

# Feeding the Roots

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- [ 0 : 00 ] In the parable of the solar, there is reference to that seed which, because it falls on soil and is thin and has no root, it doesn't last when it springs up.
- And it's been pointed out, of course, by some devotional writers and commentators that it is the root that a Christian must have. It must go deep into whatever kind of soil you may have, whether it's rocky and has to work its way in amongst the rocks and tortuously wind itself round the clods and get deeper and further into the earth so that when whatever it is is pooled, it doesn't just come up right away, it is rooted and well provided for in the depth of the ground.
- But, of course, the work of the roots is unseen. It is that which is under the earth. It is that which begins to happen before even one begins to see outward growth or fruit.
- And in many ways, even when there is evidence of growth or a shooting forth above the soil, it is only because there is root begun to go down within the soil.
- And, in a sense, our Christian life is like that. The private work that we do in terms of our relationship with the Lord is that which will root us.
- [ 1 : 28 ] What we do publicly in the services of the Lord's house, what we attend upon midweek or the Lord's day, is really just at the tip of the iceberg.
- It's just a tiny little green shoot above the soil. But the strength of our faith will depend on the strength of our relationship with the Lord when we're not in church, when we're not at the prayer meeting, when we're not there on the Lord's day.
- It's all the other hours and days of the week when that relationship with the Lord must also be nurtured. And it is that nurturing of the root.
- In other words, our private life with the Lord, our times of prayer, our nurturing of that relationship that I'd like us to look at briefly tonight. Came to pass as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.
- Now, we could speculate as to who the one disciple was. It might have been helpful if Luke had named him, but perhaps if he had, then we might have said, oh yes, this was the spiritual one, because he's the one that asked about prayer.
- [ 2 : 43 ] The point is not who did he ask him. The point is that the disciples felt themselves in need of teaching, and that Jesus was ready to provide that. Teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.
- We should also recognise that although we think in terms of Jesus' prayer life as something that he did personally, privately and alone, away from everybody else, which a lot of the time he did, he also, remember, must have had times when his disciples were in one place and he said, look, I'm going to pray over there, so just give us a wee while and I need peace to pray over there.
- We saw on the Lord's Day evening, of course, in Gethsemane, how Jesus said, when he came to Gethsemane, he said to his disciples, sit ye here while I shall pray. He went off to pray within sight of them, just as he appears to have been doing here in Luke 11.

He was within sight of his disciples, but clearly he was absorbed in personal prayer to his Father, and they did not disturb him. But when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

It might be, of course, also that it is one of John's former disciples, like Philip or Andrew, who asked about this in the first place because maybe they had experience of how John had taught his disciples to pray.

[ 4 : 09 ] People said, you know, in terms of fasting, they said to Jesus, how is it that John's disciples pray and fast and make many prayers? And your disciples don't. But Jesus, of course, sets the example of his prayer life to his disciples.

Matthew 26, verse 36, then cometh Jesus, again, same Gethsemane incident, Gethsemane, and said to his disciples, sit ye here while I go and pray yonder.

And they don't say, well, this is strange, Lord, you've never done this before. And they don't question in any way, but obviously this is something which he did from time to time. He'd say, right, you stay here, I am going over to pray.

He might have said that you all pray as well, but it was he himself who felt he needed a prayer time alone. And it's a point that when Jesus says, when he say teach us to pray, we tend to focus on the words that Jesus gives them.

And we'll come to those in a wee minute. We tend to focus on, this is how Jesus talks to pray, and he gave us the Lord's Prayer. And whether we use that as something we recite, or whether we use it as a basis on which to sort of build our prayers and the different headings or whatever, that we can do both, one doesn't exclude the other.

[ 5 : 17 ] But I would suggest to you that when they ask him how they should pray, and when he begins to teach them, it's not just, these are the words you should use. That's what we've tended to take from it.

We've tended to focus on the words Jesus teaches them to use. But Jesus also teaches them by example. And one of the examples, as we know, that we have from Jesus, is that he seeks, when he goes to pray to his Father, he seeks to be alone.

In the Sermon on the Mount, remember, this is what he says, and this is what he teaches the crowds that gather in Matthew 6. It says, He doesn't mean you must never use any kind of set or memorized prayer.

There are, you can use, just as you can use the Lord's Prayer, as a prayer both to be recited, but also as one which perhaps you can see within yourself to sort of set the scene, the mood for prayer, and then that can lead on into your personal private petitions.

The Episcopalian Church, in all fairness through it, through its, you know, Book of Common Prayer and so on, has, you know, multitudes of beautiful prayers.

[ 6 : 56 ] They are the utmost beauty and devotional worth and weight. But if that's all you've got, you can't use them. They're not meant to be all they've got.

They're meant to be, if you like, just sort of little, little goals, little set of pointers. To begin, the reason they're called collects for the Anglicans is because they're meant to collect up the personal prayers of the Lord's people.

There's nothing wrong with using or memorizing or reciting a particular form of words for prayer, maybe to set the scene, maybe to sort of help you express something. But that shouldn't be all it is.

When he says don't use vain repetition, what he means is like, for example, there's not more virtue in reciting the Lord's Prayer 20 times than in maybe using it once as a sort of launch pad for your own individual prayers.

You can't sort of find a nice juicy prayer from the Book of Common Prayer and then just say that 10 times and say, what a lot of prayers I've said. You know, it's pagan religions which have the idea.

[ 7 : 56 ] You know, think of Hinduism or Buddhism where, you know, you've got the prayer flags. They've got all this stuff that looks like bunting. And prayers are written on every single one of these colored flags. And the idea is meant to be that when the wind blows and it flutters the flag, the prayers are being said.

I think that's a great idea, but it just means there's no personal engagement with the Lord. A prayer is being said. Something's being recited. Or as I remember one of my aunts had brought back from Tibet once, a prayer wheel, which was this sort of thing that looked like a football battle almost, but inside a drum were packed tightly, this tightly coiled paper, a long, long wing of paper like Timothy on which were written prayers that these Buddhist monks or Hindus or whatever had written out.

And the idea was that the drum had a string with a weight on the end and they would turn it like a rattle and whirl it round and the weight would turn the wheel. And as the wheel, the drum turned, all the prayers in it were being said, allegedly.

That's the kind of thing I would suggest that Jesus wants us to guard against this vain repetition. There's no virtue in going through motions umpteen times. God wants the prayers of your heart.

Just as any relationship needs to be nurtured, it is that which goes on in private. That which goes on, as it were, in the secret prayer life, which will strengthen or not the relationship with the Lord.

[ 9 : 32 ] And for that, I would suggest to you that when Jesus says, go into your closet and shut yourself away, he doesn't know, what am I going to do? I haven't got a closet. Oh dear, you know, the stories are told of godly old women that, you know, would pray beside the peat stack.

And then after they got a new boiler or oil put in or a different kind of stove or whatever, there wasn't a peat stack any there anymore, so they stopped praying. Now, it doesn't have to be in one particular place.

The main thing I would suggest to you when Jesus says, go into your closet or go apart to pray, is isolation. I'm going to talk about four different I's through the course of the next few minutes.

And the first is isolation. You can also call it security or peace to get on with this business of prayer. We all know that when Jesus started out in his ministry and throughout his ministry, he made it his business to have time alone with the Lord.

Mark chapter 1, verse 35 and 36. In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed. And Simon and David were with him.

[ 10 : 44 ] Followed after him, he found him, he said, all men secretly. I bet they do. He didn't have emails or phone calls or texts in those days to constantly disturb him.

But there was people. There was people and constant interruptions. From the moment Jesus woke up in the morning and when his day began to when he finally closed his eyes at night, everybody wanted a piece of him.

Everybody wanted to touch him or to get him to come and heal somebody or to gather round him. Listen to what he was saying. They all wanted to touch the hem of his garment. They all wanted some guidance from him or something from him.

If he was going to have time with his father, he had to get away from everybody else. And in many ways, the only time to do it was before everybody else got up.

Now, this is not prescriptive. It's not saying, well, unless you get up when it's still dark. Unless you get up at like 4 o'clock in the morning and make sure everybody else is asleep. That's the only time.

[ 11 : 43 ] No, it's not. Our working lives, our daily lives are different for every person depending on maybe the shifts you work or the time that you've got. The important thing is not the hour of the day in which you do it.

The important thing is that you have the isolation. That you have the security, the peace to be alone with the Lord. If you were seeking to build a romantic relationship or a personal relationship with somebody you wanted, maybe you were going for dinner together.

Maybe you wanted to have a walk together. And a chatty friend happens to show up and pulls up a chair at your table where you're trying to have dinner together. And they insist on chatting away to you while you're trying to have a conversation.

And sitting in and taking a piece of your food while you're having your meal together. Or in your nice romantic walk. They join in with their dog or whatever. Or they just chat the whole time. You can't get any time alone with that.

And it's the same with the Lord. You've got to have time alone with the Lord. It is isolation which is the first eye. Isolation with the Lord.

[ 12 : 49 ] Whether you shut yourself in your closet. Whether it's your bedroom. Whether it's some other part of the house. Or up the hill or on the moor. Whatever it should be. You need to be alone with the Lord. Without the phone.

Without the emails. Without the interruptions. Security. Peace. To get on with it. That's the example Jesus set. To be alone with his Father.

When they wanted advice on how to pray. Yes he taught them the words. But also he set them the example. Of regularly being alone with the Lord. And if you have time that you set apart to the Lord.

You must guard that time. And you must make that a priority. Intimacy. So if somebody wants to intrude into it. Say well no I can't do it at that time. But what about maybe at three o'clock.

What about at two or something. I can't do this. You just say. I can't do this. Just now. I need that time. You don't necessarily have to tell them what it's for. But you need to guard that time.

[ 13 : 47 ] Or if it can't be done then. Okay. You might have to shift it to a different time of the day. But you've got to have the isolation with the Lord. The second I is intimacy.

And this is partly what Jesus is teaching his disciples in this prayer. With the words that he uses. Although the fatherhood of God is there in the Old Testament.

You have to look for it. It's there. But you know. It's not quite as prevalent as it is in the New Testament. Jesus taught his disciples to pray. Father. This is how he addressed his own father.

Abba. Father. This intimacy. That is the second I. Intimacy. It is our father who is in heaven. He is one who has not only brought us into being.

But he sustains us. He nurtures us. He looks after us. As a father does his own children. Only more so. Because a human father can only create the conditions in which a child may be conceived.

[ 14 : 49 ] He cannot have any control over whether it be a boy or a girl. Or what their character will be. What color of eyes they'll have. What their hair will be like. Or you know. Whether they'll be tall or short.

Or heavy. Or light. Or thin. Or whatever the case may be. He's got no control over that. But our heavenly father has already known us. Loved us. And chosen us. From all eternity.

He knows exactly who you will be. He knows every detail about you. He already knows you intimately. And he desires that you should be intimate with him.

Jesus said. When you pray. Say. Our father. There is this intimacy of one who already knows you. You don't have to pretend with him.

You don't have to be ashamed with him. Except of your sins. You don't have to be ashamed of who or what you are. He knows it all. You don't have to explain. But as we know this intimacy.

[ 15 : 46 ] That is also with this intimacy. It's not that it's casual intimacy. Or easy oz. It is our father which art in heaven. God is in heaven and we are on earth.

So bound up with that intimacy. There has to be that sense of holiness. Hallowed be thy name. Some people take that as a petition. Traditionally. Orthodoxy.

It's taken as a petition. We're asking the Lord to make his name holy. I've always taken it more as a statement of fact. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.

As in heaven. So in earth. This holiness. This reverence. This reverence. Is part of the right intimacy. Just as if you are in a personal close intimate relationship with someone.

You also respect them. You reverence them. For who they are. And for the love you bear to them. That respect. That reverence.

[ 16 : 43 ] Just as this reverence we should have for our heavenly father. Which is far greater of course. Is part of the intimacy. Recognize who it is you're speaking to.

Also there is immediacy. This is the third eye. The things that we are to pray for. Are today's needs.

Yes there's concerns about what will happen next week. At an event that may be coming up. But it is immediacy. The things that we require. Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins. What needs it now. Not in ten days time. But we need our forgiveness now. Just as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.

And that's something we also must do that day, there and then. As we pray for forgiveness. We must likewise forgive. That is an immediacy. It's our bread today.

[ 17 : 36 ] It is forgiveness each day. This immediacy highlights the urgency of prayer. There's always a sense of urgency. In prayer there should be. It's not just an easy, easy, lackadaisical relationship sort of thing.

There's an urgency. There's an immediacy. Our need is for the Lord now. Just as we mentioned earlier in prayer. If you hold your breath.

Which you might be able to do for a certain amount of time. Or you're underwater for a certain amount of time. When you come up. You're not just going. Oh it's nice to be up again. You're gasping for air.

You're absolutely drawing as much as you possibly can. Because you've been denied oxygen. And there is that urgency. When we come before the Lord.

We need to fill our lungs again. With the oxygen of the spirit. There is isolation. That we may be able to focus upon him. There is intimacy. Because he is our heavenly father.

[ 18 : 35 ] There is immediacy. Of the things that we need. And the responsibilities that we have. That we must forgive. And put away from us.

Any grudges. Any wrongdoing. That somebody's done to us. That we hold against them. We must forgive. And put that aside. Nothing must come between us.

And the Lord. There is immediacy. There is also. What the old fashioned word. The authorised version uses here. There is importunity. Which we might take. As being like.

Don't give up. If you ask for something. And it doesn't drop down. Out of the sky that minute. Then you say. Well that didn't work. Did it? You've got to keep on asking.

Keep on praying. I know of godly Christians. Who would say. Once you ask for something. Stop. Trust God. Don't go nagging the Lord. Every day.

[ 19 : 29 ] Just trust him to do it. You ask. And you meet up with the Lord. Yes. There is an element. In which we must trust the Lord. And we'll come to that. In a wee moment. Of course.

We trust the Lord. But it's not necessarily the case. That you know. You ask it once. And that's it. You don't ask again. That's not what Jesus teaches. He says. You ask. And it shall be given.

Seek. And you shall find. Knock. And it shall be opened to you. And you know. I think it's Spurgeon. I think. Who says. You know. The urgent. Are the. The wrappings.

The knockings. By which the door. Of heaven is opened. Unto us. You know. He talks. This example. About the friend. Who comes at midnight. And the guy's all pumped up.

With his kids in bed. And he doesn't want to get up. And he's not going to say. Well you're my best friend. So I'll get up. But he just won't stop knocking. He just won't stop hassling it. So if he's willing to get up.

[ 20 : 23 ] And give him. Because of his importunity. Verse 8. Because he doesn't give up. He keeps on asking. Then how much more should we with God.

Who is not simply a friend. But a saviour. He gives a similar illustration. In Luke chapter 18. About the importunate widow. Who keeps coming back. To the unjust judge.

So that he's afraid of being worn down. We've got to keep on asking. The Lord. Keep on praying. And don't give up. Don't give up.

Because he hasn't given up on you. Don't give up on the Lord. We have to trust. Remember Jacob. At the Jabbok River. You know.

When he wrestled with the angel. Representing the Lord. He said. I will not let you go. Except that he'll bless me. He wrestled on. He wouldn't let go. Until he got the blessing. That he needed.

[ 21 : 18 ] So likewise. The Lord. If he can say it. Reverently. He desires us to wrestle. With them in prayer. There has to be that. Importunity. Isolation.

Intimacy. Immediacy. And importunity. And then. It's difficult to know. How to describe. The next section here. Because. When. He talks about.

You know. The things that. You know. Which of you. Having a son. And asked for a bread. Would give him a stone. Or an egg. Would give him a scorpion. And so on. Then. You know. We think. Is it God's trying to catch us out? Is it he's going to give us bad things?

When we ask for good? There has to be an element of faith. We have to believe. That the Lord desires to give us. There has to be trust. And I don't know which of these.

These terms to use. There has to be loyalty. Because if we think in terms of. When Jesus did good. In casting out a demon. His enemy said. I was doing it by Beelzebub.

[ 22 : 14 ] The prince of demons. And sometimes. I'm sure you will have had this experience. In your personal. Prayer life. Sometimes. Something comes into your head. You say. Wow. That's not good.

Was that from the devil? Or is that God trying to suggest it? Or is that. Is that really the Lord. Motivating me to do this? Or is it. Is it just me being. Being proud. Or conceited.

One of the things. People often struggle with. Is you know. If I'm feeling that. I should. Go forward. If I should. Commit my life to Christ. Well. Who am I. To think that. That can't be from the Lord.

That must just be. My own conceited self. You have to trust. That the Lord. Is not going to seek. To pull his children. Away from him. Or push them from him.

Jesus never turned. Anyone. Away from himself. But the devil. Is always trying. To come between the Lord. And his children.

[ 23 : 09 ] He is always trying. To prevent them. From getting to the Lord. Getting and closing in. With Christ. He is always trying. To draw them away. Or put obstacles.

In their way. What do you really think. Is going to be the source. Of somebody casting out. A demon. Jesus says. If it really is the devil. Casting out the devil.

Then his kingdom. Is divided against himself. And he's going to fail. He's going to fall anyway. So you should be pleased. Even if I was. Casting demons out. By deals of love. You should be glad. But if I'm doing that.

Then who are your sons. Your fellow Pharisees. Doing it by. They exercise demons. Allegedly. Who are they doing it by. But if I. By the finger of God.

Cast out devils. No doubt. The kingdom of God. Is come upon you. In other words. What are the results. That you see. What is the result. Of if you're busy.

[ 24 : 03 ] In prayer. With the Lord. And something is placed. In your mind. Or in your heart. What is the fruit of it. What is it aiming towards. What is it seeking. To encourage you to do.

By their fruits. You shall know them. Said Jesus. In which direction. Is it seeking to lead you. The direction. That would be God honoring. Or direction. That would be.

Desecrating to God. Or irreverent. Or inappropriate. Something that would please you. Or something that would serve God. The two are not. Necessarily opposed. To each other. But it is our will.

That must be subsumed. Under his. Not the other way around. And if we choose our own way. Over God's way. Well. We haven't really put him first. In our lives. Then have we.

There has to be this faith. In what the Lord will do. Trust. That it is he. Who will speak to us. If we ask. He who will guide us. He who will give us.

[ 25 : 00 ] The results. That we pray for. Or. Will show us better ones. James. James tells us. In chapter 5. The prayer of faith. Shall save the sick.

Notice. It doesn't necessarily say. Cure the sick. Doesn't mean. If you just pray over this person. They're going to get well again. But the prayer of faith. Will either cause them. To be healed.

And recovered. Or perhaps. It may mean. It will enable the Lord. To use this illness. To bring them. To a state of repentance. And many. A person. Perhaps. Might be ready.

To make their peace. With God. If they think. They're not long. For this world. Who. If they thought. They were going to recover tomorrow. Might be a lot more. Blasey. About it. So the Lord.

May use. The prayer of faith. To save. The sick. In the sense of salvation. Or perhaps. To cure them. But it doesn't necessarily. Stay cured. The Lord.

[ 25 : 54 ] Shall raise him up. That could mean. Raise him up. Into life. Or it could mean. Heal him. Or it could mean. Bring him to heaven. And if he have committed sins. They shall be forgiven him.

If he's saved. Of course. They'll be forgiven him. The prayer of faith. Shall save the sick. But there's no point. Pray. If we don't have faith. He that cometh to God. Must believe that he is.

And that he is the reward of them. That diligently seek him. So there has to be faith. There has to be trust. That what the Lord. Will say to us. Will be honoring to him. And we should be able to tell.

In terms of those results. What direction is it pushing us in? What is the suggestion? Where is this suggestion coming from? Is it the devil? Is it the Lord? Is it just me? We need to go back.

What are the fruits of it? There has to be faith. There has to be trust. There has to be loyalty. To the Lord. Because this is I think. Is what Jesus is meaning. When he says. He that is not with me.

[ 26 : 52 ] Is against me. And he that gathereth not with me. Scattereth. Now. That means the sense is. That to be with Christ. Is to keep him permanently. If you don't remain.

Mine. Then it is because. You're ultimately against me. The only hostility to Christ. Would disengage anyone. From attachment to him.

If you think about it. You know. We might think. Oh no. I'm not against Christ. It's just that there's other things. I want to do too. There's other avenues. I want to pursue. I'm not against God. In any way.

But the point is. That he is not. First and foremost. In our lives. Then we have made other gods. Before him. Or beside him. Or before his face. We have made the ultimate idolatry.

Because we have made ourselves. In the place of God. A whole lot of other sins. Will follow upon it. He that is not with me. Is against me.

[ 27 : 51 ] Even if he doesn't think he is. He is. If he is not with me. If he does not remain with me. If he does not abide with me. If he is not permanently mine. And he that gathereth not with me.

He scattereth. He talks about the unclean spirit. Then that has gone out of a man. And walks through the dry places. Then comes back to his house. Now what does he mean there? He means there somebody.

Who has cleaned house. They have cast out any demons. They have made a fresh start. But they haven't got Christ. Dwelling with them. On a permanent basis.

And we're back again. To the isolation. The intimacy. The immediacy. The importunity. To this nurture of the faith. And what we do in secret. What we do in our private life.

With the Lord. The putting down of the root. That nobody sees. The under the soil strengthening. The private life. With the Lord.

[ 28 : 49 ] The prayer life. We might call it. But then people tend to think. Well that just means. When I go on my knees. Maybe at bedtime. Or in the morning. Whatever. No. Your prayer life is meant to be. Through your life.

But there must be. Set times. That you give to the Lord. And you shut out. Everything else. Just as any relationship. Needs time alone.

With that person. So likewise. The Lord. Needs time alone. With him. And it needs loyalty to him. It needs that. Permanent commitment. To him.

It's not enough. To say. Oh yeah. I went forward. At some evangelistic rally. Ten years ago. And that's me sorted. Now I can do what I like. If you're not. If you're just casting the demons out.

And leaving the house empty. They will come back. And they will come back. In greater number. And greater strength. And you will be the less equipped. To deal with them. Because you think you're strong. You're only going to get strong.

[ 29 : 44 ] When the roots go down. Deep into the soil. You're only going to do that. And nurture that. By strengthening your relationship. With the Lord. Every day. You need to breathe.

Every day. You need to eat. Every day. You probably need to wash. Body wise. Most days. All these needs. All these things. The body requires.

To keep going. Are mirrored. In the spirit. Of the soul. There will be some days. Yes. When duties. Will intervene. And perhaps. You just cannot.

Get the time. With the Lord. That you would like. But that's equivalent. To times. When perhaps. You just haven't had time. To eat. Or times. When perhaps. You have to hold your breath. Under water. And you can do it.

For a certain amount. Of time. But you can't do it forever. Or you'll die. So likewise. There has to be faith. There has to be trust.

[ 30 : 41 ] There has to be loyalty. That it is God. Not Beelzebub. Who wants to deal with you. That it is God. Who fills your heart. Your life.

And this time. You set aside for him. Now of course. There is also. At the end of this passage. This lady. Who said. Oh. Blessed must be your mother. You know. The womb that bore you.

The past that you suck. And so on. The physical relationship. How blessed. The woman that was your mother. And Jesus said. Well yeah. But blessed rather. May that hear the word of God.

And keep it. It's a common thing. Of course. In some branches of the church. As we know. To make a big deal. Out of Mary. And her relationship. To her son.

But what Jesus himself. Rather says. Is blessed are they. That hear the word of God. And keep it. And we do not deny. That Mary is special.

[ 31 : 36 ] And blessed. But why is she blessed? Because. When the angel. Comes to her. He says. In Luke chapter 1. Verse 28. Hail thou that art highly favored. The Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women. Why is she blessed? Well. Elizabeth says. A little further on. Verse 42. Blessed art thou among women. And blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And once is this to me.

That the mother of my Lord. Should come to me. And then of course. She says. And blessed is she. That believed. For there shall be a performance.

Of those things. Which were told her. From the Lord. Blessed is she. That believed. Yea. Rather blessed are they. That hear the word of God. And keep it. That's what made.

It. That's why she was blessed. Not just because of the fruit of her womb. Physically. But because she was a woman of faith. In this Messiah.

[ 32 : 29 ] If we are to hear the word of God. And keep it. It means then. That as far as possible. Every time. You go apart. And aside with the Lord.

You should have your Bible with you. You should have your Bible with you. And open it. And read it. Either by a reading plan. Working through so many portions a day.

Or a chapter a day. Or whatever the case may be. But you should be reading it. And reading it every day. If possible. You must have the Bible with you.

If at all possible. Only then will you be able to hear the word of God. And keep it. We must be attuned to what God desires to say to us.

And it is one of the surest ways to guard against. You hear a little voice in your head. And you pray. Is that the devil? Is that the Lord? Is it just me? We can be confused. As to whether something is.

[ 33 : 28 ] Maybe just me. Maybe it's my thoughts. Maybe it's my feelings. But if it is in the word of God. We cannot deny that God's word is truth. That which we find in God's word speaking to us.

He will often use. A book that was completed. You know like 2,000 years ago. Is still fresh and new. As his people seek his truth in it.

And they find a word for them that day. And they find something that speaks to them. A particular passage. It just speaks right to their situation. Because it is a living word. Blessed love.

Are they that hear the word of God. And keep it. And if the word of God is to be heard. The word of God is to be kept. It must be part of our relationship to him.

It must be part of the nurture of that relationship. Of the private times of the Lord. Part of the isolation with God. Part of the intimacy with God.

[ 34 : 29 ] Part of the immediacy of our requests. Part of the importunity. Searching the scriptures. Going back and back and back to the word of God. Part of the faith and the truth.

And the loyalty to the Lord. The word of God. Becomes then the foundation. Upon which we build all hands. And who is the word made flesh?

Who is the living word? It is Jesus. God's only beloved son. Our only beloved saviour. Who gives us not only the pattern. And the content.

And the example. Of a relationship to the Lord. Example of prayer. He is the one also. Who gathers them all up.

And presents them at his father's throne of grace. Lord. Teach us to pray. As John also taught his disciples. When you pray.

[ 35 : 27 ] When you pray. Say Jesus. Say. Father. When you seek your father. Give him. All your attention. Give him. All your love.

Give him. All your devotion. Let the roots. Go down deep. Let them spread. Believe the soil. Let the seed. Be planted. And germinate.

And grow. And bring forth a harvest. In the times. That nobody else will see. And your father. Which seeth in secret. Will reward you.

Openly. Bless. Bless.