

GREETING - May the Lord bless you today for allowing Morning Manna to be a part of your worship experience. I truly pray that this service will be helpful and inspirational to you.

PRAYER

ALL THAT I AM

All that I have, all that I am
All I shall ever be
Cannot repay the love debt I owe
I surrender to Thee

VEP ELLIS -- CCLI 1302275

JESUS - NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

Jesus - Name above all names
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

Psalm 94:19

In the multitude of my anxieties within me,
Your comforts delight my soul.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Psalm 16:11

You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

John 15:11

“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

DON'T LET INCONSEQUENTIAL THINGS BLOCK YOUR JOY OR PEACE

Introduction:

Inconsequential = (SYN) insignificant, trivial, petty, irrelevant, frivolous, unimportant, minor

Most people are prone to respond with dismay, grief, anguish, or fear over little things. Perhaps it was a

smart mouth comment by someone whose purpose was to insult you. Or a smirk from someone who wanted to show their displeasure with you. Or a crude joke made at your expense.

If you allow little irritations to influence your reactions or your sense of well-being you will soon be swarmed by the stink flies of depression and hurt feelings which smell your weakness. They will signal their buddies and like vultures pecking at a rotting roadkill you will soon be inundated with small, picayune criticisms, insults, raised eyebrows, and whatever else the stink flies can dredge up.

Christians, for the most part, are sensitive caring people. I know there are some hard heads with belligerent attitudes and verbally abusive mouths, but I'm talking about Christians who have learned, and are learning, how to deal with people and life in a kind and loving way. (I read this little bit of advice: If someone can easily get your goat, stop telling them where you have your goat tied up.)

Seriously, your testimony and Christian witness can be very negatively affected by your inappropriate response to a hurtful remark or a public rebuke. You must learn how to keep your cool and smile in the presence of liars, accusers, hateful people, and fake Christians.

Here's something I subconsciously do -

I visualize a barometric thermometer and mentally rate the hurtful pressures on a scale of 1 to 10. The dividing line is a 5.

From 1-4, I simply shrug it off because the pressure is low!

A 5 requires me to pay closer attention to my feelings. The barometer is moderately rising!

A 6-8 requires me to reach out to the Holy Spirit, mentally and spiritually, for wisdom and control because the pressure indicator is rapidly intensifying!

A 9 is telling me I'm not handling the situation very well and things are about to explode.

And a 10 is screaming for the angels to bring a fire truck of sanctified water to cool me down and put out the raging anger in my spirit.

I try to keep everything under a 5 because it is simply easier to deal with situation if you can keep yourself under control. The Apostle Paul advised us in **Ephesians 4:26-27** (NKJV) ²⁶ “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give [a] place to the devil.”

That commandment is often very difficult to accomplish.

Think about this question for a moment: **What, or who, gets under your skin most often and what riles you up until you feel like screaming - or punching someone?**

Don't say it out loud for the devil to hear. Just think about it.

Now, ask yourself why you allow those things to upset you and to hurt you. Ask, **“Why am I giving a privileged place in my heart to someone or something whose purpose is to hurt me?”**

Please understand that this suggestion does not mean you can always deflect the actions and words of people. What it means is that you have total control over how you respond to those people. The key is to understand this absolute principle: **You cannot control your adversary, but you can control YOU!**

(I am not trying to be a behavioral counselor or a motivational speaker. Nor am I hoping to hype you up to a sense of superiority and “snootiness.”)

The purpose of this message is three-fold:

- 1. To encourage you to reject the urging of your flesh to retaliate and strike out.**
- 2. To help you see that small hurts inflicted by someone else doesn't require a big response from you.**
- 3. To remind you who you are in Christ and how that relationship influences your life.**

There is a scripture that speaks to this very issue. It tells about allowing the “little foxes” to use their sharp little teeth to destroy the vine.

Song of Solomon 2:15 (ESV)

“Catch the foxes^[a] for us, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom.”

Whereas this scripture is considered to be speaking of individual sins (by most Commentaries,) I want you to see it in another viewpoint, while hopefully not doing any serious damage to the original intent.

The “little fox sins” can be seen as not just limited to your personal behavior but also the behavior of other people toward you.

The “little foxes” describe smaller actions that are designed to cause injury to the main vine by harming the life giving/fruit producing branches. For instance, snippy remarks, hateful stares, crude speech, judgmental attitudes, and so forth, are the small sins of others aimed at your vine with the goal of harming your vine. (Most people do not understand the spiritual nature of the little sinning foxes!) It may certainly be a human who is committing the act, but the nefarious intentions of the devil are behind the sharp, gnawing little teeth. He wants your vine destroyed.

Obviously, my encouragement to you is that you guard your heart, so you don't mimic the "small fox" behaviors towards your antagonizers. Don't return evil for evil!

Here are my suggestions:

1. Put a guard at your mouth!

Remember that little childhood song - "Be careful little mouth what you say. Be careful little mouth what you say. There's a Father up above who is looking down in love, so be careful little mouth what you say."

Psalms 141:3

"Set a guard over my mouth, LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips."

2. Put a guard over your feelings.

Don't respond to harshness with hurt feelings. If you do it will always end in chaos. Your feelings reflect your sensitivities. When you allow them to dictate your actions they will always go into a protective, reactionary, defensive, self-preservation mode. Feelings are not a dependable measuring rod because they are linked to your sense of personhood. In other words, they are like spiny, prickly, barbed little defenses

whose sole purpose is to protect your sense of well-being.

Proverbs 16:32

“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”

3. Put a guard at the door of your heart.

Your heart, your center of emotions, is susceptible to spasms of deep and destructive pain - caused by people who don't care. It only takes a few deep hurts to break your heart. Satan knows this and uses every opportunity to destroy your peaceful heart. He uses anybody he can use to inflict injury.

Proverbs 4:23-26 (NKJV)

“²³ Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.

²⁴ Put away from you a ^[a]deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.

²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you.

²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established.”

Psalms 19:14 (ESV)

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”

Here's my summation of the matter: Neither you, nor I, can be successful in forbidding the destructive actions and words of others if we are not allowing the Holy Spirit to grace our life with His provision of peace, assurance, and safety. Our humanity is destined to respond to the sins of the flesh.

Paul clearly exposes those sins in:

Galatians 5:19-21 ESV

“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

But our life in Christ allows us to live a totally different life than one bound by sin.

It is not according to our grace - but His.
It is not according to our will - but His.
It is not according to our purpose - but His.
It is not according to our desire- but His.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NKJV)

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,”

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,”

1 Peter 5:8-9

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”

Philippians 4:6-7

**“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”**

I hope you will remember this message the next time someone verbally assaults you with hurtful and vindictive words. Watch your Barometer and refuse to allow your pressure to rise! Unlike a weather Barometer that is controlled by nature, your Barometer is controlled by you.

REMEMBER:

**DON'T LET INCONSEQUENTIAL THINGS
BLOCK YOUR JOY OR PEACE**

IF YOU'RE SAVED AND YOU KNOW IT

If you're saved and you know it, say “Amen!”

If you're saved and you know it, say “Amen!”

If you're saved and you know it

Then your life will surely show it,

If you're saved and you know it, say “Amen!”

DON'T LET INCONSEQUENTIAL THINGS BLOCK YOUR JOY OR PEACE

**REMEMBER THIS -
TELL SOMEONE ABOUT MORNING MANNA!!**

CLOSING PRAYER