
SECRETS
of
INNER
PEACE

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SECRETS *of* INNER PEACE

“The way of peace they have not known” (Romans 3:17).

It was a quiet day as I sat with my father in a scenic park near Studio City, California. “Something’s missing in my life,” my dad told me. “I have a good job, a nice home, and a wonderful wife, with sufficient money to live on,” he continued, “*but I’m empty inside.*” Almost 40 years have gone by since we had that conversation in the early 1980s, but I still remember it clearly.

“I’m empty inside,” my father told me.

He had *no peace within*.

My dad wasn’t alone. Countless others can relate to having a persistently bothersome sense that something isn’t quite right inside their souls. *No peace within*. Is real peace possible? Just to clarify, I’m not talking about merely a transient happy feeling inside, such as when we enjoy tasty food, or spend time with friends, or engage in other pleasant activities. Instead, I’m talking about a deep sense of inner peace that even the trials of life can’t destroy.

Thankfully, I have found such peace.

In these short pages, I’m going to share with you what I’ve discovered, and explain how you can experience real inner peace, too. Rest assured, my

message isn't some pie-in-the-sky formula, or foolish imagining. Nor is it based on philosophical speculation or get-rich schemes. Instead, it's rooted in tried-and-true information found in an ancient Book, the Holy Bible. If you're willing to keep reading and give me a chance, I believe that you will discover something that your own heart longs for.

THE HOLY BIBLE

First, here's a quick quiz question: Can you guess what book is the world's all-time bestselling volume? It has been translated into more languages worldwide and purchased by more people in more countries than any other book ever written in the history of literature. No, it's not Harry Potter, or any other fictitious novel, but the Holy Bible.

I realize skeptics abound who don't believe that the Bible is God's Book but, without a doubt, its track record speaks for itself. The famous 19th century French atheist Voltaire (1694–1778) once declared, “It took 12 men to originate the Christian religion, but it will take but one to eliminate it. Within fifty years from now the only Bible will be in museums.”

Voltaire was wrong.

Now he's dead, but the Bible lives on. Not only that, but 50 years after Voltaire's death, the Geneva Bible Society purchased his house in Paris and used it as its headquarters to produce stacks of Bibles!

So, what does the Bible say about inner peace? Below are just a few verses. Read them carefully:

Depart from evil and do good; *Seek peace* and pursue it. (Psalm 34:14, emphasis added)

I will both lie down *in peace*, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8, emphasis added)

For God is not the author of confusion *but of peace*. (1 Corinthians 14:33, emphasis added)

Now may *the Lord of peace* Himself give you *peace* always in every way. (2 Thessalonians 3:16, emphasis added)

The Lord will bless His people *with peace*. (Psalm 29:11, emphasis added)

“There is *no peace*,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.” (Isaiah 48:22, emphasis added)

Thus, the Bible urges us to seek peace, offers us peace, and says we can sleep in peace. Sounds good, doesn't it? As you keep reading, you will discover how these blessings can be yours, too. But before we go farther, read this stirring statement inserted inside Bibles distributed by The Gideons International:

The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter. Here too, Heaven is opened and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

Again, I realize that many don't believe that the Bible is God's Book, yet millions do—and you must admit that its track record is impressive. It's the world's bestselling book! That's nothing to sneeze at.

Here's another quiz question: Can you guess the name of history's most famous person? More books have been written about Him *by far* than about any other human being that has ever walked this earth.

Not only that, but this unique Person has more followers today worldwide than any other religious leader who has ever taught among men, including Moses, Mohammed, Buddha, or Confucius *combined*. No joke. It's the truth. That Person is Jesus Christ. The Holy Bible calls Him, "the Prince of Peace" (see Isaiah 9:6). What makes Jesus Christ unique above all other humans? Here's a partial list:

1. The Bible predicted His birth in the town of Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem, *nearly 700 years before He was born* (see Micah 5:2). Can you think of any other human being who can legitimately claim that his birthplace was pinpointed hundreds of years in advance?

No one but Jesus.

2. According to the biblical account (see Luke 1:26–35), Jesus was conceived inside of His mother (Mary) without her being impregnated by a man. In other words, the Bible says that *Jesus had no earthy dad*, and that His conception was wholly miraculous. This was also predicted in Bible prophecy (see Isaiah 7:14; 9:6).
3. After living His first 30 years in remote obscurity in the quiet town of Nazareth, the period of His public ministry was quite

short—only three-and-a-half years. Yet the world hasn't been the same since.

4. Jesus is the only person who has ever lived who could innocently ask His hearers, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46). His life was 100% flawless. He never cursed, got drunk, acted improperly, lied, or even spoke a false word. Not once. Even the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, during His trial, confessed publicly, "I find no fault in Him" (John 19:4). The Bible reports He "committed no sin" (1 Peter 2:22). No other human being has ever legitimately made such a claim.

Not one.

5. Four historically credible accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) testify that Jesus Christ lived and was crucified by Roman soldiers. After six hours of painful suffering on a cross, "they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead" (John 19:33). His body was then taken off the cross, and placed inside a cold, clammy cave outside Jerusalem (Matthew 27:57–61). One of the biggest historical questions of all time is: *Did this Man really rise from the dead, as the Bible claims? Consider these well-documented facts:*

EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

After Jesus was buried, “a large stone” was rolled over the entrance of His tomb (Matthew 27:60). Because His enemies wanted to make sure that His disciples didn’t remove that stone, steal His dead body, and then falsely claim He was resurrected, they persuaded Pontius Pilate to post a guard of Roman soldiers outside His tomb (Matthew 27:62–66). At that point, Jesus’ remaining disciples were utterly discouraged and downcast. Their beloved Master was dead. So, they went into hiding. But a short time later, something of such historical magnitude happened that it suddenly transformed that devastated band of dejected Jews into fearless men and women willing to die for their faith. Think about it. If Jesus’ disciples had snatched His dead body, why would they fearlessly be willing *to die for a lie*? And how could they have gotten past those Roman guards who wouldn’t dare sleep at their post for fear of being executed?

It’s not logical.

Nevertheless, the tomb was empty!

Not only that, but over 500 eyewitnesses *actually saw the Risen One* (see 1 Corinthians 15:6). The Bible says that Jesus “presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs” (Acts 1:3). After His resurrection, Christianity became unstoppable and spread like wildfire throughout the Roman Empire—in spite of incredible opposition and periods of bloody persecution.

Today, *Christianity is the largest religion in the world.*

Inquiring minds have soberly pondered these historical realities for nearly 2000 years, and skeptics have done their best to disprove them. But they've failed. The evidence still stands. Honestly, the only logical explanation for these astonishing facts is that Jesus Christ *really did rise from the dead.* After looking objectively at these real, historical circumstances, author Josh McDowell, in his bestselling book, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, concludes that the facts are incontrovertible.

Jesus Christ really rose from the dead.

- 6) Nearly 2000 years after Jesus walked this earth, His teachings still have power to transform human hearts. Countless people today can testify that the words of Jesus Christ recorded in the New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have delivered them from addictive habits, discouragement, despair, hopelessness, and fear into a new life filled with renewed purpose, a sense of meaning, hope for the future, and the wondrous assurance that there truly is a God in heaven who created our universe, and who loves them deeply—in spite of their sins and faults.

Here is another famous reading describing the incredible impact of history's most monumental man:

Here is a man [Jesus] who was born in an obscure village [Bethlehem], the child of a peasant woman [Mary]. He grew up in another obscure village [Nazareth]. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth—His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is a centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built; all the parliaments that ever sat

and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.

—Purportedly written by James Allan Francis (1864–1928)

JESUS CHRIST SPEAKS PEACE

The New Testament reports that one time, as evening approached, Jesus told His disciples to climb into a small boat so they could cross over to the other side of a lake. As the disciples rowed, suddenly “a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling,” (Mark 4:37). The terrified disciples labored frantically to empty water out of their boat, but they couldn’t work fast enough.

Oh, why doesn’t Jesus help us? they wondered.

What was He doing?

He was peacefully “asleep on a pillow” (vs. 38)!

Desperately, the disciples woke Jesus. Screaming into howling winds, they shouted, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” (vs. 38). Now, watch closely. The Bible then says,

He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. (Mark 4:39)

Fierce winds ceased. The raging sea died down. The boat stopped rocking. Storm clouds parted.

Twinkling stars appeared. In utter amazement, the boat rowers gazed speechless at a Man who had just calmed a storm by speaking just three words, "Peace, be still." The Bible then reports that Christ's disciples, "feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?'" (Mark 4:39-41). Who was that Man? The biblical answer is, "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:30) who, in fulfillment of ancient prophecies, had embarked on a divine mission to rescue lost sinners from sin.

"Peace, be still," Jesus commanded that storm. Instantly, nature itself obeyed. Within moments, "there was a great calm." Dear reader, the main message of this little booklet is that Jesus Christ can do *for you* what He did in the midst of that storm.

Are storms raging in your heart? Are you being tossed to and fro by life's stresses, strains, temptations, trials, and catastrophes? Do you feel like those disciples did that night on the lake? Are you slowly perishing? If so, take heart! The Prince of Peace who died on a cross, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven has His eye on you—yes, *even you!* Believe it or not, He is invisibly *with you* in your boat, and He can calm your storm, too. "Peace, be still," are the words of One who spoke like no other man. His words have power, like no other words. In your heart there can be "a great calm," through trusting Him.

THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

Years ago, I was teaching a Bible prophecy seminar in the town of Armstrong, British Columbia. Night by night, I read from the pages of God's Book before an eager audience. One attendee was a young Native American woman in her twenties. Unknown to me, this woman's life was a mess. "Can I talk to you privately?" she asked me one night after a meeting. "Of course," I responded. Shortly thereafter, as we visited together apart from the crowd, she divulged some of her personal struggles.

Pondering her problems, I opened my Bible and read this verse to her:

He sent forth His word, and healed them,
and delivered them from their destructions.
(Psalm 107:20)

We talked some more, then I prayed for her before she left. The next night, she returned to my meetings. At the conclusion, she approached me again. "Last night, after we talked," she blurted out, "I got into my car and drove home. As I drove, I kept thinking about that Bible verse you shared, that says, 'He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.'"

"I kept thinking about that verse," she continued, "then it hit me. *I* have many 'destructions' that are killing me. *I* use drugs, drink alcohol, and do bad things. That Bible verse says, 'He sent forth His

word, and healed them.’ As I was driving, I suddenly realized that perhaps God Himself led me to your seminar ‘to send forth His word’ *into my heart* so I can be ‘healed’ of my problems!” Her face was glowing. As far as I remember, she never missed another night of my meetings.

Consider this: Do *you* have any “destructions” that are killing you? If so, is it possible that your merciful Creator has guided *you* to this booklet so that He can “send forth His word” into *your* heart so *you* can be “healed” and “delivered” from *your* destructions? Believe me (for I’ve experienced it myself), God’s “word” has dynamic power. Take a look at these Bible verses:

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
and all the host of them by the breath of His
mouth. ... For He spoke, and it was done; He
commanded, and it stood fast. (Psalm 33:6, 9)

Upholding all things by the word of His power.
(Hebrews 1:3)

The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word
of our God endures forever. (Isaiah 40:8)

Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words
will by no means pass away. (Matthew 24:35)

BIBLE PROMISES TO HELP US IN TIMES OF NEED

Do you feel unloved? “The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: ‘Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you’” (Jeremiah 31:3).

Do you need forgiveness? “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Are you addicted to something destructive? “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Do you feel guilty? “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12).

Do you feel worthless? “Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31).

Do you think too highly of yourself? “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 14:11).

Do you need guidance? “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:6).

Do you need wisdom? “For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6).

Do you need hope for the future? “‘For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope’” (Jeremiah 29:11).

Do you need comfort in loss? “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

Are you afraid? “For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help you’” (Isaiah 41:13).

Are you lonely? “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18).

Are you bitter? Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled” (Hebrews 12:15).

Are you filled with anxiety? “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7 NIV).

Are you discouraged? “Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

These Bible promises are powerful. Try memorizing some of them, based on your needs.

I once met a young man in the cafeteria of a certain college. “Steve,” he told me excitedly, “I’ve been going to church for many years, but for the first time, I’m now memorizing Bible verses. They’re changing my life!”

I still remember the enthusiastic look on his face. He was telling me the truth.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

One of the major causes of confusion and perplexity today is society’s lack of moral guidelines. What’s right? What’s wrong? People don’t know anymore. Many are so confused! Personally, I have found great peace of mind by reading, and by putting into practice, the Ten Commandments. In case you’ve never read them, here they are as recorded in the Holy Bible:

I

AND GOD SPOKE ALL THESE WORDS, SAYING: "I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE. YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME."

II

"YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FOR YOURSELF A CARVED IMAGE— ANY LIKENESS OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH; YOU SHALL NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM NOR SERVE THEM. FOR I, THE LORD YOUR GOD, AM A JEALOUS GOD, VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN TO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATIONS OF THOSE WHO HATE ME, BUT SHOWING MERCY TO THOUSANDS, TO THOSE WHO LOVE ME AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS."

III

"YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN, FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLess WHO TAKES HIS NAME IN VAIN."

IV

"REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS YOU SHALL LABOR AND DO ALL YOUR WORK, BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD YOUR GOD. IN IT YOU SHALL DO NO WORK: YOU, NOR YOUR SON, NOR YOUR DAUGHTER, NOR YOUR MALE SERVANT, NOR YOUR FEMALE SERVANT, NOR YOUR CATTLE, NOR YOUR STRANGER WHO IS WITHIN YOUR GATES. FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY. THEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SABBATH DAY AND HALLOWED IT."

V

“HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD IS GIVING YOU.”

VI

“YOU SHALL NOT MURDER.”

VII

“YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.”

VIII

“YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.”

IX

“YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.”

X

“YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE; YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR’S WIFE, NOR HIS MALE SERVANT, NOR HIS FEMALE SERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS DONKEY, NOR ANYTHING THAT IS YOUR NEIGHBOR’S.”

EXODUS 20:1–17

The Ten Commandments reveal what’s right, and what’s wrong—in black and white, from God’s perspective. They were “written with the finger of God” (Exodus 31:18). The Bible also says that breaking any one of the Ten Commandments is called “sin.” “Sin is the transgression [violation] of the law” (1 John 3:4 KJV). “By the law is the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). Whenever we commit

sin—such as when we dishonor our parents, murder, commit adultery, steal or lie—our God-given internal moral compass (called the “conscience”) often smites us and we feel guilty. Notice carefully: It is guilt (because of sin) that brings unrest, a sense of shame, fear, dread, *and destroys our peace*. Shockingly, the Bible also says that the ultimate penalty (on Judgment Day) for breaking God’s holy law is the death sentence. As it is written,

Those who practice such things
are deserving of death. (Romans 1:32)

The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23)

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers [6th commandment], sexually immoral [7th commandment], sorcerers, idolaters [2nd commandment], and all liars [9th commandment] shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Revelation 21:8)

Sounds serious, doesn’t it? *It is serious*. But the Good News is that God loves us still, in spite of our sins. That’s why He sent Jesus Christ into our dark world, to be born in Bethlehem as a tiny baby. Jesus’ mission was to “save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Amazingly, that’s why He allowed Himself to be crucified on a cruel cross. But what actually killed Him was more than Roman lashes on His back, or Roman nails plunged into His innocent

hands and feet. No, no. It was also much more than a thorny crown mockingly pressed into His head. It was even much more that the horror of hanging helpless on a splintery cross for six dreadful hours. No, that's not what slew Him. Instead, it was the horrific weight of the sins of the entire world pressing upon His mind and heart. The Bible says,

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned, every one, to his own way;
*and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity
of us all.* (Isaiah 53:6, emphasis added)

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
and that He was buried, and that He rose again
the third day according to the Scriptures.
(1 Corinthians 15:3–4, emphasis added)

The Good News of the Bible is that God will freely and fully forgive our sins because His own innocent Son, Jesus Christ, took our sins and died on the cross the death that His law requires of guilty law-breakers, as if He was guilty Himself. “Therefore let it be known to you...that through this Man [Jesus] is preached to you the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 13:38). If we repent (turn from sin) and trust Jesus as our Savior, He will surely pardon us. Paul wrote:

Therefore, having been justified by faith,
we have *peace with God* through our Lord
Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, emphasis added)

To be “justified by faith” means that when we repent and trust Jesus, God won’t hold us guilty for breaking His law. Because of our “faith” in Christ, “we have peace with God.” How wonderful! “Not guilty!” is the heavenly verdict, because Jesus suffered the penalty in our behalf.

Here is a major secret of inner peace.

Then, with His help, we can begin to keep the Ten Commandments, *which helps preserve our peace of mind.* Notice how the Bible connects ongoing “peace” with keeping God’s law:

Oh, that you had heeded *My commandments!*
Then *your peace* would have been like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
(Isaiah 48:18, emphasis added)

Great peace have those who love *Your law,*
and nothing causes them to stumble.
(Psalm 119:165, emphasis added)

Personally, I have found this to be true in my own life. Yes, I have committed many shameful sins in my past. But after discovering the Ten Commandments, and then realizing that I have done wrong, I’ve confessed my sins to God, and He has forgiven me—because of what Jesus Christ did for me on that cross. He took my place! And now that I have learned the Ten Commandments, I am very clear on what is right and wrong. In other words, in this world of chaos, perplexity, and

confusion, I now know exactly where the moral lines are. Because of this, through “the power of the Holy Spirit” (see Romans 15:13; 8:4), I can reject what’s wrong, and choose what’s right. And as long as I do, I can slip into bed at night with a clean conscience and get a good night sleep.

Personally, I pray almost every day for more of “the Spirit of truth,” who Jesus promised will “guide [us] into all truth” (John 16:13). Jesus also distinctly said we should “ask” our Heavenly Father for the Holy Spirit (read Luke 11:13). Receiving the Holy Spirit contributes to our inner peace (see Galatians 5:22,23).

Let me tell you another secret. In the midst of my personal ups and downs, I’ve also discovered the life-changing benefits of simply repeating God’s words in my mind, especially during the night hours. King David wrote: “My eyes anticipate the nighttime hours, so that I can meditate on your word” (Psalm 119:148 NET). Many nights, as I lie in bed, or if I wake up in the wee hours and can’t go back to sleep right away, I quietly think of God’s words. One of my favorite passages I often silently recite to myself is Psalm 23. Its calming words are:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness for His name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear
no evil; for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in
the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs
over. Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
(Psalm 23)

Trust me when I say that if we surrender our lives to God's loving care, confess our sins, trust Jesus as our Savior, and then quietly repeat the words of Psalm 23 to ourselves at night on our beds, they will bring peace to our souls. The Bible is filled with precious promises. Its words have power. Remember, Jesus said, "Peace, be still," to the raging storm, and it subsided. His words can bring peace to your troubled heart, too.

One of the saddest reports I've read recently concerned two young friends who killed themselves together in a hotel room:

JANUARY 20, 2019

Two friends who committed suicide in a pact at a Manhattan hotel have been identified.

The New York Post reports that friends of 33-year-old David Koenig and Ellen O'Meara,

30, said that the two were destined to share the same end.

The avant-garde musicians were platonic friends and each were [sic] deeply depressed.

They were found dead by a cleaner in their room at the Yotel New York in Hell's Kitchen.

The pair had left a stack of ten \$20 notes for housekeeping staff, the Post reported, as well as a short, handwritten suicide note.

Koenig and O'Meara had posted a note on their door warning staff not to come into the room but the cleaner ignored it and entered the room, the *New York Post* said.

"Their friends were very upset, but not surprised," told the *New York Post*.

"It's almost as if from the first day these two people met, they knew they were going to die together."¹

When the housekeeper reached the door of their 18th floor hotel room at about 7:00 p.m., she saw a handwritten note that read, "Don't look behind the

1 "Suicide Pact Friends 'Knew They Would Die Together,'" *news.com.au*, January 20, 2019, <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/suicide-pact-friends-knew-they-would-die-together/news-story/4fb3af3101ef91f7dc3c2c249d62042d>.

curtain. We're dead.”² She entered anyway, found the tip of \$200, and then discovered that David and Ellen had purposefully suffocated themselves while lying on the bed by using nitrous oxide and a shared plastic bag.

According to news reports, the only reason given for their tragic act was that they were both “deeply depressed.”

I have no idea what lurked beneath David and Ellen's depression and suicide. Did their lives seem meaningless? Did they think their existence was without purpose? Had they been influenced by the seductive theory that there is no God, no heaven, no hell, and, ultimately, no future? As musicians, were they discouraged by these lyrics of a popular song?

I close my eyes
Only for a moment, and the moment's gone

All my dreams
Pass before my eyes, a curiosity

Dust in the wind
All they are is dust in the wind

2 Emily Crane and Michael Nam, “Two Beautiful Souls that Burned Bright, Hard and Much Too Quickly’: Friends of Musicians Who Committed Suicide in a Pact at a Manhattan Hotel Pay Tribute to the Pair,” *Daily Mail*, January 21, 2019, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6613889/Friends-Manhattan-suicide-pact-musicians-pay-tribute.html>.

Same old song
Just a drop of water in an endless sea

All we do
Crumbles to the ground though we refuse to see

Dust in the wind
All we are is dust in the wind³

Again, I have no idea what final thoughts rolled through their young minds. But I do know that I can relate to having a sense of hopelessness. As I explain in another of my books, *Help for the Hopeless*,⁴ there was a time in my life when I too was deeply depressed. I felt trapped, with no way out. It's a long story, but I can tell you that what helped bring me through that densely dark period were promises like these:

I waited patiently for the Lord;
and He inclined to me, and heard my cry.
He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock,
and established my steps.
He has put a new song in my mouth
—Praise to our God.
(Psalm 40:1–3)

3 Kansas, “Dust in the Wind,” recorded June 1977, track 1 of *Point of Know Return*, Kirshner Records, October 11, 1977, cassette.

4 See the author's pocketbook, *Help for the Hopeless*, available from White Horse Media.

In my helplessness, I trusted that God loved me, that He would bring me through, and that He had a plan for my life. Words like Psalm 40:1–3 kept me sane.

I want to finish the booklet talking about my dad, Gene Wohlberg, whom I mentioned at the beginning. “I’m empty inside,” my father admitted as we visited in that park in Studio City, California. I’m happy to report that, as time went on, my dad began to experience the power of God’s Book.

Little by little, his life changed, too.

On October 14, 2018, in a nursing home in Glendale, California, my father breathed his last breath. He was 89. Thankfully, I had the privilege of spending ten days with him just before he died. Our last time together will always be precious to me. During those final moments, as he lay on his bed, he often recited Bible promises to me. In fact, he had a whole stack of 3x5 cards on which were Bible verses scribbled in his elderly handwriting.

My father deeply loved God, his family, and his friends. He often showed his love in practical ways to those who were old, handicapped, sick, or dying. He was a great example to me personally, and to many others. As his death drew near, my dad relied heavily on Jesus and His promises—so should we.

Don't wait until the day of death draws near. Now is the time to get to know Jesus and His Word. During my final times with my dad, he often repeated those promises again and again. He especially liked these words of Jesus:

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27, emphasis added)

I wasn't at Dad's bedside when he breathed his last breath, but one of his friends, Eddie, was there. At dad's memorial service, I asked Eddie about those last moments. "It was amazing," Eddie told me. "Your dad grabbed my hand, squeezed it tight, and then said with a strong voice, 'Alleluia!' That was his last word. Then he died."

My father, Gene Wohlberg (1929–2018) found peace within through trusting Jesus Christ as his Savior, and by relying on His Word. The Holy Bible says,

You [God] will keep him [the believer] in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. (Isaiah 26:3, emphasis added)

Now you know true secrets of inner peace.

May you find God's peace through trusting Jesus as your Savior, through keeping His moral law (which will keep your conscience clean) through

the power of the Holy Spirit, and through meditating on His Word. I'll close this booklet with this famous Bible benediction:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you,
and be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24–26, emphasis added)

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