

# ***Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians***

## ***A Heavenly Citizenship***

Lesson #7 for February 14, 2026

Scriptures: **Philippians 3:17-4:23**; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44; John 14:27; Psalm 119:165; Job 1:21; 1 Timothy 6:6-7.

1. What is the meaning of the term a *heavenly citizenship*? What are the implications?

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] This ... lesson concludes our study of Philippians, and it is packed with valuable lessons and maxims for daily living. It seems that many of the high moral values that guided the apostle Paul's life are found in the closing verses of the epistle. Similar to the teachings of Jesus, which focus on the inner person, what Paul shares with us are **secrets to living a joyful Christian life**.—BSG\* for Sabbath Afternoon, February 7.<sup>†‡</sup>

[BSG:] Even when things don't go the way we would like, which happens more often than we would like, we don't need to be worried or anxious or discouraged. Instead, there are principles that will help us find inner strength to face the challenges that life brings, and thus we can experience a settled and lasting peace that only God can give. The present and the future are in His hands, and He will supply everything we need.—BSG\* for Sabbath.<sup>‡</sup>

[BSG:] Most important, we need not place our hopes in earthly systems of government, which regularly disappoint us. As Christians, we are **citizens of God's heavenly kingdom**. And with that citizenship comes privileges, wonderful privileges. And responsibilities, too.—BSG\* for Sabbath.<sup>†‡</sup>

[From the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] This ... lesson emphasizes three major themes:

1. Members of the heavenly commonwealth live with maturity, serving as models worthy to be emulated.
2. Christian joy, like peace, is not dependent on external circumstances, for it is rooted in a close relationship with God through Christ.
3. A joyful and contented life is possible, even in this tumultuous world, but it requires obedience to biblical principles.—T-BSG\* 93.<sup>‡</sup>

### **Role Models**

2. **Each of us needs good role models.** In early childhood, those role models are generally our father and mother. Unfortunately, as we become teenagers, we tend to look to our peers as role models. Fortunately, there are Bible characters that can serve as good role models. Unfortunately, in today's media, bad role models are everywhere!
3. Even in Paul's day, morals were very corrupt and evil. There is never a shortage of evil!

[T-BSG:] Paul suggests that Christian leaders should be patterns or examples to be copied by others (*Phil. 3:17, NKJV*). This notion is contrasted with the conduct of **false teachers, described as “enemies of the cross of Christ”** (*Phil. 3:18*) [sic]. They are further portrayed as doomed to destruction, worshipers of their own impulses, “whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things” (*Phil. 3:19, NKJV*).

Conversely, Christians must be aware that their “citizenship is in heaven” (*Phil. 3:20, NKJV*) and live accordingly.—*T-BSG\** 94.†‡§

**Philippians 3:17-19:** <sup>17</sup>Keep on imitating me, my friends. Pay attention to those who follow the right example that we have set for you. <sup>18</sup>I have told you this many times before, and now I repeat it with tears: there are many whose lives make them enemies of Christ’s death on the cross. <sup>19</sup>They are going to end up in hell, because **their god is their bodily desires**. They are proud of what they should be ashamed of, and they think only of things that belong to this world.—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation®\* [GNT] (Today’s English Version) [TEV]*, Second Edition, (Philippians 3:17-19). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV\** or *GNB-TEV\**].†‡

[T-BSG:] The Greek word translated as “**example**” in Philippians 3:17 is *symmimētēs*. It occurs only once in the New Testament, which suggests that Paul deliberately chose this word so as to convey a very specific and unique message. In literal translation, it means “**fellow-imitator**,” someone “who joins others as an imitator.”—William F. Arndt, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 958.—*T-BSG\** 94.†‡§

[T-BSG:] In fact, Paul coined this term “to stress his desire that there be a community effort in following his example: ‘Imitate me, one and all of you together!’”—Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, Word Biblical Commentary, [sic] vol. 43 (Dallas: Word, Inc., 2004), p. 217. This notion is similar to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:1: “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (NKJV). Ultimately, Christ is the perfect model for Christians. In Christ, believers can become good models for others, as Paul also indicates in 1 Thessalonians 2:14: “For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus” (NKJV).—*T-BSG\** 94.‡§ [In Judea?]‡

4. **Do others, while watching us, see us as good role models? Are we good models?**
5. Do you spend time thinking about being a good role model? When you think about our future home and what it will be like to live there, are you preparing yourself for that life?

[T-BSG:] For now, we can enjoy gladness and peace, even amid the surrounding negative circumstances. Such joy and peace are possible only by means of a close relationship with God. Though there may be no peace on earth, we can find peace in Christ (*John 14:27*). A life of peace and joy is not the result of chance. The Bible gives us a series of instructions to help us achieve the abundant life that God intends for His children. In general terms, no other set of instructions can surpass the Ten Commandments. Ellen G. White puts it very masterfully when she says, “Our prosperity and happiness....” [More is quoted but not as much as the expanded version just below].—*The Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1881.—*T-BSG\** 96-97.‡§

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] The very same Jesus, who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, led the Hebrew hosts, is our leader. He who gave wise and righteous and good laws to Israel, has spoken to us as verily as to them. **Our**

**prosperity and happiness depends upon our unwavering obedience to the law of God. Finite wisdom could not improve one precept of that holy law. Not one of those ten precepts can be broken without disloyalty to the God of Heaven. To keep every jot and tittle of the law is essential for our own happiness, and for the happiness of all connected with us.** “Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.” Yet finite man will present to the people this holy, just, and good law as a yoke of bondage,—a yoke which man cannot bear! It is the transgressor that can see no beauty in the law of God.—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*,\* March 3, 1881, par. 7.<sup>†‡</sup>

[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p820.3203&index=0>]<sup>‡</sup>

6. It is important to notice that Paul was weeping over those who were stuck in his old way of thinking (i.e., traditional Judaism)! Did they need a “Damascus road experience”?
7. Of course, Paul urged the Philippians to focus on the good examples and not on the bad. Jesus is the only perfect pattern and model.

[T-BSG:] The story is told of Dr. Thomas Lambie, who “went to Ethiopia as a medical missionary. After some time he wanted to buy land for a mission station. An Ethiopian law said that no land could be sold to foreigners. Because Dr. Lambie had great love for Christ and the Ethiopians, **he gave up his American citizenship and became an Ethiopian citizen**. Then he bought the properties needed for his work.”—Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times* (Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996), p. 1176. Likewise, believers are individuals who, because of their love for Christ, are willing to give up their earthly citizenship for the sake of the heavenly citizenship. They see themselves as “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (*Heb. 11:13, NKJV*).—T-BSG\* 93-94.<sup>†‡§</sup> [What would it mean to give up our “earthly citizenship”?]‡

[T-BSG:] J. I. Packer rightly said, “Lack of good models always tends to lower standards, and unfortunately good models have been in short supply throughout this century.”—Packer, “Some Perspectives on Preaching,” in *Preaching the Living Word* (Geanies House, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1999), p. 31. God expects us, as Christians, to fill this gap (*Matt. 5:13, 14*). As citizens of the heavenly commonwealth, we are called to please God by “being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (*Col. 1:10, NKJV*), until the day we partake in the inheritance of the saints (*Col. 1:12*).—T-BSG\* 96.<sup>‡§</sup>

## “Stand Fast in the Lord”

8. Read **Philippians 3:20-21**.

[T-BSG:] Jesus and the apostles portray Christians as living simultaneously in two different realms. Jesus said, “‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s’” (*Matt. 22:21, NKJV*). Although members of human society, believers must ever bear in mind that they may already enjoy some privileges of their heavenly citizenship. More than that, they are warned to seek these benefits as a signal of their union with Christ: “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of

God" (*Col. 3:1, NKJV; emphasis added*).—T-BSG\* 93.‡§

[BSG:] Unlike the enemies of the Cross, who "set their mind on earthly things" and have no greater god than their bellies (*Phil. 3:19*), Christian citizenship is in heaven, and our ruler is Jesus Christ Himself. To underscore the point, Paul highlights the need for "these humble bodies of ours" (*Phil. 3:21, NET*), subject to disease, deterioration, and death, to be transformed to be like Christ's glorious resurrection body.—BSG\* for Monday.‡§

9. Consider what the Bible tells us about the conditions in heaven. See *Job 19:25-27*; *Luke 24:39*; *1 Corinthians 15:42-44*; *1 Corinthians 15:50-54*; and *Colossians 3:4*. Of course, the great hope is that death, disease, and disability will be finally destroyed at the third coming. (See *1 Corinthians 15:26*.) Are we preparing as we should be?

10. Consider this from an avowed atheist as he considered the promises given to Christians.

[BSG:] "And by doing so in terms of individual identity, rather than anonymity or abstraction, it seems to be the only version that offers a truly definitive victory of personal immortality over our condition as mortals."—Ferry, *A Brief History of Thought* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011, Kindle edition), p. 90. **Quite an admission, coming from an atheist.**—BSG\* for Monday.†‡§

11. For every Christian, the ultimate hope is resurrection and dwelling with Jesus for eternity in a perfect environment. **Only Christianity offers people eternal life with God!**

## **Rejoice in the Lord – Always**

12. It seems like peace is almost impossible in our world today. However, Christians have a promise of peace.

**Philippians 4:4-7:** <sup>4</sup>May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!

<sup>5</sup>Show a gentle attitude towards everyone. The Lord is coming soon. <sup>6</sup>Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. <sup>7</sup>And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.\*

13. Because of that peace, we have good grounds for rejoicing!

[BSG:] How many times have you been stressed over things that ultimately melted effortlessly away as quickly as they appeared? For good reason, Jesus repeatedly emphasized that we should not worry (see *Matt. 6:25–34*, *Matt. 10:19*), and Peter reminds us that we can cast all our worries or anxieties (*ESV*) on the Lord, "because He cares for you" (*1 Pet. 5:7, ESV*). In fact, the increasing problems worldwide should inspire us with hope that the coming of the Lord is near (*compare Matt. 24:33, Luke 21:28, James 5:8*).—BSG\* for Tuesday, February 10.‡§ [What a hope!]‡

14. As you look at the world we live in, does it give you peace to remember that we have a fantastic future life promised to us? It may not remove the immediate pain of our situation; but, it gives us hope to look beyond our current problems.

[T-BSG:] Paul teaches that Christian joy and peace are not dependent on external circumstances. He makes it clear when affirming, "Rejoice in the

Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (*Phil. 4:4, NKJV*). As we know by experience, in a sin-filled world, it is impossible to live always under perfect circumstances. So, how can we rejoice always if joy is dependent on external circumstances? In fact, to experience joy always is possible only “in the Lord.” Here we see “the true basis of Christian joy and the sphere in which it thrives.”—*Philippians*, Word Biblical Commentary, [sic] vol. 43, p. 173.—T-BSG\* 94-95.‡§ [Do you know Christians who “rejoice always in the Lord”?]‡

[T-BSG:] **It is important to note that the call to rejoice in the Lord is not just good advice—it is a command. Living with joy** is so important for Paul that he refers to it three times throughout the letter (*Phil. 3:1; Phil. 4:4, 10*). As an example to his audience (*Phil. 3:17*), he can urge them to rejoice in the Lord (*Phil. 3:1, Phil. 4:4*) because he himself did the same (*Phil. 1:18; Phil. 2:17, 18; Phil. 4:4*). Joy is one of the major themes in Paul’s letter to the Philippians. The Greek verb *chairo* (“to rejoice”) occurs eight times (*Phil. 1:18 [two times]; Phil. 2:17, 18, 28; Phil 3:1; Phil. 4:4, 10*); the verb *synchairo* (“rejoice together”) occurs two times (*Phil. 2:17, 18*); and the term *chara* (“joy”) occurs five times (*Phil. 1:4, 25; Phil. 2:2, 29, ESV; Phil. 4:1*). **What makes this call to joy even more remarkable is that the person who wrote it was in prison!**—T-BSG\* 95.†‡Ω§ [Could you rejoice in prison?]‡

[T-BSG:] **Christian peace, like joy, is not dependent on external circumstances.** Jesus said, “‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you’” (*John 14:27, NKJV*). Again, this kind of peace is possible only in the Lord. Jesus said, “‘I have told you this so that you might have peace *in me*’” (*John 16:33, NABRE, emphasis added*). Likewise, when using the phrase “peace of God,” Paul indicates that God is the source of peace. The phrase also can mean “the peace produced by God” or “the peace that God gives.” Whatever the exact meaning is, believers can experience the peace that “surpasses all understanding” (*Phil. 4:7, NKJV*) only through their relationship with God. Paul would say, **the peace of God** (*Phil. 4:7*) is possible only because **“the God of peace will be with you”** (*Phil. 4:9, NKJV; emphasis added*). In short, how do believers who are conscious of their heavenly citizenship live? They live with joy and peace.—T-BSG\* 95.†‡§ [Do we live with peace and joy?]‡

[T-BSG:] A joyful life does not happen by chance. It is necessary to follow certain principles and, for this reason, Paul provides a series of instructions in Philippians 4, many of them in the form of imperatives.

“**Rejoice in the Lord always**” (*Phil. 4:4, NKJV*). The repetition, “Again I will say, rejoice” (*Phil. 4:4, NKJV*), indicates that this commandment must be taken very seriously.—T-BSG\* 95.‡§ [Compare Matthew 6:25-34.]‡

[T-BSG:] **“Let your gentleness be known to all men”** (*Phil. 4:5, NKJV*). “The Greek word translated as ‘gentleness’ (*epieikēs*) is an interesting, multi-faceted term. In the context of how we treat others it means to be kind and gentle, while in relationships it is to be courteous and tolerant, and in legal situations it connotes leniency.”—Grant R. Osborne, *Philippians: Verse by Verse*, Osborne New Testament Commentaries [sic] (Bellingham,

WA: Lexham Press, 2017), p. 167.—[as quoted in *T-BSG\** 95-96].<sup>†§</sup>

[BSG:] The antidote to anxiety *in everything*, including every situation, is sending up a prayer of faith (*Phil. 4:6, 7*). Clearly, we are to believe and act on our prayer as having been answered even before we see its realization, because we are to pray “with thanksgiving.” Also added is the word “supplication” (Greek: *deēsis*), signaling times of extremity and urgency (see, for example, *Luke 1:13*, *Phil. 1:19*, *1 Tim. 5:5*, **James 5:16**). Our prayers are still “requests,” but we can know our petitions have been received as long as we **ask “according to His will”** (*1 John 5:14, NKJV*). **Then we can rest and have peace, knowing that all our requests are in God’s hands.**—*BSG\** for Tuesday, February 10.<sup>†‡§</sup>

15. See also *Philippians 4:6-7*; *Luke 1:13*; *Philippians 1:19*; *1 Timothy 5:5*; *1 John 5:14*; and *James 5:16*. There are a number of passages in the Bible describing the peace that God offers and of which He hopes for us to partake. Did Paul have joy and peace in prison?
16. As Christians who understand the great controversy which is involving the entire universe, we take a larger view of events. We are not limited in our understanding to what is happening on this planet. Seen in the context of the entire great controversy which started in heaven not on this earth, (See *Revelation 12:1-12*.) we can recognize that the answers to Satan’s accusations and questions about God were given by the life and death of Jesus. And the final results are guaranteed! But, why do we need our current conditions?

[BSG:] God’s peace is something the world can never give, because God’s peace comes from the assurance that we have the gift of eternal life through Jesus our Savior (*Rom. 5:1*, *Rom. 6:23*). This peace impacts every aspect of life and “surpasses all understanding” (*Phil. 4:7, NKJV*). It cannot be grasped by the mind alone, as the Greek word *nous* (minds) used here indicates.—*BSG\** for Tuesday, February 10.<sup>‡§</sup>

17. Have you experienced the peace of God? There are a number of true stories on YouTube describing Christians who were about to be killed by evil societies, and then, they suddenly feel the peace of God! How would you describe to someone what it means to experience “the peace of God”? No matter what happens to us now, faithful Christians have eternal life ahead of them! See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5ZzcCXNF28>

## “Think on These Things”

[BSG:] The peace that surpasses understanding will also “guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (*Phil. 4:7, NKJV*). Our inner life needs protection. Interestingly, *Philippians 4:7* uses a military metaphor in connection with God’s peace. The Greek verb (*phroureō*) is used to describe a garrison of soldiers guarding a city against invasion (*2 Cor. 11:32*; compare *Acts 9:24*).—*BSG\** for Wednesday, February 11.<sup>‡§</sup>

**2 Corinthians 11:32:** When I was in Damascus, the governor under King Aretas placed guards at the city gates to arrest me.—*Good News Bible-TEV\**

**Acts 9:24:** But he was told of their plan. Day and night they watched the city gates in order to kill him.—*Good News Bible-TEV\**

18. In *Philippians*, Paul repeatedly said that the only real peace for Christians is from God.

**Philippians 4:8-9:** <sup>8</sup>In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable. <sup>9</sup>Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

[BSG:] Paul introduces Philippians 4:8, 9 with “furthermore” (GNV) and a list of six virtues, followed by a succinct summary of them and encouragement to imitate Paul’s example. **This closing cross-cultural exhortation fits well within the Greco-Roman setting of Philippi, with its dual emphasis on virtue and example. Interestingly, though, the focus is on biblical virtues, which is quite obvious from Paul’s omission of the four cardinal Greek virtues (prudence, justice, temperance, and courage).** [Contrast the virtues to which Paul points. **Our actions are to be:**]

1. **True**—not accidentally, the list begins with the cardinal biblical virtue of truth, which Jesus (“Truly, I say . . .”) and the whole New Testament frequently emphasize (see, for example, *Acts 26:25, Rom. 1:18, 1 Cor. 13:6, 2 Cor. 4:2, Eph. 4:15, 1 Tim. 3:15, James 1:18, 1 Pet. 1:22, 1 John 2:21*).—*BSG\** for Wednesday, February 11.†‡§

**Acts 26:25:** Paul answered, “I am not mad, Your Excellency! I am speaking the sober truth.”—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**Romans 1:18:** God’s anger is revealed from heaven against all the sin and evil of the people whose evil ways prevent the truth from being known.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**1 Corinthians 13:6:** Love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**2 Corinthians 4:2:** We put aside all secret and shameful deeds; we do not act with deceit, nor do we falsify the word of God. In the full light of truth we live in God’s sight and try to commend ourselves to everyone’s good conscience.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**Ephesians 4:15:** Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**1 Timothy 3:15:** But if I am delayed, this letter will let you know how we should conduct ourselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**James 1:18:** By his own will he brought us into being through the word of truth, so that we should have first place among all his creatures.—*GNB-TEV.\**

**1 Peter 1:22:** Now that by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves and have come to have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**1 John 2:21:** I write you, then, not because you do not know the truth; instead, it is because you do know it, and you also know that no lie ever comes from the truth.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

[BSG:] 2. **Noble**—the Greek word refers to a personal virtue (*compare its*

other uses in 1 Tim. 3:8, 11; Titus 2:2, where it is translated as “reverent” in the NKJV).—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 11.<sup>†‡§</sup>

**1 Timothy 3:8-11:** <sup>8</sup>Church helpers must also have a **good character** and be sincere; they must not drink too much wine or be greedy for money;...  
<sup>11</sup>Their wives also must be of **good character** and must not gossip; they must be sober and honest in everything.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*\*

**Titus 2:2:** Instruct the older men to be sober, sensible, and self-controlled; to be sound in their faith, love, and endurance.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*\*

[BSG:] 3. **Right**—this virtue is defined by God’s righteous character (compare its use in Phil. 1:7).—BSG\* for Wednesday, February 11.<sup>†‡§</sup>

**Philippians 1:7:** You are always in my heart! And so it is only right for me to feel as I do about you. For you have all shared with me in this privilege that God has given me, both now that I am in prison and also while I was free to defend the gospel and establish it firmly.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*\*

[BSG:] 4. **Pure**—thought and action flowing from God’s justifying righteousness received by faith (see 1 John 3:3).—BSG\* for Wednesday.<sup>†‡§</sup>

**1 John 3:3:** Everyone who has this hope in Christ keeps himself pure, just as Christ is pure.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*\*

[BSG:] 5. **Lovely**—aesthetic beauty, seen widely in God’s creation.

6. **Admirable**—“kind and winsome and gracious” (AMPC).

Paul gives two further qualifications, lest a pagan meaning be imputed to any of these virtues: “If anything is excellent or praiseworthy” (Phil. 4:8, NIV), we are to think on these **heavenly virtues**.—BSG\* for Wednesday.<sup>†‡§</sup>

## Keys for Contentment

19. Is your life happy and contented? What did Paul recommend?

**Philippians 4:10-13,19:** <sup>10</sup>In my life in union with the Lord it is a great joy to me that after so long a time you once more had the chance of showing that you care for me. I don’t mean that you had stopped caring for me—you just had no chance to show it. <sup>11</sup>And I am not saying this because I feel neglected, for I have learned to be satisfied with what I have. <sup>12</sup>I know what it is to be in need and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret, so that anywhere, at any time, I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. <sup>13</sup>I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me....

<sup>19</sup>And with all his abundant wealth through Christ Jesus, my God will supply all your needs.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*\*

20. Unfortunately, many Christians living in the prosperous Western world do not think they have any great needs! **However, they need Christ!**

[BSG:] When extreme circumstances strike (hunger, illness, injury, loss), one begins to reflect on the things that really count and to dwell on the blessings that are usually taken for granted. When we are “brought low” (Phil. 4:12, ESV), “in need” (NIV), or left with “almost nothing” (NLT) is when faith rises to the occasion.

Conversely, when we “live in prosperity” (NASB), it should always be with the recognition that it could vanish in an instant (see *Prov. 23:5*). As both Job and Paul remind us, we brought nothing into the world when we were born, and we will take nothing with us to the grave (*Job 1:21, 1 Tim. 6:7*).—*BSG\** for Thursday, February 12.<sup>†‡§</sup>

**Proverbs 23:5:** Your money can be gone in a flash, as if it had grown wings and flown away like an eagle.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

**Job 1:21:** He said, “I was born with nothing, and I will die with nothing. The LORD gave, and now he has taken away. May his name be praised!”—*GNB-TEV.\**

**1 Timothy 6:7:** What did we bring into the world? Nothing! What can we take out of the world? Nothing!—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

[BSG:] Note the following Bible promises:

- **Psalm 23:1**—“The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need” (*GNB*).
- **Matthew 6:32**—“Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (*NKJV*).
- **1 Peter 5:7**—“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you” (*NLT*).
- **Philippians 4:19**—“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (*NKJV*).

And, most wonderful of all: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (*Phil. 4:13, NKJV*). Perhaps none of us can fully grasp what “all things” entails. Certainly, as with any request for God’s help and strength, we must ask according to His will. But many times, we don’t even ask for things we know fit His will. That’s why James 4:2 says, “You do not have, because you do not ask” (*ESV*).—*BSG\** for Thursday, February 12.<sup>†‡§</sup>

**James 4:2:** You want things, but you cannot have them, so you are ready to kill; you strongly desire things, but you cannot get them, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have what you want because you do not ask God for it.—*Good News Bible-TEV.\**

[BSG:] **Here are some things we can ask for confidently because we know they are in harmony with God’s will:**

- Salvation for a loved one or friend (*1 Tim. 2:3, 4*)
- Courage to share our faith (*Rev. 22:17*)
- Forgiveness when we confess and forsake wrong (*1 John 1:9*)
- Strength to obey God’s commandments (*Heb. 13:20, 21*)
- Love for those who hate and mistreat us (*Matt. 5:44*)
- Wisdom for challenging situations (*James 1:5*)
- Understanding the truth in God’s Word (*John 8:32*)—*BSG\** Thursday.<sup>†‡§</sup>

21. Are these the things that you pray for? If not, could you change your prayer requests?

[EGW:] Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting

up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.

**To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others.** Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against sin.

**Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest.** Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be "laborers together with God."—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*\* 55.3-56.2.†‡

[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p127.217&index=0>]‡

[EGW:] God knows our wants, and has provided for them. The Lord has a treasure-house of supplies for his children, and can give them what they need under all circumstances. Then why do we not trust him? He has made precious promises to his children on condition of faithful obedience to his precepts. There is not a burden but he can remove, no darkness but he can dispel, no weakness but he can change to power, no fears but he can calm, no worthy aspiration but he can guide and justify.

**We are not to look at ourselves. The more we dwell upon our own imperfections, the less strength we shall have to overcome them.** We are to render a cheerful service to God. It is the work of Satan to present the Lord as lacking in compassion and pity.—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,\* January 14, 1890, par. 6-7.†‡

[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.10173&index=0>]‡

22. Are we being good role models to all around us, both in the church and in the surrounding world? If not, what can we do to change and improve our witness?

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