

A Gift of Faith Book

17

Part 1

HELPFUL HINTS

—BOOK 2—

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Helpful Hints

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Part 1

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Photo by Naomi

24.) Appreciation and Encouragement

Giving appreciation and encouragement are some of the ways we can show Jesus' love to others. By taking time to see the good in others and the nice things they do, we are letting people know that we appreciate them. It makes them feel happy and loved.

It doesn't have to be a real big thing. Just giving a hug or a friendly smile can encourage people so much.

If you have the time to make a card for someone who's sick, that's another way you can be encouraging. Or if someone makes a nice meal, or puts a lot of effort into doing something, you can encourage them and thank them for it.



Photo by M. McNally

Giving encouragement and appreciation is one way we can be like Jesus. Jesus is kind, patient and loving with people.

If we ask Jesus, He can help us be more aware of people we can encourage or appreciate. It just takes a little bit of time and love to make someone else's day!



Photo by Naomi

25.) Carefulness and Caution

Sometimes things go wrong or we have an accident because we're not careful enough. How many times have you heard your mummy say,

“Be careful!”?

It's because she knows that taking time to be careful and going slow can save you a lot of trouble or can keep you from having an accident.

Sometimes you feel like rushing to be first in line or running through the house to get somewhere fast. But it's important to ask Jesus to help you remember to go slow.

It's better to get there a little later and arrive safe and sound than to have an accident on the way. Go slow and you'll get there quicker! When things go wrong and we wonder why, often it's because we weren't careful and prayerful.



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

There are many accidents and troubles that can be prevented if we make sure we pray as we go; pray before we play; pray for a good and safe day; pray for wise ideas of things to try, and pray for protection from other things that might harm us. This is to ask Jesus to do the part that we can't do, and to do the miracles of keeping us safe.

However, we have to do our part too. It's not enough to be prayerful, if we aren't also careful. We have to give Jesus a little cooperation if we want His help in staying safe and protected. So let's do our best to be careful and cautious, to look around and notice things that might be dangerous, or people that might need care, and take time to listen to Jesus in case there is something He wants to tell us or warn us of. He can see everything, and He knows what to do to keep us safe.



Photo by Naomi

26.) Cheerfulness

Being cheerful is like letting a little ray of sunshine in a room. Nobody likes to sit in a dark and gloomy room, or be around grumpy, grumbling people. But everyone sure brightens up when they're around someone who's cheerful and happy.

Even if you don't always feel like it, you can try to be cheerful—even if just to make others feel glad! People need your encouragement and cheerfulness.

A funny thing is, when you try to be cheerful for others' sake, just to make them feel happy—even when you don't feel like it—pretty soon you actually start feeling cheerful and happy inside too!



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

The more time we spend with Jesus and read His Word, the more we'll find things to be cheerful about.

We'll have more of His love and we'll notice and remember more things to be positive about. We'll have more happiness and thankfulness in our hearts and that'll make it easy to be cheerful.



Photo by Naomi

27.) Comparing

It's easy to want what you see others get—especially if it's something you've been wishing for, for a long time. But if you can learn to change your way of looking at things you'll be much happier.

Try not to look around at everything while imagining how nice it would be if it was yours!

Or just wishing that special activity, or event, or toy, or treat was being enjoyed by you, instead of the one who got to have it. Why not try something new!

Realise that everyone has difficult things in their life, and be glad that they have something now that seems to be making them a bit happier. Your turn will come too, don't worry.



Photo by M. McNally

One day you'll get just the thing you were hoping for. It's a bit like see-saw or teeter-totter and one person goes up while the other person goes down, then it switches again. Each person on it helps the other one to have a chance to go up.

In life it can be the same way. Sometimes it's your turn to help someone have a great and fun day, and to let them enjoy the best things, and to be happy that they are having a good time. Then another time it will be your chance, and others will help to make things extra special for you.

But when you grumble that it seems someone else is getting all the good things, and you get sad when someone tells you about a fun event or special gift they got, soon people will choose not to talk with you about things that are special, because it seems to make you feel sad.



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

You will have more fun and enjoy more friends if you are truly happy when it's others' turns to finally enjoy something. It shows love, and it shows faith that you know that Jesus hasn't forgotten about what is important to you.

He knows what you need and what you want, and He'll work good things out for you too—you just need a bit of patience to wait your turn.

There is a saying:

“Good things come to those that wait.”



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

28.) Thoughts

Your mind is like a house—it needs to be kept safe and strong. Have you ever seen a crack in a wall where ants came in and then crawled all over the food? Or a window screen with a tear, and flies and mosquitoes came through it?

You have to guard your mind from unpleasant, angry, foolish, ugly, proud, bothersome thoughts and bad ideas.

If you let those things into your mind and you keep thinking about them, it's like having a crack in your spiritual house, and those kinds of thoughts will bother you, take away your joy, and make you feel weak and sad.



Photo by M. McNally

Those who are good caretakers of their heart, mind, and spirit will only allow themselves to think about things that are good, lovely, true, honest, happy, helpful, pleasant, joyful, loving, forgiving, and faith-building. These kinds of thoughts will make you a strong, happy, healthy, kind, helpful and wise person.

Your mind is kind of like a machine. You can use it to figure things out, or to invent things, or to think up solutions. You can put it to good use and let it work for you, or it can be a place for Jesus to show you His ideas and tell you His Words.

Be a good guardian of your thoughts. What you think about will affect you and your life, and those around you too. Choose positive and good thoughts and you'll feel so much happier!



Photo by Naomi

29.) Helping

Did you know that there isn't anyone on Earth that can do everything completely on their own? Everyone needs help from others for something.

Sometimes it's nice to be able to get something done all on your own. But did you know that it's also nice to feel needed and to feel that someone appreciates your help?

When something you are trying to do is just a bit too hard for you, and with the help of someone else it could go much more quickly go much more quickly, then asking for someone's help might make them glad you asked.

It can make people feel special that you trust them and know they are good at doing something.

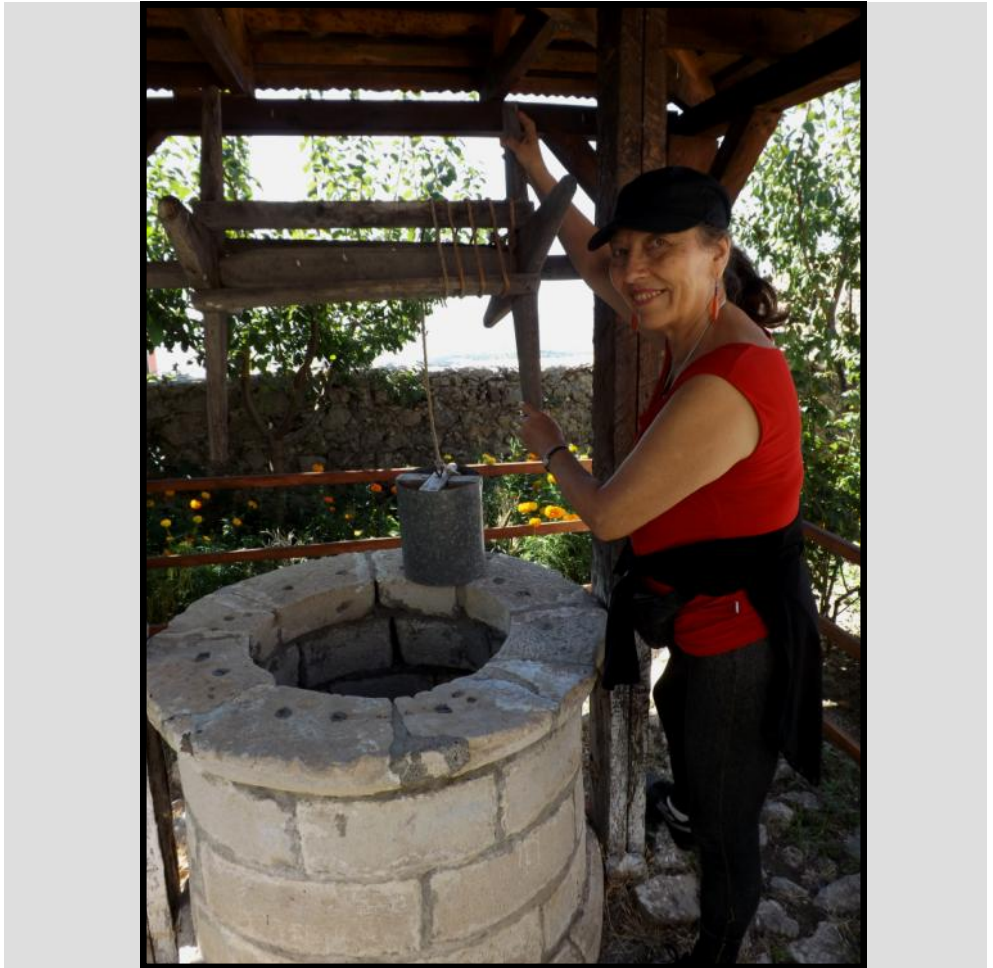


Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

Knowing that you often need others to help you accomplish or finish the things that you want to do, can help you to be a willing worker when others need and depend on you too.

You remember how good it feels to get the help you need, and therefore you are able to make things easier for others.



Photo by Naomi

30.) Patience

Have you ever seen a little tree that is just beginning to grow? It still has a long way to go before it reaches its full height, or until it bears fruit. What if the sapling didn't want to grow anymore because it took too long, and wished the wind didn't feel so strong blowing on it? It would never be tall or strong or bear fruit.

Sometimes it takes a long time until you are able to do something. Learning something new can take a lot of patience and perseverance too.

When things are difficult for you, and you wish everything would be nice and easy right then, or you would be able to have what you want real soon, remember the young tree.



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

With faith and patience you can have the endurance to keep on going, trying, and waiting, until the time is right to get to do what you are wishing for, or for things to get better again.

Here are some ideas that can make things easier for you, when you need more patience:

--Take a relaxing breath, and think of a few things that you are glad that you have now—things you might not have later on.

--Don't give up or get all upset.

--Pray for Jesus to take away from you the feelings of frustration, and to help you have patience and calmness.



Photos by Jon Berg

31.) Affection

Did you know that a baby that is held in its mother's and father's arms and given lots of cuddles and hugs will grow fast and healthy, and also be happier?

Jesus made our bodies to need hugs and to need to feel that others care about us. When you give a hug to someone that needs the encouragement, it cheers their heart and even makes them feel better and healthier.

It's not just babies that need touches of kindness and to be shown loving care, but everyone needs it! Find out what makes someone feel that you love and care about them—whether it's with a pat on their back telling them they did a good job, or a smile and wave when you see them, or a nice friendly hug, or holding their hand and thanking them for their help.



Photo by Curtis Peter van Gorder

Showing kindness through affection, hugs, and reaching out to encourage others in tangible ways—not just in words—makes everyone feel better, act more patiently, and grow healthy and strong.

God is love, and He created us to be a bit like Him, so when we act in love and receive love and affection, He makes things to flourish in our lives, and it even makes us grow! That's the way He made it to be!



Photo by Naomi

32.) Good Manners

When people notice that someone is trying to say and do things in polite, kind, and thoughtful ways, in order to make it pleasant for those around them, it makes others happy.

When you find out that someone is thinking more about you than about themselves, and they care about how you feel and if you are happy, it can make you feel real nice inside. It then makes you want to do things in nice ways for others too, and soon your day, and the situation around you, just gets better and filled with more joy.

It's easy to see when someone is only thinking about themselves, because they seem to forget to do those kind little things called "good manners", which could be expressed as: "nice ways of doing things".



Photo by M. McNally

But those that try to act in pleasant ways, making sure that others get the best things and first choice, and speak politely and patiently to others, and show their appreciation and gratitude, will find they are actually happier in the end.

The way we treat others is often how we will be treated as well. Show patience and kindness to others, and you'll be so glad you did.