

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

## GOD’S GREATEST GIFTS TO MAN

*John Edwards*

James declared, “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...*” (Jas. 1:17). This declaration attributes to God all the good that is in the universe. We notice God’s greatest gifts to man:

**THE BIBLE.** The Bible is the greatest book in the world. Paul penned, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*” (2 Tim. 3:16). We need to read it, believe it, and obey it.

**HIS SON.** John recorded, “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*” (Jn. 3:16). This is God’s greatest gift to man! Jesus is “*the saviour of the world*” (Jn. 4:42). He died so that you may live! Do you have faith in the Son of God?

**HIS GRACE.** The Spirit of God revealed, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*” (Eph. 2:8). Paul spoke of the “*gift of the grace of God*” given unto him in Ephesians 3:7. The favor of God has been given to all men

(Titus 2:11). We need to be good stewards of the grace of God (1 Pet. 4:10).

**ETERNAL LIFE.** “*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*” (1 Jn. 5:11). We do not have eternal life right here and now. Eternal life is in hope and promise (Titus 1:2; 1 Jn. 2:25). Only those in Christ have hope of eternal life. Those in Christ are those who have been baptized (Gal. 3:27). Are you in Christ?

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## OUR MOST VALUABLE POSSESSIONS

*John Edwards*

Sometimes insurance companies ask policy holders to make a list of their most valuable possessions. If you were to make a list of your most valuable possessions, what would they be?

**THE SOUL.** Man’s most valuable possession is his soul. The soul is valuable because it is from God. The Lord “*...formeth the spirit of man within him*” (Zech. 12:1). The soul is immortal. “*Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it*” (Eccl. 12:7). The Lord asked, “*For what is a*

*man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*” (Mt. 16:26). Have you insured your soul?

**TIME.** Time is so precious because it is equated with opportunities. We must use our time wisely! The Psalmist penned, “*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*” (Ps. 90:12). Paul commanded, “*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time*” (Col. 4:5). We must buy up the opportunities as they present themselves!

**INFLUENCE.** Everyone possesses influence. By every act of my life I am influencing someone in either a positive or negative way. The Bible teaches the power of influence. “*Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men*” (2 Cor. 3:2). “*...Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*” (1 Cor. 5:7). When we die, our influence will be left on earth. What kind of influence will we leave behind?

***“Redeeming the time,  
because the days are evil”***

**—Ephesians 5:16**

## THE STORMS OF LIFE

Ron Daly

Our God has not promised that every day will be a blue sky without clouds, no rain, and all sunshine. The circumstances of life are often hard and imposing. But, that's life.

The Christian can smile during the storms of life because he knows that no storm lasts forever. He can courageously face the trials of life, for God is his anchor! He knows that God will not allow one whit more to befall him than he can bear, without buckling under temptation and despair (1 Cor. 10:13).

The Lord provides the strength by which His child bounces back when hurled away; walks back when turned away; comes back when sent away; and stands up when cast down. Paul, in contemplating his circumstances of being persecuted for the cause of Christ, said the gospel is "treasure" and that it was in "earthen vessels." The apostles were the earthen vessels. They were "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; ...perplexed,

*but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed...*" (2 Cor. 4:8-9).

All of us have "thorns in the flesh" at one time or another; so did Paul. He wanted his thorn removed, but God refused to remove it! And, for good reason. One's faithfulness to God is not predicated on how many problems he has, but on how he deals with them! Instead of alleviating Paul's "thorn in the flesh," God said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness. So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:1-10).

God's child must avoid self-pity. Why should we pity ourselves? We have the best of everything in the world! THINK! We have God as our Father. We have each other as brethren. We have Christ as Savior. All our sins have been forgiven. Peace reigns in our hearts, and we are heaven bound!

When life's storms rage we take shelter in God the Lord. David said in Psalm 55:8, 16, "I would hurry to find shelter for myself from the raging wind and tempest...But I call upon God, and the Lord will save me." God is able to "still the storm" and "hush the waves of the sea" (Ps. 107:29-30).

We thank God for the storms that make us appreciate the moments of solitude and quiet. Every storm that is sent will deposit a blessing when it subsides. We must be wise enough to look for the benefits of adversity!

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### CAN YOU TELL ME WHY?

Our great grandmother started the Lord's day morning with the milking, dressed a chicken for dinner, churned the butter, helped her six children get ready for worship, polished her husbands shoes, and rode seven miles in a wagon and got to services on time; and today with every modern convenience, some of us cannot get up and drive a few blocks to worship and get there on time. Can you tell me why?

**The Terre Haute** **SPEAKER** is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

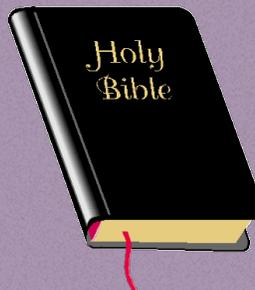
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**We Speak Where the Bible Speaks.**

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**We Do Bible Things in Bible Ways.**

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