





A thoroughly-equipped follower of Jesus grows in the grace and knowledge of his Lord & Savior Jesus Christ, his foundation. He believes in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and allows the God—breathed scriptures to teach, rebuke, correct and train him. He is not only God's workmanship but, like Moses, presents himself to God as a workman. He is hopeful of his future because God's living and active word says that God has plans for him.



He desires biblical fellowship and strives to be patient and gentle while using helpful words that build others up according to their needs. He knows that his gifts and the gifts of others that come in so many varied forms must be used for unity as ministers of God's grace. He seems to manage conflict well in large part because he and his friends sharpen and encourage each other just as iron sharpens iron. He knows that if he can love his wife as Christ loved the church-- and if he can do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit-- then his marriage will be strengthened. But, temptation will come. With God's help he can stand the test of temptation because scripture says that no temptation has seized him except what is common to man.



He knows that if he can make his beliefs and thoughts new again, he will be better able to understand and test the good, pleasing and perfect will of God. God wants him to not exasperate his children; rather, God desires for him to bring up his children in the training and instruction of the Lord. It's important to work at his job with all his heart and to live a quiet life which is worthy of respect. He shares the good news of Jesus not only through his lifestyle, but also through gracious conversation. He manages his personal finances well and avoids a loving eagerness for money because he knows such love would pierce him with many griefs. He remembers the Lord first on payday and is challenged to be a leader who knows the Way, goes the Way, and shows the Way-- through a life of faith, hope and love.



A thoroughly—equipped follower of Jesus believes that the richness of God's grace can be experienced in a powerful and joyful way, but only from the inside-out. His feelings may deceive him but his joy will sustain him despite the sadness and hurt of life's struggles and despite his own sin and brokenness. He wants to show the Way, teach others how they can become more like Jesus, and help them through the pain of their fears-- so that they too can experience the richness of God's grace. He knows that building up leaders will require him to sometimes step to the side and allow his disciples to faithfully step out of their comfort zone so that they too can become leaders. Even though delegating can be hard, he recognizes the wisdom of such transformational teaching as well as the wisdom of the two greatest commandments-- to love God and love one another.



He desires to rest in the freedom of Christ and avoids burdening himself and others with dogma over matters of opinion. He recognizes the wisdom in God's plan for marriage even if he hasn't been so wise previously. He believes in the uniqueness of the Trinity, but knows that many cults and spirits exist that preach a gospel other than the one Paul preached. However, he recognizes that every spirit which acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from the one, true God. He watches his life and doctrine closely and perseveres in them, but he also studies to learn more about religions. He submits himself to the governing authorities regardless of his individual political and governmental beliefs. He understands Adam's and Eve's respective sins and that their story is an example of a warning written down for us.



He is thankful to be surrounded by members of the hall of faith who were certain of what they could not see. They serve as encouragement and inspiration to throw off the sin that so easily entangles— and by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be witnesses for God. He believes that we are all one in Christ Jesus and is challenged to strip away remaining barriers of race, class and gender. He knows that Abraham's faith is what justified Abraham before God, but understands that works justifies us before man. His assurance of eternal life gives him the confidence to fan into flame his spiritual gifts and God's Holy Spirit gives him the power and self-discipline to utilize these gifts for the common good.



Despite the varied differences among denominations, he makes every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. The encouragement, comfort, and fellowship with the Spirit-- and the tenderness and compassion that he has through Christ-- challenge him to extend the same love in one spirit and one purpose. He is humbled by Paul's proclamation that to live is Christ and to die is gain, regardless of his eschatological beliefs on the millennium. His view that death truly is gain helps him not be fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. He prayerfully, creatively, and passionately pursues his family and friends who do not know Jesus, so they can avoid destruction of both soul and body in hell. He's comforted by Heaven's promise of no more death or mourning or crying or pain. Until then, he freely plans his course while the Lord predestines his steps. He knows that his course should include being joyful always, praying continually, and giving thanks in all circumstances-- even during trials of many kinds. He wants to store up treasures in heaven because the Bible says his heart will be where his treasure is.



While on this earth, he wants to be a reliable man who is qualified to teach others and trusts that God will give him the strength to do what he cannot do on his own.



—Author Unknown



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