

A Praise Alphabet
One for every Day of the Month

A PRAISE ALPHABET

Twenty-six Praise Suggestions Plus five
extra Based on God's Holy Word

One for each day of the month

Every day I will bless Thee, and praise
Thy name forever.

Psalm 145:2 RSV

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FORWARD

This little devotional collection was written to help me praise God for a wide variety of reasons. My daily prayers were becoming repetitive, using only a limited number of words of adoration. I grew tired of praising God in the same phrases over and over and I imagine God was tired of listening, too. By using the alphabet as my guide as I searched the Bible

I found many more than twenty-six words of praise. In order to make a different one for each day of the month, after the "Z" I added L I G H T. So these have become my Adoration part of Prayer and Quiet time with God. I also find it helpful to include confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

In putting this together, I asked God for guidance and want to give him credit if it has any value.

Note:

Symbols used to denote Bible versions:

KJ King James

RSV Revised Standard Version

NIV New International Version

LB Living Bible

ML Modern Language

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A IS FOR ALMIGHTY

Theme verse:

I am God **almighty**; walk before me and be blameless.

Genesis 17: 1 b RSV

Bible reading:

The Lord said, "I will surely return to you in the Spring, And Sarah, your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself saying, "After I have grown old, shall I indeed have the pleasure?" The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? ----- Is anything too hard for God?"

Genesis 18: 10-14 RSV

Praise God for being **almighty**. Nothing is too hard for Him. Like Sarah, I have trouble believing this when it comes to my personal life.

I do believe He is able to hurl galaxies into space; set up a marvelous solar system; plan perfect food changes and water cycles here on earth; cause the desert to bloom and paint a rainbow in the sky.

I believe His **almighty** power helped David overcome Goliath.¹ He can take an introvert such as Gideon and help him become a mighty leader.² And is anything more amazing than the way He changed Saul, enemy of Christians into Paul the most aggressive of the apostles? ³

Can I believe He is willing to share His power with me, weak and sinful as I am? Can I believe that praying according to His will, I can depend upon his **almighty** power to bring answers?

Prayer time:

Today I will praise and thank Him for being almighty. I need to talk to Him also believing when I pray. Amen

1 1 Samuel 17:31-51

2 Judges 6

3 Acts 9: 1-22ff

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B IS FOR BOUNTY

Theme verse:

I will sing to the Lord for He has dealt **bountifully** with me.

Psalm 13:6 KJV

Bible reading:

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will surely supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

2 Corinthians 9:8-10 RSV

Oh, how I praise God for His **bounty**! It comes in many forms. His earth provides us with water, soil, minerals, air, plants, and animals. We humans haven't always used these gifts wisely. Recently there has been a new awareness of the need for good conservation and distribution.

God provides mental resources--our brains, our reasoning, and our ability to read, write, and speak. All of this should enable us to make good decisions about God's **bounty**.

God has been generous with spiritual help, too. His love, grace, and forgiveness are always available. We are blest with the Bible, churches, religious leaders, art, music, and Christian friends; the greatest of all God's gifts is Jesus. His Holy Spirit is available to teach and comfort us. With these gifts comes responsibility. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required." 1

Prayer time:

I must praise God for His bounty and ask for help in using it. Amen

1 Luke 12:48b

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C IS FOR CREATOR

Theme verse:

You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor, and power; for Thou hast **created** all things and for Thy pleasure they were and art **created**.

Revelation 4:11 KJV

Bible reading:

When I look into the night skies and see the work of your fingers--the moon and the stars, which you have made--I cannot understand how, you bother with mere puny man; to pay attention to him. And yet you have made him only a little lower than the angels, and placed a crown of glory on his head. You put him in charge of everything you have made; all the sheep and oxen and wild animals, too; the birds and the fish and all the life of the sea.

Psalm 8:3-8 LB

God is an astonishing **creator**! From the most distant star in the universe to the tiniest creature seen only under a microscope, He made them all. We seem to discover new facts about His **creation** every year, from space travel findings, scientific study and medical experimentation. David said, "I will praise Thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works."¹

We will never understand or discover all that God has made because we are human and "God's thoughts are higher than ours"² It was good of Him to give us inquiring minds and I think He must enjoy seeing us discover more and more of His creation.

However, He must be sad when we use knowledge for wrong purposes or fail to give God credit for His work. Just as we must read directions on products we use, God expects his directions--The Bible to be read.

Prayer time:

My prayer today will praise my **creator**.

1 Psalm 139:14

2 Isaiah 55:9

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D IS FOR DEFENSE

Theme verse:

My **defense** is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

Psalm 7: 10 KJV

Bible reading:

Then I (Moses) said unto you, "Dread not neither be afraid of them. The Lord which goeth before you shall fight for you, according to all he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen the Lord, thy God bear thee, in all the way that you went, until you came to this place."

Deuteronomy 1:29-31 KJV

I'm so glad I don't have to fight life's battles alone. God wants to be my defense. Moses and David were glad to accept his help. Why shouldn't I?

I have a friend who believes that God and he make a majority. The Bible verifies this. "Dear friends, you belong to God and have already won your fight with those who are against Christ, because there is someone in your hearts that is stronger than any evil teacher in this wicked world."¹

God can provide extra strength to fight our physical battles. He is our defense against temptations. He can lead us into battles against poverty, aids, drugs, and other moral problems.

I need to picture God in me, beside me, before me and behind me. "In my distress, I prayed to the Lord and he answered me and rescued me. He is for me. How can I be afraid? What can mere man do to me? The Lord is on my side. He will help me."²

Prayer time:

I need God's defense each hour of the day so I must tell him. Amen

1 1 John 4:4 LB

2 Psalm 118: 5-7 LB

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E IS FOR EVERLASTING

Theme verse:

From **everlasting** to everlasting, thou art God.

Osa. 90: 2 b KJV

Bible reading:

Your kingdom, O God, will last forever and ever; its commandments are always just and right. You love right and hate wrong; so God, even your God, has poured more gladness on you than anyone else. (God was referring to Jesus) God also called Him Lord when said, "Lord, in the beginning you made the earth; and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will disappear into nothingness but you will remain forever, they will become worn out like clothes and some day you will fold them and replace them. But you yourself will never change and your years will never end.

Hebrews 1:8-12 LB

I need to stop and think about the meaning of **everlasting**. What in the world lasts forever? It can't be appliances or homes. Even such durable things as the mighty redwoods or mountains can be destroyed. God says even the earth will pass away.

However, God is everlasting. The theme verse makes an even stronger statement for God's longevity--from **everlasting** to **everlasting**. That's doubly hard for me to fathom. No other god can make such Claim. Gods made of wood, metal or stone can be destroyed. Gods such as money fame or pleasure are short-lived and worthless.

Another amazing point about the one true God is his desire to make us **everlasting** also. By believing on Jesus we can have everlasting life.¹ No wonder the gospel is called Good News.

Prayer time:

The everlasting God wants us to talk to Him about all this. Amen

¹ John 3: 16

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F IS FOR FATHER

Theme verse:

Our **Father** which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Matthew 6:9 b RSV

Bible reading:

See what love the **FATHER** has given us; that we should be called the children of God; and so we are. The reason this world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

I John 3:1-2 RSV

It is right to adore our father--whether he is human or heavenly. Good **fathers** are a wonderful blessing. They love and protect us; they provide for our needs, our training, our happiness and also chastening.

Not everyone is blessed with a good earthly **father** but all can have a wonderful heavenly **father**. The Bible reminds us "When my mother and father forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."¹ He is never too busy to listen to us. Our sins are never too bad for him to forgive if we are truly sorry. Our battles are never too hard when he fights by our side.

Earthly **fathers** have rules. So does God. We are to love him with our whole being and love our neighbors as ourselves.² He has prepared a home for us and some day he will call us to be with him.³

Prayer time:

I will have a good talk with my Father right now. Amen

1 Psalm 27: 10 KJV

2 Matthew 22:37-39

3 John 14:1-3

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G IS FOR GOOD

Theme verse:

O taste and see that the Lord is **good**.

Psalm 34:8a

Bible reading:

As Jesus was setting out on his journey, a man ran and)melt before him, "**Good** teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me **good**? No one is **good** but God alone."

Mark 10: 17-18 RSV

When I read the statement that no one is good but God alone, it makes me think. All my life I've heard **good** used to describe humans. "There goes a good man or woman" "What a good child!" From my point of view this seems to be true, but the **goodness** of God is different.

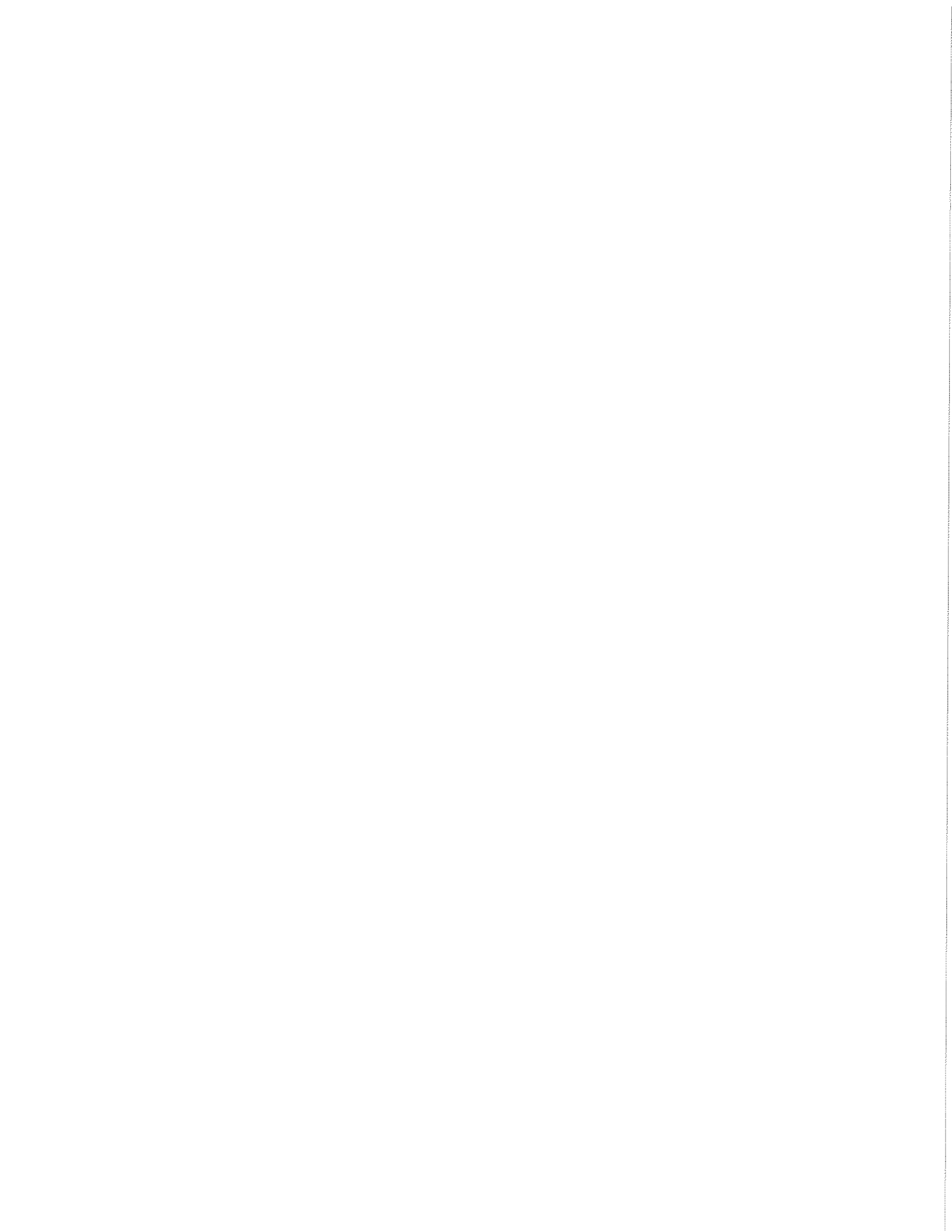
The Psalmist said we should taste and see that God is good. What an absurd request! But then one of the definitions of tasting is experiencing. I can experience God in my life and know his goodness. All I need to do is open my heart to him and then savor and reflect on what happens.

When I taste a food I like, I am quick to mention it to others. I wonder why I hesitate to mention the goodness of God? Perhaps I am not alone in this for the Bible tells us, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his **goodness** and his wonderful works to the children of men."¹

Prayer time:

I feel compelled to praise God for his **goodness** and ask for courage to tell others. Amen

¹ Psalm 107: 8 KJV



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H IS FOR HEARING

Theme verse:

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.

Psalm 34:15 KJV

Bible reading:

O Lord, please **hear** my prayer! Heed the prayers of those of us who delight to honor you. Please help me now as I go in and ask the king for a great favor--put it in his heart to be kind to me.....If it please your majesty, and if you look upon me with royal favor, send me to Judah to rebuild the city of my fathers." "How long will you be gone and when will you return?" So it was agreed and I set a time for my departure.

Nehemiah 1: 11, 2: 2-4 LB

God **heard** the prayers of Nehemiah and he **hears** my prayers. My concerns are not as monumental as his were but he listens closely to anything I bring to him. Like Job, I sometimes wonder if he is really attentive to me when I am pleading for help. I wonder if he heard correctly at time, because things don't work out the way I want them to. I must remember to be patient until the right time. I need to understand that God knows what is best and someday I will understand his answers.

Yes, God's **hearing** is good, so good he sometimes grants even more than we request. Paul confirmed this generosity of God when he said, "Now glory be to God who by his mighty power at work within us, is able to do far more than we would ever ask or dream of--infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes."¹

Prayer time:

I praise God for his hearing and his patience with me. Amen

¹ Eph 3:20 LB

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I IS FOR INVISIBLE

Theme verse:

He (Christ) is the image of the **invisible** God.

Colossians 1:15a RSV

Bible reading:

No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:12 KJV

Behold I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him. I turn to the right hand, but I cannot see Him, but He knows the way I take.

Job 28:8-10 RSV

"Mommy, I'm afraid in my room alone at night," said Johnny. "You're not alone, dear." his mother told him. "God is always with you." "I know, Mommy, but I can't see Him."

Not being able to see Him frustrates me too at times. It's easier to understand and believe in something visible.

Paul told us things that are seen are transient, but things that are unseen are eternal.¹ I am to know Him by faith rather than by sight. I am to know Him through what He has made and done. I am to know Him with my heart.

Helen Keller once said that the best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. Fanny Crosby, another blind child of God, rejoiced that when her sight A would be restored in heaven, her first sight would be God. That's when He will be visible to us all, if we believe.

Prayer time:

I praise Him for being invisible yet known. Amen

1 2nd Corinthians 4:18 RSV

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J IS FOR JOY

Theme verse:

The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Nehemiah 8:10c RSV

Bible reading:

Praise God forever! How he must rejoice in all his all his work! The earth trembles at his glance; The Mountains burst into flames at his touch. I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will praise God to my last breath! May he be pleased by all these thoughts about him, for he is the source of all my joy.

Psalm 104:31-34 LB

What does God have to be joyful about? The Bible tells us he rejoices over faithful servants¹, his creation², living with his people³, his son, Jesus⁴ and lost sheep which are found⁵ I'm so glad to worship a joyful God.

How can God's joy be my strength? I know God is joyful when he takes one of his children out of the physical suffering here on earth and receives this one into his heavenly home. But when I lost my loved one, it took a long time for me to accept the strength that came from God's joy. In my sorrow and loneliness, I could only see my viewpoint, not God's. But I am growing stronger and I praise and thank God for this.

God has workers here on earth, whose joyful lives can bring strength to those around them. It may be a child, a nurse, or just a friend whose smile and cheerful ways give strength and hope. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."⁶

Prayer time:

The God of joy deserves my praise and thanks. Amen

¹ Matthew 25:21

² Genesis 1

³ Zephaniah 3:17

⁴ Matthew 3: 17

⁵ Matthew 18:1-14

⁶ Proverbs 17:22

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K IS FOR KING

Theme verse:

Now unto the **King** eternal, immortal invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

1 Tim. 1:17 KJV

Bible reading:

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the **King** of glory shall come in. Who is the **King** of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Psalm 24:7-8 KJV

Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God, the almighty! Just and true are thy ways, O **King** of the ages! Who shall fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?

Rev 15:3b RSV

We give praise and honor to God, our **King**. He rules the universe with authority and power, yet is concerned about the welfare of each of his subjects. He invites us to enter into his kingdom and enjoy his love and care. How can we accept the invitation when we know that nothing unclean or sinful can enter the kingdom?¹

A few days after we had installed a new living room carpet, our little son and his friend came in from play covered with mud. They had been climbing piles of dirt in a near-by construction area. I stopped them at the door and took them to the back yard to clean them up before I let them in for milk and cookies.

That is what Jesus offers to do for us before we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. "Now your sins are washed away, and you are set apart for God, and he has accepted you because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God have done for you."²

Prayer time:

I take time now to talk to my King. Amen

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

2 1 Corinthians 6:11

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L IS FOR LOVE

Theme verse:

God is **love**.

John 4:8b KJV

Bible reading:

Dear Friends, let us practice loving one another, for **love** comes from God, and those who are **loving** and kind show they are children of God, and that they are getting to know him better. But if a person is not **loving** and kind, it shows he doesn't know God--for God is **love**. God showed how much he **loved** us by sending his only son into this wicked world to bring us eternal life through his death. In this act we see what real love is: it is not our **love** for God but his **love** for us when he sent his son to satisfy God's anger against our sins.

1 John 4:7-10 LB

Praise God! He is **love**, perfect **love**. Compared to his **love**, ours is feeble and fickle. We turn it off and on at will. We give it to a few special people when we feel we want to.

God **loves** everyone--the rich and poor, the weak and the strong, the saint and the sinner, the grateful and ungrateful, and people of all ages and races. He even loves those who deal in drugs, sex sins, crime, and war. He hates the offense but not the offender. He holds out his **love** for all to accept and become changed persons.

His is the kind of **love** that prompted Jesus to pray, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."¹ His **love** compels people to work in soup kitchens, build homes for the needy, serve on mission fields, visit shut-ins, and donate blood and organs. The list is endless.

Prayer time:

I bow before the God of **love** now to be filled with it. Amen

1 Luke 23: 34 KJV

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M IS FOR MAN

Theme verse:

A Child shall be born to a virgin and she shall his name Immanuel (meaning "God with us")

Isaiah 7:14 b LB

Bible reading:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation and took the form of a servant, and was in the likeness of **men**; Became obedient unto death, even death on the cross.

Philippians 2:5-8 KJV

God has probably tried every possible way to help us understand what life is all about. He has acted and spoken through angels, prophets, signs, wonders, punishment, love, forgiveness and his holy word. The supreme effort was to become one of us in the form of Jesus.

Oh, what He endured for us! From the time of His birth in a stable, through the trials of childhood, rejections and denials of adulthood and finally the awful agony of death on the cross. Life here on earth was frustrating, degrading, and painful. He understands our problems because he faced them all and many more.

He set new standards of conduct for mankind with his Sermon on the Mount.¹ Turn the other cheek, feed your enemies, go the second mile and keep even your thoughts from evil, were radical new ideas. Because God became **man** for a time we can find new hope and direction.

Prayer time:

Today I praise and thank God for sending Jesus. Amen

¹ Matthew 5

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N IS FOR NEAR

Theme verse:

The Lord is **near** to all who call upon Him, to those who call upon Him sincerely.

Psalm 146:18 ML

Bible reading:

He hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they feel after Him, and find Him, though He is not far from everyone of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being.

Acts 17:26 KJV

Doesn't it feel strange to walk or drive in a heavy fog? He can move freely in it and yet it is all about us. This helps me understand the **nearness** of God. Paul expressed it so well when he said, "In Him we live and move and have our being." (See Bible Reading above). God though, unlike the fog, cannot be seen. We can choose to ignore Him or become conscious of Him.

I feel His presence when He brings a verse or hymn to my mind. If I am lonely sad or disturbed I remind myself that He is there to help. When I become too self-centered He prods me to remember to help or pray for others. When I need someone to talk to, He listens and often sends a friend, family member or an angel.

In the Psalms I so often find words that express my feelings in a better way than I can. I like this: "You both precede me and follow me and place your hand of blessing upon my head. This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe."¹

Prayer time:

Oh how can I ever express my gratitude for his nearness?

¹ Psalm 139:5-6 LB

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O IS FOR OUR OWN

Theme verse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:3 RSV

Bible reading:

Bless **our** God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard.

Psalms 66:8 RSV

For all the peoples walk each in the name of its God, but we walk in the name of the Lord **our** God forever and ever.

Micah 4:5 RSV

There is something about **ownership** that pleases us. Even a tiny child seems to learn quickly to hold tightly to a toy and call, "Mine" when other children are around. **Owning** a car of their **own** is a goal of most teenagers. Young couples yearn for the day when they can **own** their own home.

The most precious treasure we can call ours is God. What am I saying--**own** God? I don't really understand it but time after time the Bible refers to our God. When Asa was king he prayed, "Help us a Lord our God for we rest on thee."¹ When Jesus was talking to his disciples he said, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father; to my God and your God."²

Perhaps we are shareholders in God's business. We did not buy shares--Jesus bought them for us. We need to accept them and enjoy the dividends. God asks us to spread the good news to others so more and more people can say "our God".

Prayer time:

Today and every day I want to praise our God. Amen

1 2nd Chronicles 14:11b RSV

2 John 20: 17 RSV

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P IS FOR PEACE

Theme verse:

And his name shall be called Prince of **PEACE**.

(part of Isaiah 9:6 KJV)

Bible reading:

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 RSV

Peace means calm, quiet, tranquility, and freedom from annoyance. God's **peace** gives all this and more. Is it really possible for me to have this kind of **peace**? I thought so until real trouble came my way.

When the one I loved so much became critically ill and I watched him suffer for months, my **peace** was shattered. I prayed more than I had ever prayed in my life. I knew others were praying, too. I wavered between despair and hope. I cried and then I smiled as God brought a hymn or scripture verse to mind. I didn't know what to say in my prayers at times so I asked the Holy Spirit to pray for me.

I experienced blessed moments of peace when I seemed to be in a protective bubble. I could look out and see the trouble but I was able to be calm and thank God. I could sleep and wake up refreshed. However my doubts and weakness crept in at times and broke the bubble. But the God of **Peace** was patient with me. He held out his **peace** for me any time I was ready to accept it.

Prayer time:

I praise God for his peace and patience. Amen

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Q IS FOR QUEST

Theme verse:

As the deer pants for water, so I long for you, O God.
I thirst for God, the living God. Where can I come and stand before him?

Psalm 42:1-2 LB

Bible reading:

This man (Nicodemus) came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do the signs you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly I say unto you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus said, "How can a man be born again when he is old?"

(Read John 3 for the complete story)

Nicodemus had a real thirst for answers about God. So do I. In fact, I believe God gave everyone this **quest** down deep in the heart. It gives us an unrest, which we keep trying to satisfy.

Knowing there is something missing in our lives we can make all kinds of mistakes trying to find satisfaction. The forty-niners searched for gold. The Knights searched for the Holy Grail. Some people try to find fame or fortune. Often persons who have drifted away from God tell how restless they were until they found him again.

Paul noticed that the people of Mars Hill¹ with all their gods were still not satisfied. They had erected a monument to the "unknown God". Paul seized the opportunity to explain about this unknown God, the one who sent Jesus to die for us. He is the object of our quest. He is all we need.

Prayer time:

I need to thank God for helping me want to find him. Amen

¹ Acts 17:22-33

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R IS FOR ROCK

Theme verse:

The Lord is my **rock**.

2 Samuel 22: 2a

Bible reading:

I waited and waited for the Lord, he bent down to me and heard my cry. He brought me out of the muddy pit, out of the mire and clay: he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm footing: and on my lips he put a new song, a song of praise to our God. Many when they see will learn to trust in the Lord; happy is the man who makes the Lord his trust.

Psalm 40 1-4 NEB

It was spring. It seemed to rain every day. The garden thrived but the ground was a miry sea of clay. I was determined to pick the garden peas so I put on boots and started into the garden. With each step I sank deeper until I could no longer move my feet. I wiggled my feet out of the boots and crawled out on hands and knees. What a relief to be back on solid ground.

In life every now and then I get mired down in troubles and worries that I can't even crawl out of. But God is there to lift me up and set me on the **rock**.

Jesus reminded us to build our lives on **rock** instead of sand in his parable of the two houses.¹ How can I do this? I think the answer lies in following the commandments of Jesus to love the Lord, my God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. Also he commanded me to love my neighbor as myself.²

Prayer time:

Sing a song of praise for my rock. Amen

1 Matthew 7:24-27

2 Matthew 22:37-39

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S IS FOR SPIRIT

Theme verse:

God is **Spirit** and they that worship him must worship him in **spirit** and in truth.

John 4:24 RSV

Bible reading:

But when the Holy **Spirit** controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.....If we are living by the Holy **Spirit's** power let us follow the Holy **Spirit's** leading in every part of our lives.

Galatians 5:22-25 LB

Before Jesus ascended into heaven He promised to send the **Holy Spirit** to his followers.¹ On the day of Pentecost many became aware of the **Spirit's** presence and power.² I need to remember this is available to me, too. Paul confirms this when he asked, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's **Spirit** dwells in you?"³

Why is he within us? Check out the Bible reading above ~ some of his work. He advises, He comforts. He teaches. He nudges us. And he will even pray for us.

The word **spirit** comes from Latin and means breath. He is the breath that keeps our souls alive.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love,
And do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me breath of God,
Till I am wholly thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with thy fire divine.⁴

Prayer time:

My prayer today must be full of praise for the one who provides me spiritual breath. Amen

1 John 14:16

2 Acts 2

3 1st Corinthians 3:16

4 "Breathe on Me Breath of God" by Edwin Hatch. Pilgrim Hymnal Page 233

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One for every Day of the Month

T IS FOR TOWER

Theme verse:

For thou hast been a shelter for me, a strong **tower** from the enemy.

Psalm 61: 3 KJV

Bible reading:

Then Abimelech went to Thebes, and encamped against Thebes and took it. But there was a strong **tower** within the city, and all the people fled to it, all the men and women and shut themselves in and they went to the roof of the **tower**.

Read Judges 9:50-55

In Bible times the people built **towers** of brick or stone to provide a place for a watchman and a refuge from invaders. The walls were thick and the inside roomy. This provided the security they needed.

Such **towers** would be useless in modern warfare. In fact, there seems to be nothing we can build to protect against nuclear and other deadly assaults.

We read "The name of the Lord is a strong **tower**, the righteous man runs into it and is safe."¹ Safe from what? Jesus points out what we need to be safe from. "Do not fear those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul, rather fear him who can kill both body and soul in hell."² The evil about us may kill our souls unless we flee to the **tower**, which is God. This haven will protect us from the darts of the evil one. It is roomy enough that all who believe may enter and be protected. It is tall enough for us to get a good view of approaching temptations.

Prayer time:

I will praise God for being a tower and ask for reservations. Amen

1 Proverbs 18:10

2 Matthew 10: 28

A Praise Alphabet
One for every Day of the Month

U IS FOR UNDERSTANDING

Theme verse:

Our Lord is great and mighty in strength; his **understanding** is unlimited.

Psalm 147:5 ML

Bible reading:

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit or stand. When far away you know my every thought. You chart my path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment you know where I am.

Psalm 139:1-3 Suggest reading whole chapter.

"You don't **understand**" is a common complaint of children. Good parents try hard to **understand** but it is very hard to know the inner thoughts and motives of another person. Even adults long for **understanding**.

It is a comfort to know that Jesus was misunderstood, too. So I can be sure he sympathizes with me. He made me. He watched me develop and grow. He knows the forces and pressures, which confront me. He knows I have made mistakes and wrong decisions and stands ready to help me when I ask.

Jesus often went apart to talk things over with his Heavenly Father. I can, too. I can expect answers. I never know how they will come. It may be an inner thought, a word from a friend, a verse of scripture, a hymn recalled, a church service, a scene in nature, or just a warm feeling of love. I need to sharpen my awareness of everything about me, as it may be a means of God trying to get my attention. This is very exciting to think about.

Prayer time:

I want to thank God for understanding and to help me be more alert for his answers. Amen

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V IS FOR VENGEANCE

Theme verse:

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, "**Vengeance** is mine; I will repay," says the Lord.

Romans 12:19 RSV

Bible reading:

You have learned that they were told, "Eye for eye and tooth for tooth." But what I tell you is this; do not set yourself against the man who wrongs you.

Matthew 5:38-39 NEB

When someone strikes you it just seems natural to strike back. Children and adults alike feel this way. But God says, "No let me take care of it. I know the perfect way to handle this. It is my business, not yours."

Checking out the way God handled **vengeance** in the Bible we find many methods were used. When Cain killed his brother, he was sentenced to a life of exile and hardship.¹ Joseph's brothers who mistreated him, had to humble themselves before him in order to survive.² Pharaoh, who made life miserable for the Israelites, suffered plagues and defeat.³ After Judas betrayed Jesus, he was so desperate he killed himself.⁴

Jesus prayed for those who hung him on the cross—a strange substitute for **vengeance**, but one that helps all concerned.

When we leave matters in God's hands, it sometimes seems he will never act. It's just that he knows the right time and way to take care of it. We must be patient.

Prayer time:

I marvel at God's ways in handling vengeance so in my prayer I will tell him.
Amen

1 Genesis 4

2 Genesis 44 ff

3 Exodus 7 ff

4 Matthew 27: 5

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W IS FOR WORK

Theme verse:

We do not conceal them (lessons about God) from their children, recounting to the following generation the praise of the Lord and his might, yes, the wondrous **works** he has performed.

Psalm 78:4 ML

Bible reading:

For God is my King of old, **working** salvation in the midst of the earth.

Psalm 74:12 RSV

And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord **working** with them.

Mark 16:20 RSV

Now the God of peace.....make you perfect in every good **work** to do his will, **working** in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever.

Hebrews 13: 20-21 KJV

God, the creator of the universe, doesn't sit idly, doing nothing. He is still creating. He is **working** miracles. He is not willing that any should perish¹ so he keeps **working** for the salvation of us all. He **works** through his Holy Spirit, his angels, and his people. This means me, too.

Part of his **work** is setting up a plan for my life and the life of all his children. How can I discover his plan? I need to remember the old railroad crossing signs which used to read "STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN" I need to stop and pray every day. I need to look about me for opportunities to serve. I need to listen to God and those in need. Then when I hesitate or grow fainthearted, I must remember "God is at **work** within me helping me want to obey him and helping me do what he wants me to do."²

Prayer time:

This prayer time gives me a chance to praise the God or work. Amen

1 2nd Peter 3:9 RSV

2 Philippians 2:13 LB

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X IS FOR EXCELLENT

Theme verse:

O Lord, our Lord, how **excellent** is thy name in all the earth.

Psalm 8:9 KJV

Bible reading:

And in that day you shall praise the Lord; call upon his name, declare his doings among the people; make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he has done **excellent** things; this is known in all the earth.

Isaiah 12:4-5 KJV

Most of my school assignment papers came back to me with errors marked and suggested improvement. So it was a real thrill if I got one marked "**excellent**". However, God's work is always **excellent**. There are no flaws in his love, his mercy, his grace, and his name, or his plan of salvation.

Do I ever praise him for his **excellence**? Do I ever share my thoughts about these things with others? The Bible reading reminds me to "declare his doings among the people". Why is it easier to praise a grandchild than God?

The words "**Your Excellency**" are used in royal circles when addressing a King or Queen. It is protocol, not an act of praise. But God, our King has earned the title of "**YOUR EXCELLENCY**". And this title doesn't isolate him from us. He maintains a close relationship with his lowly, bungling children even though "his ways and thoughts are higher than ours."¹

Prayer time:

I must tell "**His Excellency**" how I've failed and ask for help in doing better.
Amen

1 Isaiah 55:8-9

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Y IS FOR YES

Theme verse:

For all the promises of God find their **yes** in him.

2 Corinthians 20:1a LB

Bible reading:

Paul wrote, "Did I change my mind? Hadn't I really made up my mind yet? Or am I like a man of the world who says **yes** when he really means no? Never! As surely as God is true, I am not that sort of person. My **yes**, means **yes**. Timothy and Silvanus and I have been telling you about Jesus Christ the Son of God. He isn't one to say **yes** when he means no. He always does exactly what he says. He carries out and fulfills God's promises, no matter how many of them there are.....God has put his brand upon us--his mark of ownership--and given us to him.

2 Corinthians 1:17-22 LB

Yes means "it is so" according to dictionaries. This is true when God makes promises. His **yes** is a seal or guarantee.

In the world about us it seems to be different. Promises of **yes** often mean nothing. How many cease-fire agreements have been broken? How many promises to pay are forgotten? How many business agreements have been disregarded? **Yes** seems to mean "Maybe" or "if I don't forget" or have no validity at all.

Then whom can we trust to really mean **yes**? "Trust in the Lord completely."¹ When we ask for his help we need to know his standards and submit to his will. He knows what is right and good. His time schedule is not always in agreement with ours. So our asking must be accompanied with understanding and patience.

Prayer time:

Let us praise the God who means **yes**. Amen

1 Proverbs 3:5 LB

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Z IS FOR ZEAL

Theme verse:

The **zeal** of the Lord of hosts shall do this.

2 Kings 19:31c KJV

Bible reading:

If a man has a hundred sheep, and one wanders away and is lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others and go into the hills to search for the lost one? And if he finds it, he will rejoice over it more than the ninety-nine others safe at home! Just so, it is not my Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish.

Matthew 18:12-14 LB

God's **zeal** is shown in many ways. Like the shepherd who searched for the sheep, God keeps trying to bring all of us into his fold. His chosen people turned away time after time to worship other gods and break his commandments but God kept calling them back.

God works **zealously** through his apostles and followers. Paul was a good example.¹ He was able to endure illness, persecution, hardship, and prison. He found ways to serve God no matter where he was or what was happening. He was an imitator of God and challenged us to be also.²

I confess I find all kinds of excuses not to work with **zeal** in my church and community. I am too old, too busy, or too tired. I say I am not good at that kind of work. The **zeal** of God could help me do much more than I am doing.

Prayer time:

I need to talk to God about his zeal and my lack of it. Amen

1 Acts 22:3 KJV

2 Ephesians 5:1 RSV

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L IS FOR LIGHT

Theme verse:

The Lord is my **light** and my salvation.

Psalm 27: 1a RSV

Bible reading:

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is **light** and in him is no darkness at all. Jesus said to the people, "I am the **light** of the world. So if you follow me, you won't be stumbling through darkness, for the living **light** will flood your path.

John 8:12 LB

I don't appreciate the **light** until I am suddenly without it. When the electricity goes off, I immediately start to look for some other form of **light**. Then how inadequate these substitutes seem. A candle or a flashlight does not penetrate the darkness about me nearly as much as electricity.

God is **light** so strong, it banishes all darkness. With his help I do not need to stumble nor grope my way through life. I don't need to fear nor feel helpless. I must admit I turn off his **light** sometimes and stumble in the darkness. After a few bumps and falls, I realize how much I need him. He graciously forgives me and starts to **light** my path again.

Now I think of all the persons in this world who have never known about God's **light**. Oh, how hopeless and lost they must feel. I want to share the news about God's **light** today. But how? To whom? I believe God's **light** will help me find the answer to these doubts of mine. I must ask for it and then walk in it.

Prayer time:

I am so thankful that God is light, something I need each day. Amen

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I IS FOR INSTRUCTOR

Theme verse:

I will **instruct** you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

Psalm 32:8 RSV

Bible reading:

The whole Bible is given to us by inspiration of God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong with our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right.

2 Timothy 3:16 LB

God is my **instructor**! Do I appreciate what that means? I have the best teacher in the universe. What makes a good teacher? One who is intelligent, enthusiastic, patient, has a love for students, takes a personal interest in each one, and stands ready to explain what is being taught.

God has all this and more. He stands ready to teach anyone, anytime for a lifetime. His **instructions** are free. His lessons are practical, preparing us to live and work in this world and the next. Some of his lessons are easy to digest (as milk) and we are urged to move on to harder truths (such as solid foods.)¹

So what kind of a pupil am I? Do I study? Do I listen? Do I follow **instructions**? Do I apply what I have learned? Paul told Timothy "Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."²

Prayer time:

I want to thank my instructor and tell him I will try to study and listen better. Amen

1 Hebrews 5:11-14

2 2nd Timothy 2:15 KJV

A Praise Alphabet
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G IS FOR GRACE

Theme verse:

And God is able to pour out on you richly every possible **grace**, so that you will always and under all circumstances have plenty for your own need and abundance for every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8 ML

Bible reading:

For by **grace** you have been saved by faith, this is not your own doing, it is a gift of God--not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10 RSV

All my life I've heard talk about the **grace** of God but I'm sure I never really understood it. The dictionary defines grace as unmerited love and favor, and as free mercy. In the world, an example could be the days of grace given by an insurance company to pay your premium even after the due date.

Even though I am undeserving, I am saved by **grace**, from paying the penalty of my sins. I am loved. I am forgiven and blessed. I am accepted into God's family. How wonderful!

As I think about it I see how God's **grace** was present in the lives of Moses, David, Paul, and Jonah. There were times when they didn't seem to deserve God's love just as I don't. I rejoice that he gives it to us anyway. Now I am beginning to understand it better. It is one of the many reasons why I want to praise him.

Prayer time:

God of grace and God of glory at this time I must pause and pray with a thankful heart. Amen

A Praise Alphabet
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H IS FOR HOPE

Theme verse:

O Lord, you alone are my **hope**; I've trusted you from my childhood.

Psalm 71: 5 LB

Bible reading:

So faith, **hope**, and love abide; these three; and the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose **hope** the Lord is.

Jeremiah 17:7 KJV

Paul named three things which should always be held in our lives and hope was one of them (see reading above) **Hope** is that element which gets us going when we are stalled and keeps us going, searching and expecting.

Today will be a busy one but because of God being my **hope** can get through it and do what is pleasing in his sight. God is the **hope** for my tomorrows because he has a plan for my life and I must try to find it and carry it out. God is my **hope** forever--that time beyond life on this earth. "If in this life only we have **hope** in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."1 I don't want to be miserable. I want to live forever with him in heaven.

God is the **hope** for the solution to the problems of the world. An example, I believe is the movement called "True Love Waits" where thousands of youth are pledging to wait until marriage for sex. In this God is working to solve Sex/Aids problems. All other "solutions" have failed. God is our **hope**.

Prayer time:

Hope is so wonderful; I want to thank God for it. Amen

1 1st Corinthians 15:19

A Praise Alphabet
One for every Day of the Month

T IS FOR TRUE

Theme verse:

But the Lord is the **true** God.

Jeremiah 10: 10 a RSV

Bible reading:

Hear me Asa and all Judah and Benjamin: The Lord is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. For a long time Israel was without the **true** God.....but when in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and sought him, He was found by them.

2 Chronicles 15:2-4 RSV

Although imitation flowers are often beautiful and give pleasure to many people. I prefer real **true** flowers. I love to plant flowers and watch them grow and bloom. To me there is no comparison between God-made flowers and man-made ones.

But, how about my preference, between the **true** God and false Gods? Immediately, I say--I chose only the **true** God. On second thought, I must admit I can be carried away in the enjoyment of luxuries. I remember the cruise I took and found leisure in being pampered for seven days. I say I am blessed by being able to escape severe winter weather when I go to Florida. Are these things more important to me than God?

So I really can't criticize the Israelites when they forgot the one **true** God at times. I have an advantage over them in knowing Jesus--"God's Son has come to help us understand and find the true God."¹

Prayer time:

The one who is true is waiting for me to have a talk with Him right now.

1 1st John 5:20 LB