



# **A Nugget A Day:**

## **Meditations To Inspire Your Year**

by

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**Fellowship of Actors, Artists and Authors**

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## INTRODUCTION TO USING MEDITATIONS

Meditation is an act of spiritual contemplation, practised by members of many religions as a means of becoming one with God or the universe, finding enlightenment, achieving selflessness, and other virtues.

### **Suggestions for using the meditations in this book**

- Choose a quiet place, as far as possible removed from external distractions, where you can dwell in peace.
- It is recommended that as far as possible you devote the same time daily to your meditations.
- The recommended times for meditation is just after rising, before eating, and just before going to bed.
- Focus on the thought which heads each meditation.
- Read through the meditation for the day.
- Focus on the prayer every day.
- Write down any thoughts and feelings that come to you.
- On every day of the week, take one new thought and meditate on that.
- On the last day, go over the meditation again, and write a summary of the thoughts and feelings that have inspired you during the week.

*May you find inspiration and guidance as you work through the year's meditations.*

## **Week 1 – Tunnels**

### **Thought for the week**

*A river running through a tunnel must have an exit.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      When you enter a tunnel, although the light behind fades, somewhere ahead is more light, even though you may not see it.
- Day 2      Remember, when you go through a tunnel, someone has been there before you.
- Day 3      Life is like a river. It has an origin, and eventually it reaches its destination, the ocean.
- Day 4      In the journey of life, we will merge with the vast ocean of eternity, yet we shall never lose that vital part which is our unique self.
- Day 5      Sometimes the river runs through darkened tunnels. Don't despise these dark times, most growth takes place in the dark.
- Day 6      Just as surely as day follows night, you will emerge into the light.
- Day 7      If you are passing through a dark tunnel experience, remember the river. Eventually you will emerge back into the light.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, you have taken me through many tunnels, and sometimes they have been long and dark, yet, as the river flows, I always came through. As I journey in the river of life, may I trust you in the dark tunnels, and rejoice when the darkness gives way to light.

## **Week 2 – Time**

### **Thought for the week**

*Time is not a river with a source and destination, It is not an ocean, bounded by distant shores. It is limitless and boundless as the universe.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Time knows no boundaries, no limitations. Do not think of time as divisions of the day and year. Nor of life ticking away with every swing of the pendulum.
- Day 2      Learn from Nature, which is not concerned with the passage of time. Nature just is. And in its being, it gives to every time and every season some beauties of its own.
- Day 3      Time is the connection we have with this world. In Eternity there is no time. Let that fact calm your spirit when you are disturbed.
- Day 4      Live today and every day with serenity, bringing beauty to today as you touch someone's life.
- Day 5      Let serenity dissolve your weariness and anxiety, and let love energise you.
- Day 6      We cannot make the clock of life tick faster or slower, so live a day at a time, breathe a breath at a time.
- Day 7      Be assured, that when you pass into the wider Eternity, you will not cease to exist, for you will become part of all that has been, is, and is to come.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, Help me today to rest quietly in the safe-keeping of your arms. May I not be so concerned with time that I forget that you are from Everlasting to Everlasting.

## **Week 3 – Achievement**

### **Thought for the week**

*Achievement is relative: Your best is likely to be someone else's worst. Someone else's best is likely to be your worst. Take heart! Don't compare.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Do you consider you have achieved much because you have lived well?
- Day 2 Are you a successful person because you have gained the respect of intelligent men and women? Or because little children love you?
- Day 3 Have you achieved because you filled your niche in life?
- Day 4 Can you measure your achievement because you accomplished the task God gave you to do?
- Day 5 Have you achieved because you think you have left the world better than you found it?
- Day 6 Know this; you can only reach the heights of achievement if you fly on your own wings and not on the wings of others.
- Day 7 Do not judge your achievement by the size of your wage packet or the size of your house. True achievement is judged by the quality of your service and your relationship to humanity.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, may I not be so caught up with measuring my achievements, that I forget that without you my success would be paltry. May I not sacrifice my integrity on the altar of achievement. There is so much that would encourage me to be self-centred and selfish. Keep me God-centred and focused on other people.

## **Week 4 – Love**

### **Thought for the week**

*Our hearts are like grapes; they need to go through the wine-press of adversity to express their love.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Grapes need to be pressed to release their juice. If they remain on the vine, they are of little use.
- Day 2      When I go through the winepress of adversity, may my love pour out to bless other people.
- Day 3      If I sow love sparingly, I reap nothing. But if I sow love liberally others will reap a bountiful harvest.
- Day 4      Envy rules: jealousy drowns; pride destroys; love draws. May my love draw the love out of other people .
- Day 5      I might want to love humankind, but I have to start with loving one person.
- Day 6      The depth of God’s love goes deeper than the foundations of the tallest building in the world, and higher than the most powerful space shuttle can travel.
- Day 7      Just as all nature depends on the sun, so all humankind depends entirely on the love that comes from God.

### **Prayer**

Help me to be a channel of your love. I know I shall never love unconditionally, as you love, but I want to try. I don’t want my love to fade as the flowers in the garden; I want it to go on blooming and touching other people’s lives until I pass into eternity.

## **Week 5 – Envy**

### **Thought for the week**

*Envy is praise that robs the heart. Genuine praise and appreciation enrich the heart.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Envy and jealousy are the foundation stones of criticism; they will destroy our own happiness and the happiness of other people.
- Day 2      In envy all sympathy is crushed by the selfish wish to possess what rightly belongs to someone else.
- Day 3      People who envy the achievements other people, tend to blame them for their own lack of success.
- Day 4      Envy may go so far as to lead a person to feel pleasure in a someone else's suffering and pain.
- Day 5      When envy develops into jealousy, the heart changes from sourness to bitterness. Domination and power then rule.
- Day 6      Envy robs the heart and eats away at the spirit just as insidiously as rust destroys the strongest iron bar.
- Day 7      Envy and love cannot flow from the same fountain. Find the antidote to envy by reaching out to people in love, friendliness, and genuine admiration. Envy will then have no room to grow.

### **Prayer**

Help me Lord to root envy out of my heart like one of the weeds in the garden, so that I can live honestly. I know that a once-only weeding will not do; I need to be as alert with my soul as I am in rooting weeds out of my garden.

# **Week 6 – Friendship**

## **Thought for the week**

*A true friend sticks closer than one's nearest kin. (Proverbs 18:24).*

## **Meditations**

- Day 1      If you value friendship, don't put either your friend or yourself in a position of power over the other. The minute you exercise power over a friend, you have lost the friendship.
- Day 2      Many friends do not create happiness; the quality of their friendship is what matters.
- Day 3      Friendship is getting together, keeping together, growing together. It is two hearts beating as one.
- Day 4      True friendship divides grief and multiplies joy. You cannot be a friend without being friendly.
- Day 5      Some trees grow slowly; so does true friendship. Take time to develop friendships.
- Day 6      We choose whom we talk to about our problems. A friend is one we can talk to about anything. Do not share your secrets with an acquaintance.
- Day 7      A true friend is one you can trust with the key to your heart. Let your friend trust you, likewise.

## **Prayer**

Lord, may I be a true friend. May I have an open heart so that I can feel the pain as well as the joy of my friends. You are my example, for you are always there when I need you. You know me through and through, and you love me just the same. You are closer to me than any friend could be.

## **Week 7 – Reputation**

### **Thought for the week**

*A person's reputation is like precious porcelain; beautiful but delicate. Do all you can to enhance someone's reputation and all you can not to destroy it.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Thoughtless and idle words can destroy someone else's reputation which has taken years to build up.
- Day 2 No amount of kind words will build a person's reputation, if that person's deeds are not in harmony with the words.
- Day 3 A good reputation is more valuable than all the money you can accumulate.
- Day 4 A reputation is invisible, yet it shouts to the world the kind of person you are.
- Day 5 If your reputation depends on keeping in with people, then every day you run risk of not meeting their demands.
- Day 6 People who contribute to the destruction of someone's reputation, have committed a serious crime.
- Day 7 Never try to blow up your own reputation, you may find that the balloon bursts in your face.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, may my epitaph be that I planted flowers where I thought they would grow and that I did not sow thistles in someone else's garden. Always keep before me that if your love did not reign in my heart then my reputation would be in the gutter.

## **Week 8 – Worry**

### **Thought for the week**

*Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:25,26).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 We have enough to do to worry about our own faults, without worrying about the faults of others, who probably don't worry about them anyway.
- Day 2 There are two sure ways to combat worry; keep busy and count your blessings.
- Day 3 It takes less time to think of the good things than to worry about what might never happen.
- Day 4 How do you know that your deepest worry will ever come to pass? When you have passed from this life, where will your worry be then?
- Day 5 Too much leisure leaves too much time to worry about being too unhappy.
- Day 6 Do you worry about your next meal, or about the luxuries you cannot have? Get your priorities right.
- Day 7 Remember, however much you worry, worry will not feed you, clothe you, or pay the bills, not even the funeral director's!

### **Prayer**

Let this be your prayer today: Father God, you will never leave me, fail me, or forsake me. How can I fear or be dismayed when you have promised to be with me?

## **Week 9 – Adversity**

### **Thought for the week**

*In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; God has made the one as well as the other, so that mortals may not find out anything that will come after them. (Ecclesiastes 7:14).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Take heart: When you look back on your life, times of adversity will be as single nights spent in uncomfortable beds.
- Day 2      When the winds of adversity blow, tilt your wings upward like the eagle, and soar above them until the storm is past.
- Day 3      You can sail through life and never meet with adversity, but when you do, think of it as one of life's great universities.
- Day 4      Take heart from the people you know who have turned the stumbling blocks of adversity into stepping stones of service.
- Day 5      In the day of ease we tend to forget adversity, and in the day of adversity, ease is forgotten.
- Day 6      Can you be a true friend to someone who is suffering adversity?
- Day 7      Adversity and ease are like the two parts of an egg. To separate them leaves the egg incomplete.

### **Prayer**

Father God, when I feel in danger of being crushed by adversity, help me to remember that the time of spring and the singing of the birds follows the frost of winter. May my faith in you remain strong.

## **Week 10 – Beauty**

### **Thought for the week**

*You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (Isaiah 62:3).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      An uncut diamond has little beauty until it submits to the skill of the craftsman. And when it is crafted, the diamond does not have to shout about its beauty.
- Day 2      Keep within you the beauty of the garden always in bloom, and you will know beauty.
- Day 3      Feast your eyes on the beauty of the way nature arranges colour, and in clouds, trees, mountain ranges, or snow crystals.
- Day 4      There is beauty in the soft down of a baby chick, and the innocence of the new-born baby.
- Day 5      Surround yourself with beauty. Fill your mind with beautiful thoughts. Fill your life with beautiful actions, then you, too, will be beautiful.
- Day 6      We only recognise beauty because we know what ugliness is.
- Day 7      Beauty that comes from within will endure long after outward beauty fades. Beauty accompanied by grace ensures that it will not turn into vanity.

### **Prayer**

One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. (Psalm 27:4).

## **Week 11 – Decisions**

### **Thought for the week**

*When you reach the crossroads, do not be afraid to travel the less travelled road.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      A decision based on insufficient facts is like driving the wrong way along a one-way road.
- Day 2      When you have made a decision, don't look back; move forward in the freedom the decision has brought.
- Day 3      A decision that fits someone else may not suit you. There is no recipe for making decision that suits all cases.
- Day 4      Once a decision was made, do not waste precious energy worrying about it afterward. If the decision wasn't right, at least you made a choice.
- Day 5      We make many decision when we are young which mould our character throughout life. Undoing the consequences of those decision can be painful and difficult.
- Day 6      Worry is fear without a decision. If you worry, make a decision about something.
- Day 7      When you are faced with making a decision, it may seem as if you are passing through a tunnel, where there is no light to guide you. Do not panic. And never make a decision out of fear.

### **Prayer**

The most important decision I may make, Lord, is to let you guide me into the decisions I need to take. Then I know the choice is right. Even if I do make mistakes, I know that you will not hold that against me.

## **Week 12 – Eternity**

### **Thought for the week**

*Eternity draws as surely as a magnet draws iron filings.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      The redeemed of the Lord will stand before the throne arrayed in robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb.
- Day 2      They shall hunger no more, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them.
- Day 3      They will thirst no more, for the Lord shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.
- Day 4      There will be no more tears, for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
- Day 5      Heaven will echo and re-echo with the song: Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.
- Day 6      There is no fear in eternity. For fear is banished in the presence of perfect love.
- Day 7      If you fear eternity, think of Jesus and all your loved ones who have gone before to prepare the way for you.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, may I not be so taken up with the present that I give no thought to the joys of eternity. But may I not be so taken up with eternity that I forget about the tasks that have to be done in the present. Keep me faithful so that one day I, too, will sing around the Throne of the Lamb.

## **Week 13 – Farewells**

### **Thought for the week**

*Farewell is a sad kind of thing, but it must be done; we go from you after this quietly, respectfully, our task accomplished and the long day done; our wages taken and in our hearts some late larks singing. We would it was coming we were, rather than going; but go we must.* (Sir Hugh Robertson, on the occasion of the farewell concert of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      What is death? It is when we say ‘Farewell, dear friend, may the waves of the sea not separate us now, or the years we have spent together become a dim memory.’
- Day 2      The greatest adventure in life is to tread the path of the final farewell.
- Day 3      God will swallow up your death in his victory.
- Day 4      Fear not death. Remember those who have gone before you, and those who will follow.
- Day 5      Many people are not so much afraid of death as of dying.
- Day 6      Nothing in this world or when you bid farewell to it can separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Day 7      When you say farewell to this life, Jesus says Welcome!

### **Prayer**

We know that we have passed from death to life. We also know that we abide in Christ, and he in us. We shall never say ‘Farewell’ to Jesus. In the final farewell, Jesus will be our companion. He has already passed that way.

## Week 14 – The Golden Rule

### Thought for the week

*'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.'* (Matthew 7:12).

### Meditations

- Day 1      If we wish to be treated with respect, we must treat other people with decency.
- Day 2      Do not be obsessed with *not* doing wrong to others that you neglect to *do* what is right. Not doing something can be just as harmful as doing something that *is* harmful.
- Day 3      Deeds are like a second skin. They travel with us wherever we go. Let people recognise you by your good deeds not by your bad.
- Day 4      Seeds produce their kind; so do our words and deeds. It takes ten good deeds to neutralise one bad deed. And we may never have enough time to put right the harm we cause by one bad deed.
- Day 5      Do good deeds without expecting thanks. And don't expect thanks if you don't do something bad.
- Day 6      Let love motivate your deeds then you will build other people up.
- Day 7      Your words will be forgotten but your deeds will be remembered long after you are dead. May you be remembered as a person of good deeds.

### Prayer

Dear Lord, help me not to so fear the consequences of doing something, that I cause harm by not doing it. May my deeds spring from a pure and loving heart, for then others will be drawn to you, and not to me.

## **Week 15 – Giving & Receiving**

### **Thought for the week**

*Who gives and hides the giving hand, nor count on favours, fame or praise, shall find his smallest gift outweighs the burden of the sea and land. (Anon)*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Be a channel of giving, but make sure that you do not swamp others who find it difficult to receive. Give as the gentle rain, not as the torrential downpour.
- Day 2      Give with the warm hand of love, not with the cold hand that leaves the recipient feeling bitter.
- Day 3      If all you have to give is a smile, be assured that it will enrich those who receive it, and your smile will not impoverish you.
- Day 4      If you have something to give, search for someone to give it to, and when you find, you will experience the joy of the open-handed.
- Day 5      When we give out of our poverty, our mite will be multiplied beyond measure because it is given with love.
- Day 6      Give with love. Receive with joy. Do not let your hand be closed when you should give, and do not refuse to receive what is offered in love.
- Day 7      Take your example from the flowers; they do not withhold their perfume. They give because that is their nature.

### **Prayer**

Help me today to give of my time, talents and little acts of kindness that mean so much to people. Help me to give cheerfully, for you love a cheerful giver.

## **Week 16 – Money**

### **Thought for the week**

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*  
(Matthew 6:19-21).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      What rewards do you want in life? If you have the Lord's smile on your work, then that is reward enough. You need nothing else.
- Day 2      The wages of this world never keep up with the cost of living. God's rewards multiply with time and you never end up owing anything.
- Day 3      Little kindnesses are often worth more than a great deal of money.
- Day 4      We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Why make the coffin-bearers' job more difficult by carrying unnecessary weight!
- Day 5      Do not make money your strong tower to run into in the day of trouble. God is your strong tower.
- Day 6      There is no guarantee that a little more money would make you a whit happier.
- Day 7      However much money we have, we could always use more. Enough is as good as a feast. Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure, and trouble therewith. (Proverbs 15:16).

### **Prayer**

Thank you, Lord, for enough money to supply my daily needs, and to live without begging. For enough to give where it is needed, and not to feel burdened by too much.

## **Week 17 – Patience**

### **Thought for the week**

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.  
(Galatians 5:22-23).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Strive to let patience be the captain of your ship. Be like the sails that wait for the wind to fill them, to blow the ship toward its goal.
- Day 2      Cultivate patience; stay calm; hold back your words until the right moment; then your lips will speak good sense.
- Day 3      God speaks to all people, but very often his messages are for those who listen and wait in loving patience. What is it you have to wait in patience for?
- Day 4      Take a lesson of patience from nature. Nothing we can do will hasten the growth of the seed we sow. The blossom comes before the fruit.
- Day 5      To be patient may require more courage and fortitude than taking action before it is appropriate.
- Day 6      Do not confuse indolence with patience.
- Day 7      If you are impatient, study the snowdrop. Every year it bursts into pure-white bloom in the hardest winter.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me to remain hopeful, and to wait with patience and not rush into action. Help me to wait for the fulfilment of your word that you will come again and take me home.

## Week 18 – Happiness

### Thought for the week

*Jesus said that a holy nature is a happy one. Happy are: the humble; the contrite; the meek; they who hunger after righteousness; the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness. Happiness is goodness.*

### Meditations

- Day 1 Perfect happiness is an illusion. The only state of perfection is Heaven. Don't waste energy searching for the impossible.
- Day 2 Don't expect other people to make you happy. Relying on others to make you happy will surely lead to disappointment.
- Day 3 Most people believe they smile because they are happy; the truth is, we are happy *because* we smile. So, smile at someone today and be happy.
- Day 4 If you had your life all over again, would you want to be anyone other than yourself? If so, you are not happy with who you are.
- Day 5 Happiness is a gift to be shared.
- Day 6 The search for happiness is one sure cause of unhappiness.
- Day 7 Don't confuse happiness with contentment. Happiness is the outward expression of inner contentment.

### Prayer

Lord, when my life is filled with faith, wonder, gratitude, hope, and enthusiasm for living, the door to happiness is opened. I find happiness when I stop searching for it. My inner happiness is a gift from you.

## **Week 19 – Peace**

### **Thought for the week**

*By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      The peace of God is like the widest river and the deepest sea; it knows no limits or boundaries; it never runs dry.
- Day 2      The peace of God is perfect; it does not depend on circumstances or on feelings.
- Day 3      The peace of God goes on unending, just like the river that joins with the sea, it goes on into eternity. The peace of God is fresh every morning.
- Day 4      Just as Jesus calmed the waves with, ‘Peace, be still,’ so he says to all of life’s storms.
- Day 5      In the last great unknown – death – be assured that the peace of God will not desert you. Trust his peace and be not afraid.
- Day 6      Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, courage, health, and hope.
- Day 7      For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (Isaiah 55:12).

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, may nothing disturb your peace in me. May nothing fill my heart with fear. You are ever-present. You never change. May I be a channel of your peace this day and every day.

## **Week 20 – Praise**

### **Thought for the week**

*I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High. (Psalm 7:17).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Praise God in the morning that you have another day to live for him. At eventide praise God with a grateful heart, then sleep with a of song of praise in your heart for all his goodness.
- Day 2 God loves a cheerful giver. Do not hoard your praises, like the miser and his gold. Give out of a full heart.
- Day 3 Use praise instead of condemnation; the one lifts, the other puts down.
- Day 4 Honest praise is like the sun that warms people to open themselves to its warmth.
- Day 5 People will learn more from one moment of praise than from a lifetime of being criticised.
- Day 6 God has not given you a thousand tongues with which to praise him. He gave you one tongue; use it to the full, as if it were a thousand tongues.
- Day 7 Your deeds will be recognised for what they are; they do not need you to praise them. Expensive perfume does not rely on its label to praise it.

### **Prayer**

You O Lord are worthy to receive glory and honour and power: for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created. All glory, honour and praise are due to your name, for now and throughout eternity.

## **Week 21 – Wisdom**

### **Thought for the week**

People who avoid being fooled by others are clever. People who don't allow others to fool them are wise. People who are fooled by others, lack wisdom. People who knowingly allow themselves to be fooled by others, show the character of a saint.

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      A rebuke will cause hurt to a person who lacks wisdom, but inspiration to the person who seeks wisdom. But make sure that your rebuke is delivered in love.
- Day 2      You can never say, I am wise. Wisdom, like the horizon, is never reached.
- Day 3      Some things in life cannot be changed, others can. Wisdom recognises the difference.
- Day 4      Aristotle was asked, 'Why are you wiser than your companions?' He replied, 'Because I spend more on oil to study at night than they spend on wine.'
- Day 5      Wisdom is more often discovered around our feet than in the stars.
- Day 6      Only the truly just person has the wisdom and the right to judge someone else.
- Day 7      You cannot give other people wisdom. You can only lead them to the fountain.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me to nurture the seeds of wisdom and understanding you have sown in me, so that other people will benefit. May I not parade my wisdom in front of others, but hold it in readiness for when it is needed.

## **Week 22 – Character**

### **Thought for the week**

*By trifles, in our common ways, our characters are slowly piled.*  
(W. Morley Punshon).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Compassion is the hallmark of true character.
- Day 2      Character is often hidden, sometimes changed, but seldom destroyed.
- Day 3      Character and thought are different sides of the same coin. As we think, so our character becomes.
- Day 4      A talent may be perfected by ourselves, our character can only develop in the world of other people.
- Day 5      People judge your character by your actions, words, looks, steps and your integrity.
- Day 6      It takes people years to develop their character yet it can be destroyed in a split second.
- Day 7      To reach Christ's character means step by step, foot by foot, hand over hand hard work and perseverance. Slowly and often painfully we mount the ladder that rests on earth and rises to heaven, drawn by the goal of his perfect character.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, may I never stop climbing the ladder toward your perfect character. And may I never say or do anything that will destroy the light of another person's character.

## **Week 23 – Faults**

### **Thought for the week**

*When a sieve is shaken, the refuse appears; so do a person's faults when he speaks.*  
(The Apocrypha. Sirach 27:4).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      You are less likely to find fault with someone you love.
- Day 2      We are more likely to detect the faults of other people because the same faults lie within us.
- Day 3      If you want to make enemies, tell people their faults. If you want to make friends, hide their faults, and look for the good in them.
- Day 4      We have enough to do to worry about our own faults, without worrying about the faults of others, who probably don't worry about them anyway.
- Day 5      When we talk about another's faults we draw attention to our own.
- Day 6      There's so much bad in the best of us, and so much good in the worst of us, that it ill behoves any of us to find any fault in the rest of us.
- Day 7      If you chip away at people's faults you may end up causing them to come crashing down, like a building with minor cracks in it.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, you never condemned people because of their faults. You loved them instead, and that helped them change. May I love other people, in spite of their faults, as I hope they love me, in spite of mine.

## **Week 24 – Liberality**

### **Thought for the week**

*We should all give what we have decided in our heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthian. 9:7).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Do not discuss generosity with a miser or kindness with the hardhearted. You might as well speak to them in a foreign language.
- Day 2 When you give, do not shout it from the housetops. Let your giving be an act of worship, done in silence.
- Day 3 When you give to God, give of your first fruits, not of what is left. God deserves your best.
- Day 4 Generosity involves faith: It is trusting God to use us to meet a need in the life of another.
- Day 5 Proof of God's generosity is that he gave his only son so that we might have eternal life.
- Day 6 Five things constitute perfect virtue: gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. (Confucius).
- Day 7 Those who donate a great deal to charity become charitable as a result because they open a wide channel for God's blessings to reach them. (Zohar).

### **Prayer**

Lord, your word says that of the three graces, faith, hope and charity, charity is the greatest. Charity is selfless. Charity knows no bounds or limits. Charity is compassion in action. Charity is not patronising or condescending. So, dear Lord, help me to be charitable without feeling superior.

## **Week 25 – The Heart**

### **Thought for the week**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and steadfast spirit within me.  
(Psalm 51:10).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      The heart must be broken, melted and moulded before it can be filled with love. A heart filled with love is a treasure store that will never fail.
- Day 2      Equality, true equality, resides in human hearts, not in statutes written in the corridors of politics.
- Day 3      Within the heart of every person is the Point – the meeting place of North and South; East and West.
- Day 4      Most of us have a heart just big enough not to hate, but not large enough to truly love others. Let your heart be as soft as wax, to sympathise with others; and as hard a rock to bear the stones that fall upon it.
- Day 5      To be truly human we have to use both head and heart. We think with the intellect and feel with the heart. Do not treasure one and ignore the other.
- Day 6      Age may bring a failing memory, but the memories of the heart are ever fresh. Feelings never grow old.
- Day 7      If your heart is sad be like Samuel, who, amid the silence of Shiloh's temple, cried, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.'

### **Prayer**

Lord, keep my heart from growing old. Now and forever! Keep my heart tender and open to your leading, so that I can touch other people with your love.

## **Week 26 – Joy & Sorrow**

### **Thought for the week**

*The gayest hours trip lightly by, and leave the faintest trace;  
But the deep, deep track that sorrow wears, time never can efface.*  
(J. W. Hedderwich).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      We can never experience true joy until we have experienced the meaning of pain.
- Day 2      Joy and Sorrow are as inseparable as the wine from the cup. Joy would lose its thrill if we did not know sorrow. Mirth would be dulled if we knew not pain. Laughter is only a breath away from tears.
- Day 3      The things that bring us joy are invariably formed within the workshop of pain. The cup that holds the wine was formed in the silver smith's crucible. The tree that grew in the woods was cut to make the violin that soothes your spirit.
- Day 4      True friendship divides grief and multiplies joy.
- Day 5      Sorrow unexpressed rots the heart.
- Day 6      Joy and sorrow sleep in the same bed.
- Day 7      Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30:5).

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, I know that the rivers of joy run deeper than bubbly happiness. Joy is your gift to me, for which I thank you. I pray that I will not let sorrow dim the eyes of my spirit that I fail to see you standing with arms outstretched to comfort me in my times of deepest grief.

## **Week 27 – Mountains & Valleys**

### **Thought for the week**

*God is the Divine Author of mountains, valleys and rivers. Without the mountains there would be no valleys.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Living on the mountain-top will inspire you. Work done in the valley is what will sustain you.
- Day 2 Life presents many mountains, but remember, the highest mountain of life is climbed one foot after the other.
- Day 3 You may think that the valley has more to offer than the mountain, but the valley would be arid if it did not receive the homage of the mountain stream. The top of a mountain may prove to be a lonely victory.
- Day 4 If you are preoccupied with finding molehills you will never see the view from the top of the mountain.
- Day 5 Mountains stand as monuments to God's unfailing promises. God never fails. God will never be moved.
- Day 6 If you are passing through a dark valley, look up to the mountain.
- Day 7 Even Jesus could not stay on the mountain. He had work to do in the valley.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, it might be exciting on the mountain-top, but there is work in the fertile valley; so both are necessary. Help me to see that in my valleys there is always the river of your continuing love and care. Help me to look up and aim high, so that I don't trip over the molehill.

## **Week 28 – Strength & Weakness**

### **Thought for the week**

*God chooses the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong. (1 Corinthians 1:28).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Which do you possess, for most of the time; the lion strength of a clear conscience, or the rabbit weakness of a guilty conscience?
- Day 2      Never mistake force for strength. Remember, a strength carried to extreme is in danger of becoming a weakness.
- Day 3      A wise person draws on inner strengths. A foolish person depends on the resources of others. But our reserves of strength are concealed until we need to draw on them.
- Day 4      People who overcome their weaknesses are more worthy than those who overcome enemies.
- Day 5      It is wise to know what your strength is equal to, and what exceeds your ability.
- Day 6      We can only build on our strengths, not on our weaknesses.
- Day 7      Whatever you feel about yourself and your qualities and talents, remember this, being wise does not necessarily mean being strong. Strength of character comes from a strong sense of self-discipline.

### **Prayer**

Lord, keep me relying on your riches, your strength, your wisdom, to make me rich, strong and wise. Then I shall be content for you turn my weaknesses into strengths. Then you can use me for your purposes.

## **Week 29 – Trust & Doubt**

### **Thought for the week**

*O Most High, when I am afraid, I put my trust in you, whose word I praise. When I trust, I am not afraid what people can do to me. (Psalm 56:3-4).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      When you are ill, do you not trust the doctor's remedy? Can you, therefore, doubt your Heavenly Father's care?
- Day 2      Trust grows from a tiny seed. But it takes time and constant attention before it grows into a beautiful flower. Doubt is a weed that will flourish in ill-kept soil.
- Day 3      Make sure that the person you put your trust in is trustworthy. That is when it is wise to doubt.
- Day 4      Doubt might be a key to knowledge, but do not trust all that you read. It might be flawed.
- Day 5      Those who trust in God will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love. (The Apocrypha, Wisdom of Solomon, 3:9).
- Day 6      If you doubt God's provision, you are saying, 'I don't trust you.'
- Day 7      Death is the hidden gate to eternity and to God's presence. If you trust God with your life, you can trust him with your death.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me in times of doubt to still trust in your loving kindness. Keep ever before me your promise that you will never leave me nor forsake me.

## **Week 30 – Thinking, Feeling & Speaking**

### **Thought for the week**

*Wisdom is known through speech, and education through the words of the tongue.*  
(The Apocrypha, Sirach 4:23-24).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      When we do not listen, we demean the other person. When we refuse to speak, we do everyone an injustice.
- Day 2      Do not answer before you listen, and do not interrupt when another is speaking. Do not argue about a matter that does not concern you. (The Apocrypha, Sirach 11:8-9).
- Day 3      Show yourself to be totally alive, by thinking, acting, and speaking with enthusiasm.
- Day 4      Thinking without feeling is cold; feeling without thinking is blind. Speaking without thought is as useless as an empty drum.
- Day 5      When we fail to hear, the spoken words, and the feelings they carry, are lost for ever.
- Day 6      Thoughts are the rudder, and feelings the sail of our ocean-going soul. Our words, the wind that moves the soul along.
- Day 7      Take responsibility for your own feelings, thoughts, words, and actions. You cannot make other people responsible for what you say, think or feel, or for your behaviour.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me to listen to other people's words and feelings; think before I speak; to speak the truth; to speak with wisdom, so that my words build people up.

## **Week 31 – Virtues & Vices**

### **Thought for the week**

*Virtue is not restricted to saints. We should measure virtue not by what we do on Sundays, but by what we are every day of the week.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Virtues and Vices never come upon us full-blown. They grow upon us little by little. Getting rid of a vice usually requires radical surgery.
- Day 2 People will not recognize a virtue by your refraining from evil; but they will recognise when you do something good and worthwhile.
- Day 3 If you have love, then all the other virtues will follow. But that does not mean that you don't have to work on them.
- Day 4 Vices started off their life as normal feelings and desires. A virtue not tempered with humility can become a vice.
- Day 5 Your failings will be more easily noticed by virtuous people, than by sinners. Your virtues will be more easily noticed by sinners.
- Day 6 Do you fight for principles or live up to them?
- Day 7 If we did not know what sin was, would we be so horrified by what some people do?

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, help me to develop the virtues of love, courage, faith, determination, hope, justice, kindness, discretion, self-control, and truthfulness. And may I spurn the vices of pride, greed, lust, envy, excess, vengeance, and laziness. May my virtues grow and my vices lessen.

## **Week 32 – Beliefs**

### **Thought for the week**

*And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John, 3:16).
- Day 2      When Daniel was taken up out of the lions' den, he was unhurt, because he believed in his God.
- Day 3      Strengthen your belief in the Bible by nurturing the fruits of meditating on his promises.
- Day 4      Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (John, 14:1 – 2).
- Day 5      Three things are necessary for salvation: to know what we ought to believe; to know what we ought to desire; and to know what we ought to do. (Saint Thomas Aquinas).
- Day 6      Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. (William James).
- Day 7      Believe for something and you will see it.

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, help me ever to hold firm the belief that you will be my guide in every part of my life. Help me to focus my mind on a future with you. That where you are, there I will be also.

## **Week 33 – Forgiveness & Bitterness**

### **Thought for the week**

*O Lord, according to your great goodness you have promised repentance and forgiveness to those who have sinned against you.*

(The Apocrypha, Prayer of Manasseh).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Bitterness is second cousin to hate. Do not give room in your heart to either.
- Day 2      It takes a brave person to forgive, but a coward does not know how to say sorry.
- Day 3      Nothing in this world will cause so much heartache as being consumed with the passion of resentment.
- Day 4      Can you say: Father, forgive me my injuries, as I forgive those I have injured!
- Day 5      Strive to be at peace with everyone. Be a good example of the grace of God. Bitterness has ruined the lives of many, so do not let it lodge in your heart. (Hebrews 12:14-15).
- Day 6      If we did not know forgiveness for our sins, through Jesus Christ, we would not know how to forgive other people when they wrong us.
- Day 7      Bitterness brings heart pain. If you dine on a meal of resentment, do not grumble if your pain gives you sleepless nights. Love is the antidote.

### **Prayer**

Father, I know that all my sins are forgiven freely. Help me to practice what I believe. Help me to be more forgiving, but in the end, it is what I decide to do. You cannot make me forgive.

## **Week 34 – Death & Resurrection**

### **Thought for the week**

*Jesus said to her (Martha), 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'* (John 11:25-26).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Good Friday would be the Devil's victory if there were no Resurrection Day. Do not let fear of death rob you of the joy of your eventual resurrection to everlasting life in Christ.
- Day 2      Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime. (Martin Luther).
- Day 3      Death is every bit a mystery as life itself. We will only understand the meaning of life as we experience death and resurrection.
- Day 4      People who die in Christ have no fear of death.
- Day 5      Beyond the sunset of this life lies a new dawn.
- Day 6      Resurrection is like the daffodil bursting through the frozen ground. It heralds a new springtime.
- Day 7      Death is but the shedding of the old skin. Resurrection is donning the bright new robes of the Lamb, prepared for those who are faithful. Be not afraid of death. You are coming home!

### **Prayer**

Father God, help me to understand that tomorrow is only a sunrise away. Your Holy Spirit lives to intercede for me. Jesus is the bridge between this world and the next. Keep me treading that bridge until I hear your 'Welcome Home my beloved!'

## Week 35 – Children

### Thought for the week

*Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, And though they are with you yet they belong not to you. (Gibran, The Prophet).*

### Meditations

- Day 1 Children are entrusted to us on loan. To believe otherwise is to deny them the right to be themselves, and to tie them for ever to us as our possessions.
- Day 2 Children who are told what they *may* do, not what they *shouldn't* do, develop enquiring minds.
- Day 3 Children who live with optimism grow up believing they were born to fly. Yet they do not sufferer the delusion of thinking they can.
- Day 4 Children who are given appropriate responsibility to balance the wings of independence do not feel overwhelmed by doubt or driven by the need for approval.
- Day 5 You may give children your love but you can only help them to think their own thoughts.
- Day 6 Children already live in the world of tomorrow. We have no bridge into their world, and to try to keep them in ours is a betrayal.
- Day 7 Children are the dawn of each new generation. Greet the dawn with joyful expectancy.

### Prayer

Father, help me not to betray childhood by trying to put adult responsibility onto shoulders too young to bear its weight.

## **Week 36 – Perfection**

### **Thought for the week**

*As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake I shall be satisfied, when I awake with your likeness. (Psalm 17:15).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      God does not command us to be happy, but to be perfect in Christ. If we are happy as well, then that is a bonus.
- Day 2      God does not hold up his standard of perfection to taunt us, but to inspire us to strive to reach his standard.
- Day 3      You have heard it said that practice makes perfect, but that only applies if you practice perfection.
- Day 4      The love of God is perfected in those who keep his word. This is how we know and demonstrate that we love him. (1 John 2:5).
- Day 5      Remember, nobody achieved perfection by wishful thinking, but by hard work.
- Day 6      Strive to perfect the qualities of a generous spirit, with wisdom, truthfulness, love and serenity.
- Day 7      God is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. (Jude 24).

### **Prayer**

Lord, I know that I am not yet perfect, but that you are drawing me ever on toward perfection. When I am discouraged, keep my eyes fixed on the Celestial City, and your ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’

## **Week 37 – Poverty & Wealth**

### **Thought for the week**

*Of what use is wealth to a miser? What he denies himself he collects for others; and others will live in luxury on his goods. (The Apocrypha, Sirach 14:3-4).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      The poorest person can be rich in generosity, human dignity, integrity and spiritual values.
- Day 2      Prosperous people always run the risk of losing their wealth; poor people always have the prospect of being better off.
- Day 3      God will not judge you by what you did not possess, but by what you did with what he gave you.
- Day 4      Wealthy people who lack the vision of what good to do with their wealth, are poverty-stricken in spirit.
- Day 5      Riches and all that goes with wealth, do not give rest to a weary body, or bring comfort to a dying soul.
- Day 6      When we seek wealth without God, we build a ship without a rudder.
- Day 7      However much wealth you have, if your wants are never satisfied, you will never have enough. Blessed is the person whose wants are simple and whose needs are few.

### **Prayer**

Father, you supply all my needs, not my wants. May I not doubt your supply. May I treat with respect all that you give me, and not to waste precious energy longing for wealth which I cannot use.

## Week 38 – Acceptance & Rejection

### Thought for the week

*The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the foremost. (1 Timothy 1:15).*

### Meditations

- Day 1      The most wonderful think about God is that he doesn't pick and choose what he likes or dislikes about us; he accepts us just as we are. God's greatest difficulty is that we reject ourselves.
- Day 2      We will never feel totally approved of by other people unless they accept the very worst in us.
- Day 3      We cannot say, 'I accept you,' and then add, 'if you will –.' Acceptance does not impose conditions.
- Day 4      If in this life we learn the difference – and act thereupon – between what pleases God and what does not, we have accepted his will for us.
- Day 5      Acceptance results in unity. Rejection results in division.
- Day 6      Learn the lesson of Contentment. Happy is the man who can accept that, in whatever state he finds himself, he is content.
- Day 7      Don't go through life forever kicking against the traces, like the stubborn horse, who does not accept the bit.

### Prayer

God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. (Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Serenity Prayer*).

## **Week 39 – Adoration**

### **Thought for the week**

*My heart is fixed, O God. I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord.*  
(Psalm 57:7-9).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Although I feel unworthy to even approach you, you bid be come and adore.
- Day 2      In my adoration I give you thanks for all your great love which you have showered upon me.
- Day 3      I cannot adore you fully unless in my heart I have made restitution for wrongs committed. Nothing I can bring is enough. I bring my heart.
- Day 4      I cannot adore you and be at war with my brother. Help me to forgive.
- Day 5      When I adore you, I feel at one with you. Help me to live in unity with those around me.
- Day 6      To adore you I must exercise faith, to believe that you are my Father, that Jesus is my Saviour, and the Holy Spirit, my guide.
- Day 7      There are many things about God which must remain a mystery. Do not try to understand them with your finite mind. Adore God in wonder. It is the only way.

### **Prayer**

Father, when you calm my human nature my spirit is full of energy. I bow before you in humbleness, awe, adoration, love. I know that this temple you have created will one day pass into the silence of eternity, there never to tire or grow old. There I shall be immortal. Keep me worshipping you.

## **Week 40 – Afflictions & Comfort**

### **Thought for the week**

If the world seems cold to you, kindle fires to warm it!' (Lucy Larcom).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      If you would not have affliction visit you twice, listen at once to what it teaches. (James Burgh).
- Day 2      God is our refuge and strength, our comforter, preserver, deliverer, and supporter.
- Day 3      It is our God-given duty to pray for those who are afflicted. To bear their pain, to comfort and sustain, as we wish them to uphold us in our afflictions.
- Day 4      Do not be as the seed sown in shallow ground, that wilts at the first sign of heat because it has no depth of ground.
- Day 5      Take comfort from the little stream that emerges unscathed from the hard winter ice.
- Day 6      Afflictions are the paving slabs of the road to heaven. We travel in the footsteps of Christ and the martyrs. In this find comfort.
- Day 7      Jesus comforts us in all our afflictions, so that we may bring comfort to other people. Know the comfort of Christ in your heart this day.

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father, you are my strength and succour; my encourager and support in distress and affliction; my consolation in grief and loss. You are the Comforter in my pain, calamity, or persecution, and in my repentance.

## **Week 41 – Assurance**

### **Thought for the week**

*If you seek reassurance of your position in Christ, give thanks that God's word says: that you are justified, have been adopted, are sanctified, and are precious.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Let this be your assurance, My God loves me. Grow in grace, to the very end. And may your life be filled with a conscience at peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
- Day 2      In Jesus you can have perfect assurance. Trust him when he says: 'He that believeth on Me shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'
- Day 3      Remind yourself – often – that whatever happens, God will take care of you. He has promised, and his promises are binding.
- Day 4      Assurance and holy confidence makes us hold out our open hands to receive the promises of God, trusting that he will not give us anything harmful.
- Day 5      Meditate upon the Lord's holy name, that you may have confidence in him. Rejoice in his holy character. He is just, true, gracious, faithful and unchanging. He is a God to be trusted.
- Day 6      Those who know the name of the Lord will trust him; and they that trust in him will rejoice. Jehovah-Shalom will send peace.
- Day 7      The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous will run into it and be safe. (Proverbs 18:10).

### **Prayer**

Father, I know I am safe within your arms. In this assurance I find sweetest rest; Glory to Jesus I know I am blest.

## **Week 42 – Compassion**

### **Thought for the week**

*When the prodigal son reached the bottom of the pit, he made up his mind to return home. His father saw him coming and ran to him, and in compassion threw his arms about his neck and welcomed him home. (Luke 15:20).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Compassion is the hallmark of true character. Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus.
- Day 2      Do not say that you weep for the whole world. That is God's task. Show compassion to one person; that is all you can do.
- Day 3      When you show compassion you are allowing people to show compassion to you.
- Day 4      Let your life be like a reservoir. The water is held there for a purpose. Let your compassion flow. If it does not, it will stagnate.
- Day 5      Christ has no hands but yours and mine to carry out his works of compassion.
- Day 6      Compassion is not an abstract quality. Compassion reaches out and touches.
- Day 7      Some people try to work up a glow of compassion, like sitting in front of a fire, and praying earnestly, 'Lord, teach me compassion.' But compassion is not taught, it is exercised. Find someone who needs a helping hand.

### **Prayer**

Father, help me to love, to be tolerant in judgment, gentle in speech, ripe in wisdom in the affairs of the soul, finding delight and reward in the comfort of helping to relieve distress. Help me to be a channel of your love.

## **Week 43 – Conscience**

### **Thought for the week**

*The water of baptism – not the washing off of material defilement, but the craving of a good conscience after God – through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.  
(1 Peter 3:21. Weymouth).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      This too is my own earnest endeavour – always to have a clear conscience in relation to God and man. (Acts 24:16. Weymouth).
- Day 2      Your conscience is ever with you, yet it cannot be seen by other people. They can only know your conscience by how you behave.
- Day 3      Conscience is the voice of the soul; the passions are the voice of the body. (J. J. Rousseau).
- Day 4      Conscience is like an alarm clock. For one man it rings loud and clear, and he takes heed. For another man, the clock is smothered by a pillow. The alarm goes unheeded. The train leaves without him.
- Day 5      Don't put on your once-a-week conscience like your Sunday-best coat.
- Day 6      Conscience may be your best friend or your worst enemy. The choice is yours.
- Day 7      Conscience heeded will become tender. Ignore its voice, and it will soon stop speaking.

### **Prayer**

Father, the inner ear of my conscience allows me to hear your voice. Keep my conscience clear, and my hearing alert.

## **Week 44 – Contemplation**

### **Thought for the week**

*Let your contemplations be simple and review them frequently. Search for truths as earnestly as you would for the rarest gems in the earth.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      A busy motorway is not the best place to engage in contemplation. Find your own wilderness, there you can contemplate the silence of your inner temple. There you will find quietness.
- Day 2      So often we cannot see the glorious colours of life because our eyes and heart are jaundiced. Clear away the inner diseases and see God's beauty in all its vibrant hues.
- Day 3      If you cannot contemplate the majesty of God, meditate on his love that gave his Son for you.
- Day 4      Let love, desire for God, hope, courage, or boldness, joy, and peace be the focus of your contemplations.
- Day 5      Times of particular contemplation: the Lord's Day, when your heart is warmed with a sense of the divine; when you are afflicted or tempted; when someone you know is near death.
- Day 6      Contemplation starts with the first thought.
- Day 7      Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10).

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me to contemplate your love, your grace, your wisdom, your justice, so that my life will reflect their working out in me. Help me this day to be still and to know that you will keep me in perfect peace because my mind is fixed on you.

## **Week 45 – Worship**

### **Thought for the week**

*Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. (1 Chronicles 16:29).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. (John 4:23).
- Day 2 If people cannot worship the God of Creation, can they worship the Christ of the Cross?
- Day 3 Let worship be a window through which you gaze upon the beauty and love of God.
- Day 4 We worship God because he is God, and we shall have no other gods but him only. Him only will we serve.
- Day 5 A time is coming when the whole world will bow at the feet of him who is worthy to receive all honour, glory and power. Give God his rightful place here.
- Day 6 Jesus is the only one who has the right to worship God. We worship God through Christ's sacrificial love.
- Day 7 Build yourself up in your most holy faith by communion with God in Christ Jesus. Let your worship be a testimony of God's love in your life.

### **Prayer**

Father, I want to render my worship ungrudgingly, and not as a heavy labour

## **Week 46 – Christians**

### **Thought for the week**

*Christianity means doing everything as an act of worship.*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. (1 Peter 4:16).
- Day 2      Christians and camels receive their burdens kneeling. (Ambrose Bierce).
- Day 3      A real Christian is a person who can give his pet parrot to a town gossip. (Billy Graham).
- Day 4      Let it not be said of us that as Christians we closed our eyes and ears to the needs of children who cannot read or write; who have no-one to feed them; who have no-one to point them to the beauties of nature and art; or tell them of Jesus.
- Day 5      Christians might not be perfect, but don't shoot the messenger.
- Day 6      Christianity is best observed in the ardent, impartial, overflowing love of man to man.
- Day 7      A Christian is on a pilgrimage, passing through this world, toward his home in Christ.

### **Prayer**

Father, keep my eyes directed forward and upward. I cannot live on past experience. What you taught me last year was yesterday's food. I know I shall not survive if I do not partake daily. Feed me today so that I can feed others.

## **Week 47 – Work**

### **Thought for the week**

*Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. (John 6:27).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Don't get into the bad habit of praying for something and then sitting back expecting God to work a miracle. He will only do so if you can't do it for yourself.
- Day 2      Neither hard work nor virtue is a substitute for talent. Although talents may be God-given, skill is the reward of hard work and dedication.
- Day 3      Not all work is noisy or laborious. Take the sunshine. You can only see the evidence of it working by its results in the beauty of nature.
- Day 4      Work without play is drudgery. Play without work is a vacuum. You need work and play.
- Day 5      May you have work until your life shall end, and enough life until your work is done.
- Day 6      Many people have become millionaires by working at something no one else is willing to do.
- Day 7      Do not make prayer hard work, but make all your work a prayer of thanks to God.

### **Prayer**

Lord, I thank you for the health and strength you give me to do the work I have to do. You give me what is sufficient for my daily needs. May my work always be honourable and true, as an offering to you.

## **Week 48 – Confession**

### **Thought for the week**

*We have a great high priest, Jesus Christ, from whom we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-15).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run in and are saved. The admission fee is to confess: ‘I am a sinner, unrighteous and lost.’
- Day 2      Be careful to whom you confess your sins. God will love you; people might judge you.
- Day 3      You might find it easier to confess to what you have done than to what you have left undone.
- Day 4      If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).
- Day 5      I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. (Revelations 3:5).
- Day 6      Confession without repentance is like minting a coin without the monarch’s head.
- Day 7      Confession is God-directed. Repentance and restitution are other-directed.

### **Prayer**

Father, if confession is good for the soul, then help me to keep my soul healthy and in good spirits by never being afraid to confess to you what I might not want to confess to other people. I know that my confession is safe with you. You will not broadcast my failings. You will cover them up with the thickest blanket, never to be revealed.

## **Week 49 – Understanding**

### **Thought for the week**

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever. (Psalm 111:10).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1 Folly is a joy to one who has no sense, but a person of understanding walks straight ahead. (Proverbs 15:21).
- Day 2 Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding. (Job 28:28).
- Day 3 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. (Proverbs 4:7).
- Day 4 Do not be like the people Jeremiah had in mind when he said: ‘Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.’ (Jeremiah, 5:21).
- Day 5 Much learning does not teach understanding. That is why people with little education are often so wise.
- Day 6 Nature’s commentary on the ‘peace that passeth all understanding,’ is seen in the clear skies after a storm, where not a leaf stirs; and in the cool of the evening after the heat.
- Day 7 Jesus is the key to understanding the Scriptures.

### **Prayer**

Father, as the window lets the light of the sun into my house, may your understanding convey the Spirit’s influence to my soul. May my soul always be open to let in the light of your understanding.

## **Week 50 – Contentment**

### **Thought for the week**

*Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. (1 Timothy 6:6).*

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty. (Socrates).
- Day 2      Divine Contentment is learning to let go and let God take control.
- Day 3      Being content is like the wind; you can see evidence of it, but can never grasp it.
- Day 4      Contentment may not create a perfect mind or body, but it can help you stop murmuring against the God who created you the way you are.
- Day 5      Contentment moderates ambition. It is incompatible with corruption. It sweetens conversation, and gives serenity to the heart.
- Day 6      To be content, consider how much more you have than what you need. Secondly, consider how much more unhappy you might be than you really are.
- Day 7      Contentment is a pearl of great price, and whoever procures it at the expense of ten thousand desires makes a wise and a happy purchase. (J. Talguy).

### **Prayer**

Father, I know that riches do not bring contentment, nor does poverty necessarily bring dissatisfaction. What makes the difference lies in the condition of my heart. Keep me praising you for all your wonderful provision. I thank you for what you provide. I thank you for what, in your wisdom, you withhold from me.

## **Week 51 – Truth**

### **Thought for the week**

*Jesus said 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'* (John 8:31-32).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. (Psalm 25:5).
- Day 2      Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name. (Psalm 86:11).
- Day 3      Fight to the death for truth, and the Lord God will fight for you. (The Apocrypha, Sirach 4:28).
- Day 4      A few words that suggest hidden truths are more to be cherished than a multitude of words that simply confirm what you already know.
- Day 5      Truth will triumph in the end because it can never be extinguished, any more than evil could kill God.
- Day 6      Truth needs no explanation, any more than does the lightning flash or the ray of sunshine, on a dark day.
- Day 7      The existing forms of religion may dissolve, but the truth which is the soul of religion will revive more vigorous than ever. (A. J. Froude).

### **Prayer**

Father, to understand what truth is would require a lifetime of study. I believe that you are the truth. You speak the truth. Jesus lived a life of truth. He never uttered a single falsehood. Keep me ever truthful.

## **Week 52 – Courage & Discouragement**

### **Thought for the week**

*Courage, brother! do not stumble, Though thy path is dark as night; There's a star to guide the humble, Trust in God and do the right.* (Norman McLeod).

### **Meditations**

- Day 1      It often calls for more courage, more superhuman patience and staying power, to stand firm than it does to charge into battle.
- Day 2      Conscience recognizes courage as the foundation of integrity, and integrity is one of the pillars of a sound human character.
- Day 3      Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, courage, health, and hope. Thoughts of discord, discouragement, sickness and despair will fill your life with death.
- Day 4      True love resides in the heart of one who can accept support, encouragement and praise, as well as give them.
- Day 5      Taking risks requires courage; not taking risks may mean defeat. Courage sees what needs to be done, and does it.
- Day 6      Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! (Psalm 27:14).
- Day 7      Do not let mistakes discourage you from pressing on toward the goal. Get up and try again.

### **Prayer**

Father, help me to ever remember your words to Joshua: I hereby command you: 'Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.' (Joshua 1:9). When I am afraid, I know that trust in you will fill me with courage.

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