



St. Francis

1181-1226

Springs of Peace

Springs of peace, when conflict heightens

Thine uplifted eye shall see,

Peace that strengthens calms, and brightens,

Peace itself a victory.

Springs of comfort strangely springing

Through the bitter wells of woe,

Founts of hidden gladness, bringing

Joy that earth can ne'er bestow

-- Frances Ridley Havergal

The King of Love

The King of Love my Shepherd is

Whose goodness faileth never,

I nothing lack if I am His

And He is mine for ever.

Where streams of living waters flow,

My ransomed soul He leadeth,

And where the verdant pastures grow

With food celestial feedeth

-- Frances Ridley Havergal

Matthew 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Matthew 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Matthew 6:28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Matthew 6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

(Selections from book: The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi, by Brother Ugolino)

OF BROTHER BERNARD OF QUINTAVALLE, THE FIRST COMPANION OF ST FRANCIS

The first companion of St Francis was Brother Bernard of Assisi, who was converted in the following way:

St Francis had not yet taken the religious habit, though he had renounced the world ... many looked upon him as one out of his mind. He was scoffed at as a madman, was rejected and despised by his relations and by strangers, who threw stones and mud at him when he passed; yet he went on his way, accepting these insults as patiently as if he had been deaf and dumb.

Then Bernard of Assisi, one of the richest and most learned nobles of the city, began to consider deeply the conduct of St Francis; how utterly he despised the world, how patiently he suffered injuries, and how his faith remained firm, though he had been for two years an object of contempt and rejected by all.

He began to think and say within himself, "It is evident that this brother must have received great graces from God"; and so resolved to invite him to sup and to sleep in his house.

St Francis having accepted the invitation, Bernard, who was resolved to contemplate the sanctity of his guest, ordered a bed to be prepared for him in his own room, where a lamp burned all night.

St Francis, thinking that Bernard was really fast asleep, got up and began to pray. Raising his hands and eyes to heaven, he exclaimed with great devotion and fervour, "My God! my God!" at the same time weeping bitterly; and thus he remained on his knees all night, repeating with great love and fervour the words, "My God! my God!"

And this he did because, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he contemplated and admired the divine majesty of God, who deigned to take pity on the perishing world, and to save not only the soul of Francis, his poor little one, but those

of many others also through his means. For, being enlightened by the Holy Ghost, he foresaw the great things which God would deign to accomplish through him and through his Order; and considering his insufficiency and unworthiness, he prayed and called upon the Lord, through his power and wisdom, to supply, help and accomplish that which of himself he could not do.

Then Bernard, seeing by the light of the lamp the devout actions of St Francis and the expression of his countenance, and devoutly considering the words he uttered, was touched by the Holy Spirit, and resolved to change his life.

Next morning, therefore, he called St Francis, and thus addressed him: "Brother Francis, I am disposed in heart wholly to leave the world, and to obey thee in all things as thou shalt command me."

At these words, St Francis rejoiced in spirit and said, "Bernard, a resolution such as thou speakest of is so difficult and so great an act, that we must take counsel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and pray to him that he may be pleased to show us what is his will, and may teach us to follow it. Let us then go together to the Bishop's palace, where we shall find a good priest who will say Mass for us. We will then remain in prayer till the third hour, imploring the Lord to point out to us the way he wishes us to select, and to this intent we will open the Missal three times."

And when Bernard answered that he was well pleased with this proposal, they set out together, heard Mass, and after they had remained in prayer till the time fixed, the priest, at the request of St Francis, took up Missal, then, having made the sign of the holy cross, he opened it three times, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The first place which he lit upon was at the answer of Christ to the young man who asked of him the way to perfection: If thou wilt be

perfect, go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow me.

The second time he opened at the words which the Saviour addressed to the Apostles when he sent them forth to preach the Word of Truth:

Take nothing with you for your journey: neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money; wishing to teach them thereby to commit the care of their lives to him, and give all their thoughts to the preaching of the Holy Gospel.

When the Missal was opened a third time they came upon these words: If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

See later in this mag for another story.

Then St Francis, turning to Bernard, said: "This is the advice that the Lord has given us; go and do as thou hast heard; and blessed be the Lord Jesus Christ who has pointed out to thee the way of his angelic life."

Upon this, Bernard went and sold all that he had. Now he was very rich, and with great joy he distributed his wealth to widows, to orphans, to prisoners, to monasteries, to hospitals, and to pilgrims, in all which St Francis assisted him with prudence and fidelity.

He was the first [in the order] who had abandoned the world, giving all he possessed to the poor of Christ, keeping back nothing for himself; and practising evangelical poverty, placing himself in the arms of the Crucified, whom may we all bless eternally. Amen.

PRAISE

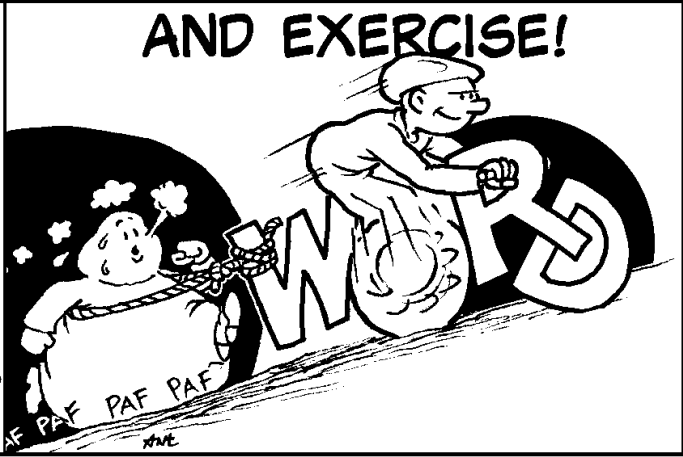
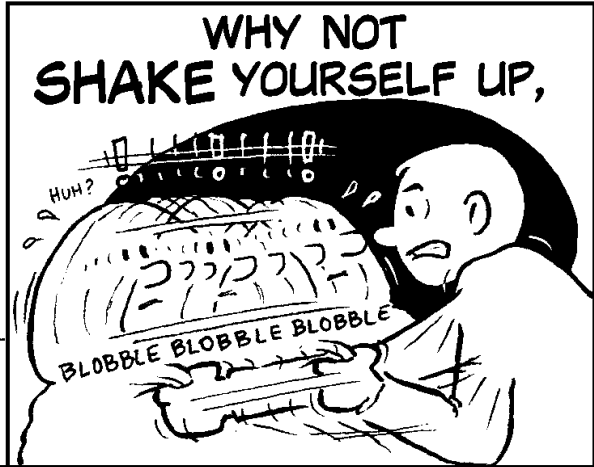
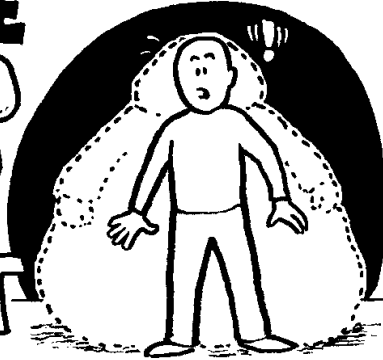
I worship You, O Lord, my God, in heart, in mind and in spirit. I raise my heart to You in prayer, in praise and in thanksgiving. For You are the giver of all things, and You are all things to me.

You are my Father, the mighty God, the giver of life and of strength; He that causes the sun to rise, the light to shine, the night to come; He that creates life, the maker of all things. And You are like a mother, the comforter, who holds me in her arms, who consoles me in my sadness, who warms me with her love, who feeds me at her breast. And You are my Lord, who loves me, who kisses and caresses, who protects and who provides. And together You are one--one God, complete, supplying my all.

I praise You and I thank You. I lay my heart bare before You in praise and honour and glory and thanksgiving. For I am as the dust of the earth. I am as nothing before You, the God of all things. By You I have life, I have love, I have my all. All things come from Your hand--all love, all peace, all contentment, all lessons. What I am and what I will become is within Your hands. So I praise You and I honour You.

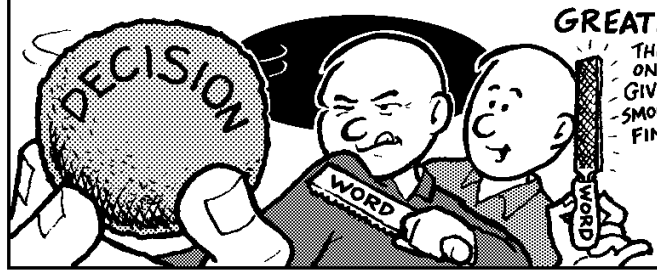


**WHY BE
FAT
IN
SPIRIT?**



**HERE'S ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF GODLY COUNSEL
(IN ADDITION TO HEARING FROM ME PERSONALLY):**

COUNSEL MAKES FOR MORE WELL-ROUNDED DECISIONS!



GREAT!
THIS ONE GIVES A SMOOTHER FINISH!

**PERSONAL DECISIONS ARE YOURS
AND YOURS ALONE TO MAKE.
BUT GETTING COUNSEL FROM
EARTHLY SHEPHERDS CAN BE A
BIG HELP IN HELPING YOU PREPARE
TO MAKE THOSE DECISIONS!**

From Jesus With Love

Once upon a time there was a man who owned great riches, and as he was walking, he saw a glorious pearl of great price. The man said in his heart at that moment, "I must have that pearl!" And to buy it, he sold all that he had, all of his possessions, that he might obtain that precious possession.

Thus you are to Me. You are that pearl of great price that I saw, and I determined I would leave everything, I would leave My throne in Heaven and come to Earth, that I might have you, that you might be Mine. For this reason I sacrificed everything that I had, that I might obtain you.

Master's Arts

Holy Spirit Empowerment— Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit

The Master says:

"I can help you in all the ways you need it—and one way is through giving you a dose of the Spirit of God, right into your own spirit. It's like the Spirit of God becomes one with yours, and it makes it glow and shine brightly, and empowers you. Your weak spirit can't do much until God's Holy Spirit comes and joins you, lives in you. With your spirit and God's Spirit joined together, you are capable of doing the seemingly impossible. For with God—when you are with God, together as one—nothing is impossible.

"You can tell when you need more filling of the Spirit of God when problems and troubles seem too big for you, and you feel so incapable of doing anything good at all. Call for the Holy Spirit to fill you to overflowing and empower you to meet any need or tackle any crisis or face any trouble—and come out of it with a victory to praise God for."

LAMBIBITS

(Lessons, anecdotes, messages, Bible-based beliefs, inspirational talks, and sayings.)

Things kept going strong under the disciples who sat at Jesus' feet, but then things began to change with their disciples who had never seen Jesus!-- And it only took about two generations to do it.

The Church always has to be called out (drop out)--always has to be separated! As soon as the old group grows stale and stagnates, He always has to bring along some new group--the new dropouts!

It's like someone has said, "God has no grand-children! There's no such thing as second generation Christians! Every new generation either has to drop out or cop out--one or the other; bring forth new buds, or die on the vine and become dead!"

The Franciscans began to go astray even before St. Francis was dead! He died of a broken heart, because he finally realised that God had said, "Build My Church" of people, instead of buildings! Nevertheless, he had done a great job leading a group of dropouts who took vows of poverty and lived by faith. He actually did a good work, even though his followers occupied their lives by just building and repairing chapels, etc!

In a way, just the fact that he did gain new disciples, did build a new Church of "living stones": The Franciscan Order! But he wasn't even dead yet before they began to get rich and fat and powerful and ceased to live like he had originally led them!

There is no man nor woman, movement or denomination, building or government, civilisation or empire, that has not grown too old to be useful--that has not had to pass away to bring forth the new! It's God plan to preserve life! He has to keep recreating it! Nobody lives forever! No building or government of man has ever been eternal!

Only the Kingdom of God is everlasting! God Himself had to wipe out His own creation in the flood to purge the world so it would live long enough to finish His Plan--or He would have had to destroy it long ago--and one of these days, He will have to destroy it! The old earth must pass away, that we may have the New Heaven and the New Earth, and the New City, built by God. --Pastor David

Inspiring True Stories from History: Perfectly Tranquil

There is no fear in Love; perfect love casts out fear. (1 John 4:18)

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (Isaiah 41:10)

Love and fear are opposites. Those that love Jesus with all their heart and have rested their future and life with Him, find a peace that none can explain nor take away from them. But if we, like Peter who wished to walk on the stormy waves to see Jesus, get our eyes on the waves of our troubles, may feel the grip of fear. The solution and secret is found in the words of this passage, “Thou (Lord) wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusted in thee,” (Isaiah 26:3). We need our mind stable and firm on Jesus—His love, His unlimited ability to help us, His thoughts and Words, and trust that He sees and knows all, and will make everything work out for good for us in the end.

Some fears are somewhat imaginary or mental or come from the invisible spiritual side. Other fears are caused by real events or possibilities. But whatever incites fear or worry or distress in our hearts, God is still in control. He still loves us, and is able to help bring us through the situation for the better. We can have peace as we teamwork with Jesus, looking to Him for His guidance, as we face danger or unwanted struggles.

Fear, like a disease, can be contagious. It’s good to realize this—both so you can put a stop to it before it sweeps others up along with you into its tormenting control, and so that you can guard against it when others’ fears are beginning to affect you. If the fearful disposition of those around you is beginning to make you feel the same, it’s not because your senses and wit are validating it and telling you the cause of fear is worth the worry; it is simply because it’s a contagious thing—but only if you don’t hoist up your spiritual immune system.

God’s Word, His promises, His voice to You right at that moment, the truth and reality as God sees it, and the knowledge of God’s love for you will shield you aplenty against the virus of fear. “There is no fear in love” and “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 18).

The lady who penned the following thoughts and events in her life, found the way to total peace of heart and mind, and freedom from fear. She first of all chose to be full surrendered to the Lord, wanting her life to hold only that which would please Jesus most; her love for Jesus made her desire this. Then, just like a loving couple talks to each other as they are on a journey, so did she wish to be in close and constant communication with the Lord, through every step of her life’s way, while doing His will. She knew Jesus loved her eternally and immeasurably, and this gave her peace and faith that because she belonged to Him who treasured her; He could see and care about all that befell her and would only allow that which was for her good.

(From: “The Autobiography of Madame Guyon” by Jeanne Marie Bouvier de La Motte Guyon, written in the 1600’s.)

“We met with accidents in this journey, sufficient to have terrified anyone. ...yet my resignation to God was so strong, that I passed fearless, even where there was apparently no possibility of escape. At one time we got into a narrow pass, and did not perceive, until we were too far advanced to draw back, that the road was undermined by the river Loire, which ran beneath, and the banks had fallen in; so that in some places the footmen were obliged to support one side of the carriage. All those around me were terrified to the highest degree, yet God kept me perfectly tranquil.”

“Although we had much more danger on the road than when going, I had no thought about myself, but all about my husband. Seeing the coach overturning, I said, ‘Fear not, it is on my side that it falls; it will not hurt you.’ I believe, had all perished, I should not have been moved. My peace was so profound that nothing could shake it.”

“I had nothing to wish for, nor yet to be afraid of. Everywhere I found my proper center, because everywhere I found God. My heart could then desire nothing but what it had. This disposition extinguished all its desires; and I sometimes said to myself, ‘What wantest thou? What fearest thou?’ I was surprised to find upon trial that I had nothing to fear. Every place I was in was my proper place.”

“My disposition at this time was a continual prayer, without knowing it to be such. The presence of God was so plentifully given that it seemed to be more in me than my very self. The sensibility thereof was so powerful, so penetrating, it seemed to me irresistible. Love took from me all liberty of my own. ... My strong love to the will of God would have rendered everything easy to me. The property of this prayer was to give a great love to the order of God, with so sublime and perfect a reliance on Him, as to fear nothing, whether danger, thunders, spirits, or death.”

“One day reflecting humanly on this undertaking of mine, I found my faith staggering, weakened with a fear lest I were under a mistake, which slavish fear was increased by an ecclesiastic at our house, who told me it was a rash and ill-advised design. Being a little discouraged, I opened the Bible, and met with this passage in Isaiah,

‘Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. I will help thee saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel.’ (Isaiah 61:14) and near it, ‘Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.’ (Isaiah 43:1-2)”

HOW ST FRANCIS TAMED THE WILD DOVES

A certain young man having caught one day a great number of doves, as he was to sell them he met St Francis, who always felt a great compassion for such gentle animals; and, looking at the doves with eyes of pity, he said to the young man: "O good man, I entreat thee to give me those harmless birds, emblems in Scripture of humble, pure, and faithful souls."

And the young man, inspired by God, immediately gave them to St Francis, who, placing them in his bosom, addressed them thus sweetly:

"O my little sisters the doves, so simple, so innocent, and so chaste, why did you allow yourselves to be caught? I will save you from death, and make your nests, that you may increase and multiply, according to the command of God."

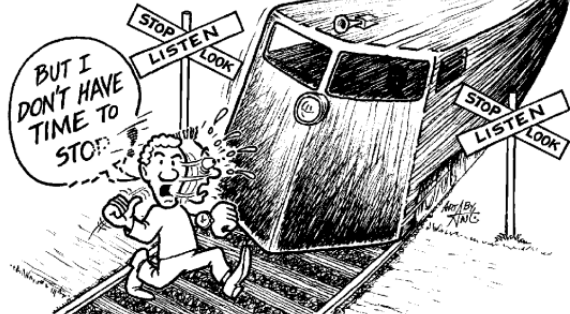
Then St Francis made nests for them all, and they began to lay their eggs and hatch them in presence of the brethren, and were as familiar and as tame with St Francis and the friars as if they had been hens brought up amongst them, nor did they ever go away until St Francis had given them his blessing.

Then said St Francis to the young man who had given them to him:

"My son, thou shalt become a friar in this Order; and shalt serve most fervently the Lord Jesus Christ"; and so it came to pass, for the young man became a friar, and lived in the Order in great holiness.

(From "Little Flowers of St Francis", by Brother Ugolino)

STOP! LOOK! & LISTEN!



IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW WELL YOU KNOW THE BIBLE OR HOW MANY SPIRITUAL GIFTS YOU HAVE. IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY OR KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE LORD ALL THE TIME, -- YOU'RE IN TROUBLE!

<p>THE LORD SPEAKS IN A STILL, SMALL, BUT VERY DEFINITE, VERY FIRM, VERY LOVING VOICE.</p>	<p>BUT IF YOU'RE PRAYING SO LOUD AND MAKING SO MUCH NOISE THAT YOU CAN'T EVEN HEAR GOD, THEN THERE'S REALLY NOT MUCH POINT IN PRAYING!</p>
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"IN QUIETNESS AND IN CONFIDENCE SHALL BE YOUR STRENGTH." (ISAIAH 30:15)
"CONFIDENCE" MEANS **FAITH!**

<p>THE VERY FACT THAT YOU KEEP QUIET SHOWS YOU'RE EXPECTING GOD TO DO SOMETHING AND NOT TRYING TO DO IT YOURSELF!</p>	<p>YOU MAY HAVE TO KEEP WORKING BUT YOUR ATTITUDE AND SPIRIT ARE CALM.</p>
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SOMETIMES YOU **CAN'T** GET QUIET!--YOU'VE GOT TO PRAY AS YOU GO!

<p>WHICH WAY NEXT LORD?!</p>	<p>THANK YOU, JESUS!</p>
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IT'S LIKE THINKING ON YOUR FEET!

<p>BUT SOME PEOPLE HAVE TO BE IN MOTION--DOING SOMETHING ALL THE TIME!</p>	<p>THEY ARE TERRIFIED OF THE QUIET AND STILLNESS BECAUSE THEY KNOW THE VOICE OF GOD MIGHT COME THROUGH!</p>	<p>SO THE DEVIL KEEPS THEIR MINDS, EYES AND EARS FILLED WITH VIOLENT SIGHTS AND SOUNDS!</p>
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THEY DON'T WANT TO THINK!

THAT'S WHY THEY HAVE SO MANY "AMUSEMENTS". THAT WORD MEANS "AWAY FROM THINKING"

IF YOU LIVE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL CONFUSION, YOU'LL DEVELOP A HARDNESS AGAINST THE VOICE OF GOD, BECAUSE TO HEAR HIM YOU HAVE TO BLOCK OUT ALL THE NOISES AROUND YOU!

THE WORLD IS ALWAYS IN A HURRY! THAT'S THE DEVIL'S OWN PLAN: "SPEED UP THE WORLD! ANYTHING TO MAKE EVERYTHING MOVE FASTER!" AND THE RESULT IS A WORLD HELL-BENT FOR DESTRUCTION!

WARNING SIGNS LIKE THIS ARE POSTED AT DANGEROUS PLACES, SUCH AS RAILROAD CROSSINGS--PLACES OF CRISIS WHERE THERE IS AN INTERRUPTION OF YOUR ROUTINE, YOUR WAY, --OTHERWISE YOU MIGHT GET HIT BY A TRAIN!

BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME! HERE'S A QUIZ:

WHICH IS EASIER??

- 1 TRY TO BEAT THE TRAIN.
- 2 PLOW THROUGH THE TRAIN.
- 3 JUMP OVER THE TRAIN.
- 4 STOP AND WATCH IT GO BY!

(HELPFUL HINT: THE CORRECT ANSWER IS NUMBER 4!)

TRYING TO FORCE THE SITUATION AND PUSH YOUR WAY THROUGH JUST WON'T WORK!

REMEMBER: HURRY IS A LACK OF FAITH AND IS OF THE DEVIL! IF YOU'RE RUSHING AROUND, FRETTING AND IMPATIENT, YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ON THE LORD FOR THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS!

ONE OF THE MAIN PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN MAKING A DECISION IS THIS:

<p>DON'T START BY TRYING TO REASON IT OUT.</p>	<p>OR TALKING IT OVER WITH OTHERS.</p>	<p>PRAY!</p>
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WHEN YOU HAVE LEARNED TO STOP, LOOK, LISTEN AND WAIT IN COMMUNION WITH HIM UNTIL YOU GET HIS ANSWERS, YOU WILL HAVE LEARNED HOW TO MAKE DECISIONS AND TO TRULY FOLLOW GOD!

IT'S SIMPLE TO DO! IF YOU'VE NEVER DONE IT BEFORE, YOU CAN START LIKE THIS: PICTURE JESUS IN YOUR MIND'S EYE AND SAY TO HIM, "JESUS, I WANT TO BE ABLE TO HEAR YOU SPEAKING TO ME! FORGIVE ME FOR MY SHORTCOMINGS AND SINS AND COME INTO MY HEART AND LIFE: AND LET ME HEAR YOU CLEARLY WHEN I STOP AND LISTEN TO YOU! AMEN."

AFTER YOU SAY THAT TO HIM, **CONTINUE TO LISTEN!** YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT THE THINGS YOU WILL HEAR! --HAPPY LISTENING!

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Thoughts and True Stories

A colporteur traveling in Bohemia through a Roman Catholic district was surprised to come upon a locksmith who knew the Bible well. He learned that seventeen years before, a priest had gathered all the copies of the Bible together and made a bonfire of them. A gust of wind carried away two burning pieces out of the bonfire, which the locksmith had picked up and read. The first words that caught his eyes were, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." So impressed was he that he and his father saved a whole Bible out of the burning, and became Bible readers and Bible students.

While contending with the manifold problems of geography and climate in the building of the Panama Canal, Colonel George Washington Goethals had to endure the carping criticism of countless busybodies back home who freely predicted that he would never complete his great task. But the resolute builder pressed steadily forward in his work, and said nothing.

"Aren't you going to answer your critics?" a subordinate inquired.

"In time," Goethals replied.

"How?"

The great engineer smiled. "With the canal," he replied.

We usually admire the other fellow more after we have tried to do his job.

Anecdotes from Dwight L. Moody

-- When I was a little boy I used to try and catch my own shadow. I don't know whether any of you have ever been so foolish as that or not. I could not see why the shadow always kept ahead of me. Once I happened to be racing with my face to the sun and I looked over my head and saw my shadow coming back of me, and it kept behind me all the way. It is the same with the Sun of Righteousness. Peace and joy will go with you while you go with your face toward Him.

-- There are nine different qualities--peace, gentleness, long-suffering, hope, patience, charity, etc., but you can sum them all into one, and you have love. I saw something in writing the other day bearing upon the subject which I just took a copy of: "The fruit of the Spirit is in just one word--love. Joy is love exalted; peace is love in repose, long-suffering is love enduring, gentleness is love in society, goodness is love in action, faith is love on the battle field, meekness is love in school, and temperance is love in training. And so you can say that the fruit is all expressed by one word--love."

Rowland Hill tells a good story of a rich man and a poor man in his congregation. The rich man desired to do an act of benevolence, and so he sent a sum of money to a friend to be given to this poor man as he thought best. The friend, just sent him five pounds, and said in the note: "This is thine; use it wisely; there is more to follow." After a while he sent another five pounds and said, "more to follow." Again and again, he sent the money to the poor man, always with the cheering words, "more to follow." So it is with the wonderful grace of God. There is always "more to follow."

