perk up and feel refreshed.

Take good care of yourself, because God made you, and He wants you to be happy and healthy, filled with His love and Spirit!



12.) Diligence and Faithfulness

The Bible talks a lot about diligence. Diligence means taking time to do things the right way and to do them well. It means putting your whole heart into whatever you are asked to do.

Faithfulness means that if you are given a task, like clearing the table after dinner or making your bed, that you just go and do it when it's time. You don't wait for mummy or daddy to remind you. You just go and do it.

Jesus didn't just sit around all the time, waiting for someone to tell Him what to do. He said His Father is always working, and so He, too, works to help us every day. (John 5:17)



Photo by Chariane Quille

If we love Jesus, we'll want to be like Him. We can look to His example when He was on Earth. He was whole-hearted and faithful in everything He did.

He was faithful doing carpentry work with His earthly father for many years, and helped to care for his brothers and sisters too, since He was the oldest.

He was faithful to do everything that His heavenly Father told Him also. Someday we're all going to Heaven to meet Jesus.

Won't it be nice to hear Him say,
"Well done! You're a good and faithful servant!"



13.) Kindness

When we let others have the first pick, or choice of something new, even if it means letting them have the one we wanted, that's called preferring others.

Sometimes it will be so hard to let someone else have the first turn when we really want to be first! But you know, every time you do something hard like that, there's a little more room in your heart for Jesus' love to grow.

Jesus knows it's hard to prefer others and let them have the biggest piece or the first choice. It was just as hard for Him when He was on Earth.

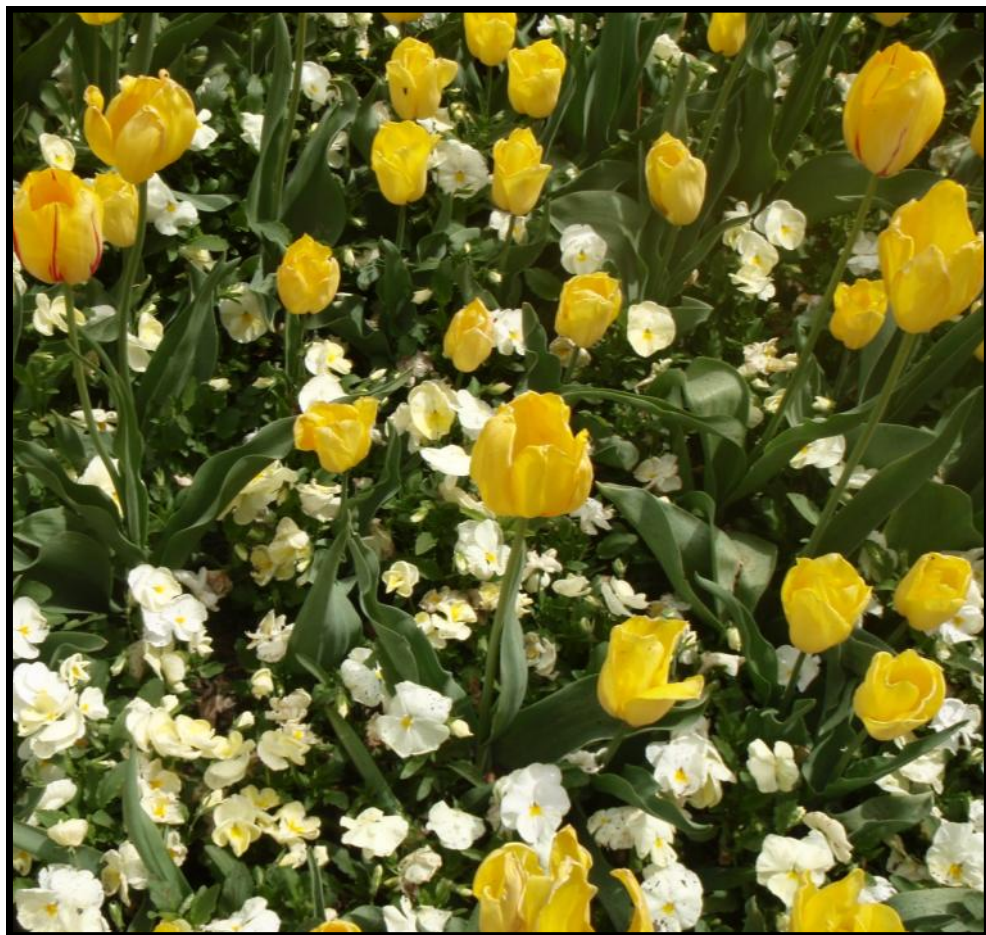


Photo by Chariane Quille

That's why He understands and He loves us so much when we do hard things like that.

In fact, it's almost like He gives us a big hug whenever we are kind and considerate like that. It sure is nice getting big daddy-hugs from Jesus!

Every time you are kind and considerate to others, you're making room in your heart for Jesus' love to grow. And it'll grow and grow until it just pops out and overflows everywhere, and you'll be a little channel of Jesus' love to others.

Jesus needs little channels or little pipes to pour His love through. Will you let Him use you?



14.) Courtesy

Everyone talks about good manners and how important they are. Maybe you don't see why good manners are so important. But if you are polite and say "please" when you ask for something, people will enjoy answering your request.

They will know you tried to be kind and considerate when you asked; you weren't being demanding or pushy. If you are polite and respectful, people will respond that way to you, too.

It's like an echo. Have you ever heard an echo? You call out something and you hear the echo repeating whatever you said. If you shout something loud and mean, the echo will answer back the same way.



Photo by Chariane Quille

If you call out something friendly and lovingly, the echo will repeat the same words, in the same way.

This is an example of how it is in your interaction with others as well. If you talk gently, politely and respectfully to others, that is how they will answer you.

Everyone likes to be treated that way and having good manners is part of showing love. What you give to others always comes back to you. Just like the echo!



15.) Thinking Well of Others

Whenever you find yourself getting critical or thinking not such good thoughts about others, stop yourself.

Pretend that an alarm went off in your head or you're seeing a flashing red light on the road. That's a danger signal like you see sometimes when you're driving in the car. It means to stop and proceed with caution.

Spiritually, it means to stop thinking bad thoughts and take time to think about something good about that person.

The Bible says, that whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and are giving a good report about a situation, and are words of praise, to think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)



Photo by Chariane Quille

If we're not thinking positive, loving thoughts about others, then we are definitely on the wrong road!

Just like the flashing red light means it's time to stop and proceed with caution, we can stop and make sure we're on the right road, going God's way and thinking His Heavenly thoughts about others.



16.) Wise or Foolish

Jesus once told a story about a wise man and a foolish man. The wise man was the one who built his house on a rock. That's a good way to build because then your house has a strong foundation.

The foolish man built his house on sand, and the rains and the storms came and washed his house all away. The house had no foundation so it was soon gone.

Have you ever built a sandcastle at the beach? It wasn't long before the waves came and washed it all away and there was nothing left of it. That's just how it is when we build our lives on man's knowledge or the wisdom of the world, instead of building on the Rock, Jesus Christ.



Photo by Duane Hanes

Real wisdom is, knowing that we're all just like little sheep that need a shepherd to teach us and show us the way.

Real wisdom is following Jesus and obeying Him and putting His Words into effect in our lives. Now that is really being wise!

Have you ever made a sudden decision and chose to just do whatever you thought of, and then found out that it really wasn't such a good idea?

It's good to pause and pray and before doing something—especially if it's something that has just popped into your mind.

That way you can stay safer, and make sure you are doing the kinds of things that will make you and Jesus the happiest.



Photo by Chariane Quille

Sometimes what pops into your head is a word or a song or something you heard on a video. Not everything you will ever hear will be good and kind, positive and uplifting, and have a good effect on you and others.

You can show that you are wise, and that you are growing up, by stopping yourself from saying things that are silly or hurtful, or untrue.

Words will have an effect on you and others, and it will make a big difference in your interaction with others, and whether others enjoy having you around.

So, a word to the wise: Pause before speaking, and say only the things that you know are good, true, kind, necessary and helpful. Then your words will be like building blocks that create a good environment to live in.