Psalm 27:14 (Contemporary English Version)

“Trust the LORD! Be brave and strong and trust the LORD.”

Psalm 34:10 (Contemporary English Version)

“Young lions may go hungry or even starve, but if you trust the LORD, you will never miss out on anything good.”

Psalm 55:23 (Contemporary English Version)

“But what about those people who are cruel and brutal? You will throw them down into the deepest pit long before their time. I trust you, LORD!”

Psalm 91 (The Message)

“You who sit down in the High God’s presence, spend the night in Shaddai’s shadow, say this: ‘God, you’re my refuge. I trust in you and I’m safe!’ That’s right—he rescues you from hidden traps, shields you from deadly hazards. His huge outstretched arms protect you—under them you’re perfectly safe; his arms fend off all harm. Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night, not flying arrows in the day, not disease that prowls through the darkness, not disaster that erupts at high noon. Even though others succumb all around, drop like flies right and left, no harm will even graze you. You’ll stand untouched, watch it all from a distance, watch the wicked turn into corpses. Yes, because God’s your refuge, the High God your very own home, evil can’t get close to you, harm can’t get through the door. He ordered his angels to guard you wherever you go. If you stumble, they’ll catch you; their job is to keep you from falling. You’ll walk unharmed among lions and snakes, and kick young lions and serpents from the path. ‘If you’ll hold on to me for dear life,’ says God, ‘I’ll get you out of any trouble. I’ll give you the best of care if you’ll only get to know and trust me. Call me and I’ll answer, be at your side in bad times; I’ll rescue you, then throw you a party. I’ll give you a long life, give you a long drink of salvation!’”

Psalm 34:7 (King James Version)

“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 142, 143

“We are living in the midst of an ‘epidemic of crime,’ at which thoughtful, God-fearing men everywhere stand aghast. The corruption that prevails, it is beyond the
power of the human pen to describe. Every day brings fresh revelations of political strife, bribery, and fraud. Every day brings its heart-sickening record of violence and lawlessness, of indifference to human suffering, of brutal, fiendish destruction of human life. Every day testifies to the increase of insanity, murder, and suicide. Who can doubt that satanic agencies are at work among men with increasing activity to distract and corrupt the mind, and defile and destroy the body?

1. What are synonyms for (A) trust and (B) fear? (For this part of the exercise, you may use your thesaurus.)
   A. _________________________
   B. _________________________

2. What are antonyms for (A) trust and (B) fear?
   A. _________________________
   B. _________________________

3. What things do you fear the most?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Are most people afraid of something?
   ____________________________________________________________

5. When you are afraid, what do you do?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

6. As a Christian, what can you do when you are afraid?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

FROZEN BY FEAR

March 13, 1964. It was well past midnight, a few hours before dawn. Kitty Genovese was returning home from work. As she was about to enter her apartment, she was attacked by a man with a knife. “He stabbed me. Please help me! Please help me!” she screamed. Immediately many lights in apartments
around her went on. The killer quickly left. But no one came out to help her. No one called 911. A few moments later, the lights went out. The killer returned to finish the job. As soon as she screamed again, the lights came back on and the killer ran. This happened three times. On the third try, the killer finished his job and quietly walked away. During the 35-minute attack, 38 people watched from the safety of their apartments. Not one person came to her rescue, so overcome with their own feelings of fear, they had no sense of moral duty or sensitivity. They sat idle as a fellow human being was brutally murdered.

Soon after the Kitty Genovese incident, social scientists began studies that they hoped would explain this “phenomenon.” They concluded that lack of compassion and empathy on the part of the onlookers was owing to feelings of anonymity and being out of touch with other people.

Witnesses, in an attempt to justify their inaction, said, “We were afraid,” “I was tired,” “We didn’t want to get involved.” Completely guilt free, wrapped up in self and their own emotions, they were oblivious to all around them. (Taken from New York Times article, March 27, 1964.)

*Steps to Christ*, pp. 121, 122

“If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ has loved us; but if our thoughts dwell upon the wondrous love and pity of Christ for us, the same spirit will flow out to others. We should love and respect one another, notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing. Humility and self-distrust should be cultivated, and a patient tenderness with the faults of others. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.

“The psalmist says, ‘Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.’ Psalm 37:3. ‘Trust in the Lord.’ Each day has its burdens, its cares and perplexities; and when we meet how ready we are to talk of our difficulties and trials. So many borrowed troubles intrude, so many fears are indulged, such a weight of anxiety is expressed, that one might suppose we had no pitying, loving Saviour ready to hear all our requests and to be to us a present help in every time of need.

“Some are always fearing, and borrowing trouble. Every day they are surrounded with the tokens of God’s love; every day they are enjoying the bounties of His providence; but they overlook these present blessings. Their minds are continually dwelling upon something disagreeable which they fear may come; or some difficulty may really exist which, though small, blinds their eyes to the many things that demand gratitude. The difficulties they encounter, instead of driving them to God, the only source of their help, separate them from Him because they awaken
unrest and repining.

“Do we well to be thus unbelieving? Why should we be ungrateful and distrustful? Jesus is our friend; all heaven is interested in our welfare. We should not allow the perplexities and worries of everyday life to fret the mind and cloud the brow. If we do we shall always have something to vex and annoy. We should not indulge a solicitude that only frets and wears us, but does not help us to bear trials.

“You may be perplexed in business; your prospects may grow darker and darker, and you may be threatened with loss; but do not become discouraged; cast your care upon God, and remain calm and cheerful. Pray for wisdom to manage your affairs with discretion, and thus prevent loss and disaster. Do all you can on your part to bring about favorable results. Jesus has promised His aid, but not apart from our effort. When, relying upon our Helper, you have done all you can, accept the result cheerfully.

“It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, ‘Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.’ He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge. His prayer for His disciples was, ‘I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.’ ‘In the world,’ He says, ‘ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ John 17:15; 16:33.”

1. Highlight the paragraph that tells us to trust in the Lord.
2. Highlight the paragraph that tells us to cast our care on God.

HERE’S WHAT I THINK

All these years later, it’s easy judge the people in those apartments. We can sit in the safety of our homes and say someone should have done something, raced down the steps and rescued the woman, aided her in some way. But put yourself in the same situation. Imagine you’re sitting at home and your peaceful evening is interrupted by the screams of a woman being stabbed to death. You run to the window to see what’s happening. At the sight of the attack, you are overcome with emotion: feelings of fear, anger, injustice, and surprise. What do you do? Do you help the woman? Do you let your own fear get the best of you? Would guilt affect your actions? What hold do guilt and fear have on your life?

Go to http://guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your answers. Your thoughts and feelings may seem clearer to you when you write them down, so we’ve provided space for you here as well. You may also wish to share them with your class later. Be up-front and honest.
“In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care, for ‘they sow not, neither do they reap.’ And yet the great Father provides for their needs. The Saviour asks, ‘Are ye not much better than they?’ Matthew 6:26. The great Provider for man and beast opens His hand and supplies all His creatures. The birds of the air are not beneath His notice. He does not drop the food into their bills, but He makes provision for their needs. They must gather the grains He has scattered for them. They must prepare the material for their little nests. They must feed their young. They go forth singing to their labor, for ‘your heavenly Father feedeth them.’ And ‘are ye not much better than they?’ Are not you, as intelligent, spiritual worshipers, of more value than the birds of the air? Will not the Author of our being, the Preserver of our life, the One who formed us in His own divine image, provide for our necessities if we but trust in Him?

“Christ pointed His disciples to the flowers of the field, growing in rich profusion and glowing in the simple beauty which the heavenly Father had given them, as an expression of His love to man. He said, ‘Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.’ The beauty and simplicity of these natural flowers far outrival the splendor of Solomon.

“The most gorgeous attire produced by the skill of art cannot bear comparison with the natural grace and radiant beauty of the flowers of God’s creation. Jesus asks, ‘If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?’ Matthew 6:28, 30. If God, the divine Artist, gives to the simple flowers that perish in a day their delicate and varied colors, how much greater care will He have for those who are created in
His own image? This lesson of Christ’s is a rebuke to the anxious thought, the perplexity and doubt, of the faithless heart.

“The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Jesus says, ‘My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’ ‘These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.’ John 14:27; 15:11.

“Happiness that is sought from selfish motives, outside of the path of duty, is ill-balanced, fitful, and transitory; it passes away, and the soul is filled with loneliness and sorrow; but there is joy and satisfaction in the service of God; the Christian is not left to walk in uncertain paths; he is not left to vain regrets and disappointments. If we do not have the pleasures of this life we may still be joyful in looking to the life beyond.”

1. Highlight the paragraph that tells us what God does for the birds and for us.
2. Highlight the paragraph that talks about the divine Artist coloring the flowers and caring for us.

People in the Bible Who Were Afraid

Words in each line are merged together. Find the original words. Hint: The letters that make up each word are still in their original order.
"We should not try to lessen our guilt by excusing sin. We must accept God's estimate of sin, and that is heavy indeed. Calvary alone can reveal the terrible enormity of sin. If we had to bear our own guilt, it would crush us. But the sinless One has taken our place; though undeserving, He has borne our iniquity. 'If we confess our sins,' God 'is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 1 John 1:9. Glorious truth!—just to His own law, and yet the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. ‘Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy.’ Micah 7:18.

"'Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' Matthew 6:13, R.V.

"Temptation is enticement to sin, and this does not proceed from God, but from Satan and from the evil of our own hearts. ‘God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man.’ James 1:13, R.V.

"Satan seeks to bring us into temptation, that the evil of our characters may be
revealed before men and angels, that he may claim us as his own. In the symbolic prophecy of Zechariah, Satan is seen standing at the right hand of the Angel of the Lord, accusing Joshua, the high priest, who is clothed in filthy garments, and resisting the work that the Angel desires to do for him. This represents the attitude of Satan toward every soul whom Christ is seeking to draw unto Himself. The enemy leads us into sin, and then he accuses us before the heavenly universe as unworthy of the love of God. But ‘the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?’ And unto Joshua He said, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ Zechariah 3:1-4.

“If Christ is in you ‘the hope of glory,’ you will have no disposition to watch others, to expose their errors. Instead of seeking to accuse and condemn, it will be your object to help, to bless, and to save. In dealing with those who are in error, you will heed the injunction, Consider ‘thyself, lest thou also be tempted.’ Galatians 6:1. You will call to mind the many times you have erred and how hard it was to find the right way when you had once left it. You will not push your brother into greater darkness, but with a heart full of pity will tell him of his danger.

“He who looks often upon the cross of Calvary, remembering that his sins placed the Saviour there, will never try to estimate the degree of his guilt in comparison with that of others. He will not climb upon the judgment seat to bring accusation against another. “There can be no spirit of criticism or self-exaltation on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary’s cross.

“Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God.”

1. Highlight the phrase that tells us that God takes away our guilt.

2. Highlight the phrase that tells us not to be a critical of others in order to make our guilt look smaller.

3. Highlight the sentence that tells us the best way to win others to Jesus.

*The Upward Look, p. 314*

“Trust yourself in the hands of God. Do cease complaining, even though you suppose that there is something to complain of. Satan says, ‘I will harass him until he shall make shipwreck of faith’: but you need not be overcome by his devices.
God will uphold you if you will only let Him. At times you are inclined to make a complete surrender of yourself to God, and then you feel at rest; but you take yourself back again, you do not let Jesus carry your burdens.

“You want the will of God to be done in you, but at the same time you shrink from the pain and self-sacrifice involved in having it done. In order that the will of God may be done in you, you must trust your heavenly Father as a child trusts its parent. But you have an anxious, troubled heart; you are actually afraid to trust yourself with God, afraid of the consequences that such surrender may involve. Do not, I beseech you, mar your own Christian experience.”

SO WHAT?

There are 545 recognized phobias in the world. That translates into a lot of scared people. People scared of everything from water to fire to French culture. Maybe you don’t have huge debilitating phobias, maybe you do. But something everyone feels at times is guilt. Guilt has a way of casting a shadow on our lives.

Guilt and fear have plagued humanity since the beginning. Adam and Eve hid from God in the garden because they felt guilty for what they had done. Abraham lied to Pharaoh because he was afraid he would kill him and take Sarah.

There is only one way to fight these two emotions—trust; complete trust in Christ. Only He has the power to forgive and relieve guilt. The Bible says, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline” (2 Tim.1:7, NLT). Use that spirit; don’t hide behind a dark cloud of guilt and fear. Trust God and use the power He has given you.

WHAT IF?

Have you ever stopped to wonder what makes it so hard for us to trust God? Have you ever asked yourself, What if I hadn’t done. . . Have you ever played “What If?” with yourself, wishing you had done something different than what you did?

I believe that God put stories of men and women in the Bible so that we might learn from their lives. I have a few Bible characters listed for us to stop and ask “What if?” Fill in the blanks with your idea of “what if” for each character listed.

1. What if David hadn’t run away from King Saul?
2. What if Jacob owned up to the fact that he lied and cheated his brother out of his special blessing?

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

3. What if Moses had trusted God and gone back to Egypt right away?

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

4. What is it that you feel God pulling at your heart strings to do for Him? What if you forget the fear in your heart? What if you just let go and let God?

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

John 16:33 (NIV)

Decode the message by finding each substitute letter or symbol.


Thursday | Today’s Reading

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pp. 100, 101

"Be not therefore anxious for the morrow. . . . Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.’ Matthew 6:34, R.V.

“If you have given yourself to God, to do His work, you have no need to be anxious
for tomorrow. He whose servant you are, knows the end from the beginning. The events of tomorrow, which are hidden from your view, are open to the eyes of Him who is omnipotent.

“When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. We may well have [page 101] anxiety and anticipate danger and loss, for it is certain to befall us. But when we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.

“Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee’ (2 Corinthians 12:9); but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day’s need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day’s supply.

“One day alone is ours, and during this day we are to live for God. For this one day we are to place in the hand of Christ, in solemn service, all our purposes and plans, casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for us. ‘I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.’ ‘In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.’ Jeremiah 29:11; Isaiah 30:15.

“If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service,—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved.”

1. Highlight the paragraph that tells us what happens when we take the management of things into our own hands.

2. Highlight the paragraph on page 101 that tells us what the Lord’s thoughts are toward us.

Psalm 23:4 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.”

Psalm 27:1 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”
WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

As a Christian, you know for a fact that God is watching and protecting us at all times. You’ve heard Psalm 23 read again and again. You know forgiveness is freely given to all who ask. Yet feelings of guilt and fear can have a powerful hold on your life. You hear about a shooting on the news, and all of a sudden you’re scared to leave the house. You mess up once and feel guilty for weeks. Wouldn’t it be so much simpler to simply trust God to protect you? Wouldn’t it be less stressful just to ask for forgiveness? Wish it could be that simple? It is.

1. You have studied this week about guilt and fear. From what you have studied, what can you do about the guilt and fear in your life? Use Bible verses to back up your answers. There are several in the lesson this week.

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. Does guilt have any purpose? If so, what?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. What did Jesus say to the paralytic?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. What should you do about the fears you have?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

5. How simple is it to be forgiven and start over fresh? (Use some Bible verses to back up your answer.)

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

Steps to Christ, pp. 49, 50
"As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you realize your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. You see that your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain it?

"It is peace that you need—Heaven’s forgiveness and peace and love in the soul. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot procure it, wisdom cannot attain to it; you can never hope, by your own efforts, to secure it. But God offers it to you as a gift, 'without money and without price.' Isaiah 55:1. It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it. The Lord says, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Isaiah 1:18. 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' Ezekiel 36:26.

"You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this because He has promised. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power; He helped them in the things which they could see, thus inspiring them with confidence in Him concerning things which they could not see—leading them to believe in His power to forgive sins. This He plainly stated in the healing of the man sick with palsy: 'That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.' Matthew 9:6. So also John the evangelist says, speaking of the miracles of Christ, 'These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.' John 20:31.

"From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.' The sick man might have said, 'Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.' But, no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole."

1. Highlight the paragraph that says "It [forgiveness] is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it."

2. Highlight the paragraph that tells you how the paralytic accepted Jesus’ forgiveness.
Romans 8:1-4 (English Standard Version)
“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Hebrews 10:17 (English Standard Version)
“Then he adds, 'I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.’”

1 John 1:9 (English Standard Version)
“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Isaiah 43:25 (English Standard Version)
“I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”

HOW DOES IT WORK?
A new product called “Disposable Guilt Bags” appeared in the marketplace. It consisted of a set of 10 ordinary brown bags on which were printed the following instructions. “Place the bag securely over your mouth, take a deep breath and blow all your guilt out, then dispose of the bag immediately.” The wonder of this is that the Associated Press reported that 2,500 kits had been quickly sold at $2.50 per kit. Would that we could dispose of our guilt so easily! There is nothing on this earth powerful enough in itself to dispose of guilt. We cannot fix ourselves, which is what many of us try to do. That which makes it possible to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be healed, that which makes it possible for us to receive our life back again, fresh and clean and new, is the power of God’s grace in the cross of Jesus Christ.

This week, try out the Guilt Bag idea. But instead of using paper bags, try using good old reliable prayer. Really, it may sound like a dumb idea. But try seriously for one week, and see if you don’t feel less guilt.

*Why not write out your prayer on the lines below.*