

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

# LIGHT FROM THE WORD

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June–August 2026  
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# LIGHT FROM THE WORD

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inside

Light from God's Word

Daily Devotionals

Daily Bible Readings

Meet the Writers

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# Light from God's Word

We wouldn't want to check into a disorganized hospital for surgery. Whatever pre-op apprehension we carried into the hospital would multiply greatly if it became apparent that no one on staff knew what they were supposed to do. Like a hospital, the church must be well-organized, have a squeaky clean reputation, and be staffed by qualified leaders. Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus contain instructions for establishing and maintaining orderly churches that receive the Lord's approval.

As young leaders, Timothy and Titus faced serious challenges organizing new churches. Paul's directions were to be strong in the faith and firmly focused on spiritual values so that no one lapse into doctrinal error and materialism.

Paul also instructed the church to be committed to prayer for everyone, including those who held positions of governmental authority. It may seem hard to pray for political rulers whose values differ from ours, but we continue praying knowing that God "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

While congregations may not agree on the specifics of worship, there should be unanimous agreement about the guidelines. Worship should be holy, and preaching and teaching sound doctrine is essential.

As we meditate on 1–2 Timothy and Titus, may we gain a deeper appreciation for our church—its leaders, its character, its purpose—and our role in it.

Wesleyan Publishing House Editorial Team

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*Stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer. (1 Tim. 1:3)*

When Paul wrote to Timothy, Nero sat on the throne of Rome and Christians were persecuted mercilessly. The Roman historian Tacitus told of Christians being burned alive as human torches to light Nero's evening parties. Later, Nero would execute both Peter and Paul.

The church of the first century was painfully aware of the threat posed by outside persecution, but the New Testament also warns about the threat posed by false teachers within the church. Historically, persecution has almost always resulted in the growth and expansion of the church. Tertullian, writing about AD 200, famously reminded the faithful that the blood of the martyrs is seed, spreading the faith. False teaching, on the other hand, can rob the church of its power by corrupting its message. The issue is not differing interpretations of Scripture so much as it is a denial of its authority.

The false teachers in the church Timothy pastored were promoting doctrines that sound strange to us—obscure Jewish myths, contrived genealogies (perhaps to create a family-tree connection to Old Testament heroes), extreme forms of self-denial, and even self-abuse. We're more familiar with modern examples of pastors and scholars who reduce Jesus to no more than a great teacher and the Bible to no more than a human book.

The threat is the same, and so is its source. Beware the enemy within.

—Bob Black

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*1 Timothy 1:1–7*

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**PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH AND FOR  
MISGUIDED CHURCHES CLOSER TO HOME.**

*We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.*  
(1 Tim. 1:8)

**S**hop class and I didn't get along in the seventh grade, but this time it would be different. With fierce determination, I set out to avoid past mistakes and produce a knickknack shelf in the form of a maple leaf for my mother to proudly display for decades to come.

Miraculously my maple-leaf masterpiece took shape, more or less, and I applied two generous coats of varnish before putting it aside to dry. At the end of the day, however, results weren't quite up to my expectations. Apparently, I had coated it with glue instead of varnish, and now it was decorated with wood shavings, lint, and various flying insects. Not only that, but it was bonded to my workbench for time and eternity.

Glue has its place, but not as a substitute for varnish. Glue is glue. Glue does what glue does. Inadvertently, I was depending on it to do something it was never intended to do.

The law has its place, too. "It is God's straight-edge to show us how warped we are," John R. Church said. But don't count on the law for salvation. It's grace that brings new life through faith, we're told, and that will make all the difference one day when we place the finished craftwork of our lives in the hands of the Carpenter for his "Well done."

—Bob Black

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*1 Timothy 1:8-11*

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*I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. (1 Tim. 1:12)*

Temple Gairdner has been called “the apostle of Arabic Christianity,” and with good reason. He left England in 1898 to tackle one of the most difficult assignments—a mission to Muslims.

Sent to Cairo by the Church Missionary Society, Gairdner focused on Egypt’s educated classes and brought the gospel to them in innovative and imaginative ways. He was a pioneer, and others are still building on his foundation.

Although few may have noticed it at the time, the key to his success was apparent in his very first public prayer. His words were brief and directly to the point: “O God, you know that I do not want anything else but to serve you and [others], always, all my life.”

We hear a lot about leadership in the church today, and we should. Leaders are critically important. But leadership in the New Testament is always expressed through servanthood. Paul was an apostle—he says so in the greeting of this letter—and that leadership was expressed through faithful service to God and others. After all, the root word for “minister” in the New Testament literally means “to wait on tables.” Can you picture it? A servant, carrying a towel, bending low to work at menial tasks in service around a table at mealtime . . . perhaps for a party of twelve? It sounds vaguely familiar.

—Bob Black

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1 Timothy 1:12–14

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SEEK TO SERVE GOD AND OTHERS IN WAYS BOTH  
MENIAL AND INNOVATIVE.

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. (1 Tim. 1:15)*

**J**ohn Newton's story is well known. Captain of a slave ship, he turned to God in a fearsome storm at sea and became a minister in the Church of England. Powerfully influenced by John and Charles Wesley and their friend George Whitefield, he in turn became a mentor to a generation of Christian leaders like William Wilberforce, who was God's instrument for ending the slave trade in England not long before Newton's death.

Newton's greatest legacy, of course, is his classic hymn "Amazing Grace," but he also left a wonderful testimony on his tombstone. His epitaph reads, "John Newton, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy."

The same rich mercy and amazing grace transformed the apostle Paul, too. In his first letter to Timothy he powerfully combined a confession of faith (Jesus saves) with a confession of sin (no one needed saving more than I did). John Newton echoed this verse when, on his death bed at age eighty-two, he whispered to a friend, "Although my memory is fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior."

Every sinner saved by God's amazing grace can say "Amen" to both truths.

—Bob Black

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*1 Timothy 1:15-16*

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**REMEMBER THE SAVIOR'S AMAZING GRACE.**

*Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Tim. 1:17)*

Why do I have to study theology?" a seminary student complained. "It's not like I'm going to use it in my ministry."

He wasn't kidding. Theology is not very "PC" ("pastorally correct") in many churches these days. An increasingly popular opinion seems to be that "worship unites but theology divides." For the sake of evangelism all barriers must come down, we are told. But what if those "barriers" are actually gateways to truth—truth about God and truth about ourselves?

In just the first chapter of his first letter to Timothy, Paul deals with the sinfulness of humanity, the splendor of God, and the saving power of grace. That's theology in the service of evangelism and discipleship! The truth about God in our key verse alone could fuel an entire sermon series.

When truths that compose the very core of our faith are neglected, the result is far worse than ignorance. It is error. C. S. Lewis said, "If you do not listen to theology, that will not mean that you have no ideas about God. It will mean that you have a lot of wrong ones."

Paul was determined that Timothy, as a young pastor, would preach the truth (2 Tim. 3:10—4:5). Through the theology Paul imparted, Timothy was prepared to share the truth with new believers. Every congregation should expect the same today.

—Bob Black

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*1 Timothy 1:17*

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*The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 1:14)*

In one of the most famous stories in literature, from Victor Hugo's classic novel *Les Misérables*, Jean Valjean is caught stealing the bishop's silverware. When the police drag him back to the scene of the crime, the bishop not only insists that Valjean keep the silver, but also hands him two silver candlesticks, saying, "You forgot to take these." That gracious act transforms Valjean. He gratefully sells the silverware to begin a new and productive life, but he keeps the candlesticks, which will forever represent grace to him. As the reformed thief breathed his last at the end of the book, Hugo wrote, "The light from the two candlesticks fell upon his face."

That's a powerful story, but I know a better one, and so does every born-again child of God. "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith," the apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:8). When he later wrote to Timothy, who was pastoring that same Ephesian church, he shifted to a first-person pronoun (1 Tim. 1:14). This was Paul's testimony too.

Certainly, the lost silver cost the bishop a great deal, but think what Christ's sacrifice cost him. No wonder the German martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer warned us not to settle for what he called "cheap grace" by being unwilling to pay the cost of discipleship. Paul didn't, Bonhoeffer didn't, and neither must we.

—Bob Black

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*1 Timothy 1:1-17*

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**SURROUND YOURSELF WITH REMINDERS OF THE  
DIFFERENCE GOD'S GRACE HAS MADE.**

*May those who fear you rejoice when they see me, for I have put my hope in your word. (Ps. 119:74)*

**M**y grandfather suffered from iritis, a painful inflammation of the eyes which made them extremely sensitive to light. For an extended period of time, he had to lie in total darkness. Bandages covered his eyes, shades were pulled, and quilts were hung over the windows to prevent even the smallest glimmer of light from entering his room.

That meant he couldn't read his Bible, of course, but family members sitting in the hallway outside his room would read it to him through the closed door. When no one was reading it, he held it firmly in his hands, and when sleeping he placed it under his pillow.

Bibliolatry? Worshiping the Word? No, not at all. He had met his Lord on those pages, and its truth was the basis of his hope, both in this world and in the world to come. Contrary to appearances, his room wasn't dark at all. It was filled with a light no one could see.

John Wesley said it well. "I want to know one thing—the way to heaven. God himself has written it down in a book. O, give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God!"

In an age which many find increasingly hopeless, there is hope in the Christ who can be met on the pages of that book.

—Bob Black

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*Psalm 119:73–80*

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**READ THE WORD, NOT JUST OUT OF HABIT, BUT IN HOPE.**

# DAILY BIBLE READINGS

*By reading for fifteen minutes each day, you can read every chapter of the Bible in one year. Begin anytime!*

june

1. 2 Samuel 14–15
2. 2 Samuel 16–18
3. 2 Samuel 19–20
4. 2 Samuel 21–22
5. 2 Samuel 23–24
6. Galatians 1–3
7. Galatians 4–6
8. 1 Kings 1–2
9. 1 Kings 3–5
10. 1 Kings 6–7
11. 1 Kings 8–9
12. 1 Kings 10–12
13. 1 Kings 13–15
14. 1 Kings 16–18
15. 1 Kings 19–20
16. 1 Kings 21–22
17. Ephesians 1–3
18. Ephesians 4–6
19. 2 Kings 1–3
20. 2 Kings 4–5
21. 2 Kings 6–8
22. 2 Kings 9–11
23. 2 Kings 12–14
24. 2 Kings 15–17
25. 2 Kings 18–20
26. 2 Kings 21–23
27. 2 Kings 24–25
28. Philippians 1–4
29. 1 Chronicles 1–2
30. 1 Chronicles 3–5

july

1. 1 Chronicles 6–7
2. 1 Chronicles 8–10
3. 1 Chronicles 11–13
4. 1 Chronicles 14–16
5. 1 Chronicles 17–20
6. 1 Chronicles 21–23
7. 1 Chronicles 24–26
8. 1 Chronicles 27–29
9. Colossians 1–4
10. 2 Chronicles 1–4
11. 2 Chronicles 5–7
12. 2 Chronicles 8–11
13. 2 Chronicles 12–16
14. 2 Chronicles 17–19
15. 2 Chronicles 20–22
16. 2 Chronicles 23–25
17. 2 Chronicles 26–29
18. 2 Chronicles 30–32
19. 2 Chronicles 33–34
20. 2 Chronicles 35–36
21. 1 Thessalonians 1–5
22. Ezra 1–4
23. Ezra 5–7
24. Ezra 8–10
25. Nehemiah 1–4
26. Nehemiah 5–7
27. Nehemiah 8–10
28. Nehemiah 11–13
29. 2 Thessalonians 1–3
30. Esther 1–4
31. Esther 5–10

august

1. Job 1–4
2. Job 5–8
3. Job 9–12
4. Job 13–17
5. Job 18–21
6. Job 22–26
7. Job 27–30
8. Job 31–34
9. Job 35–38
10. Job 39–42
11. 1 Timothy 1–6
12. 2 Timothy 1–4
13. Psalms 1–7
14. Psalms 8–14
15. Psalms 15–18
16. Psalms 19–24
17. Psalms 25–30
18. Psalms 31–34
19. Psalms 35–37
20. Psalms 38–42
21. Psalms 43–48
22. Psalms 49–54
23. Psalms 55–60
24. Psalms 61–67
25. Psalms 68–71
26. Psalms 72–75
27. Psalms 76–78
28. Psalms 79–84
29. Psalms 85–89
30. Psalms 90–95
31. Psalms 96–102



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