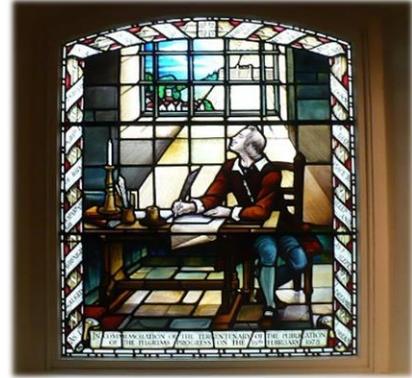


June 11, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

Many thanks to those who participated in the service last night. Somehow it made for a warm, embracing “family” feeling that we all really hunger for right now. Josh Perkins’ testimony was one of the most powerful accounts of God’s providence in the life of one of our families that we’ve ever heard. Not just that the Lord spared them. But the fact that he emphasized the way in which their family worship just before bedtime prepared them for the crisis later that night. . .



. . . That he almost didn’t do family devotions that evening. That for some reason he decided to go ahead and have it. That they read the account of Naomi and Ruth; with its story line from bitterness to blessing. That he just naturally closed with making very close, personal applications to the family along that very line. . . Then, just a few hours later . . . Fire! And preservation! *Brands plucked from the burning*. Praise the LORD!

Spiritual “Prompting”

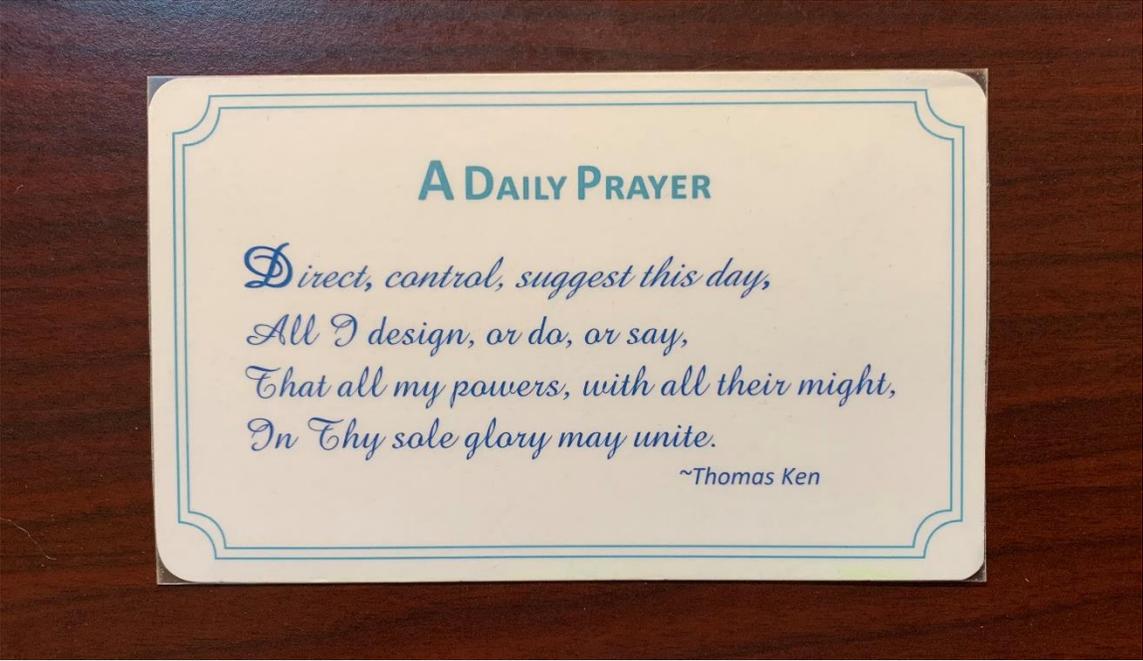
Several years ago I came across the full text of Thomas Ken’s, “Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow” (sometimes called the, “Doxology”). But actually, that isn’t the hymn’s title. It’s only the first line of the *fourteenth* (!) stanza.

The hymn was written by Ken for the private devotional exercises of the students at Winchester College. It was printed under the simple title, “A *Morning* HYMN.” The first line of the first stanza describes what Ken is getting at all through the hymn.

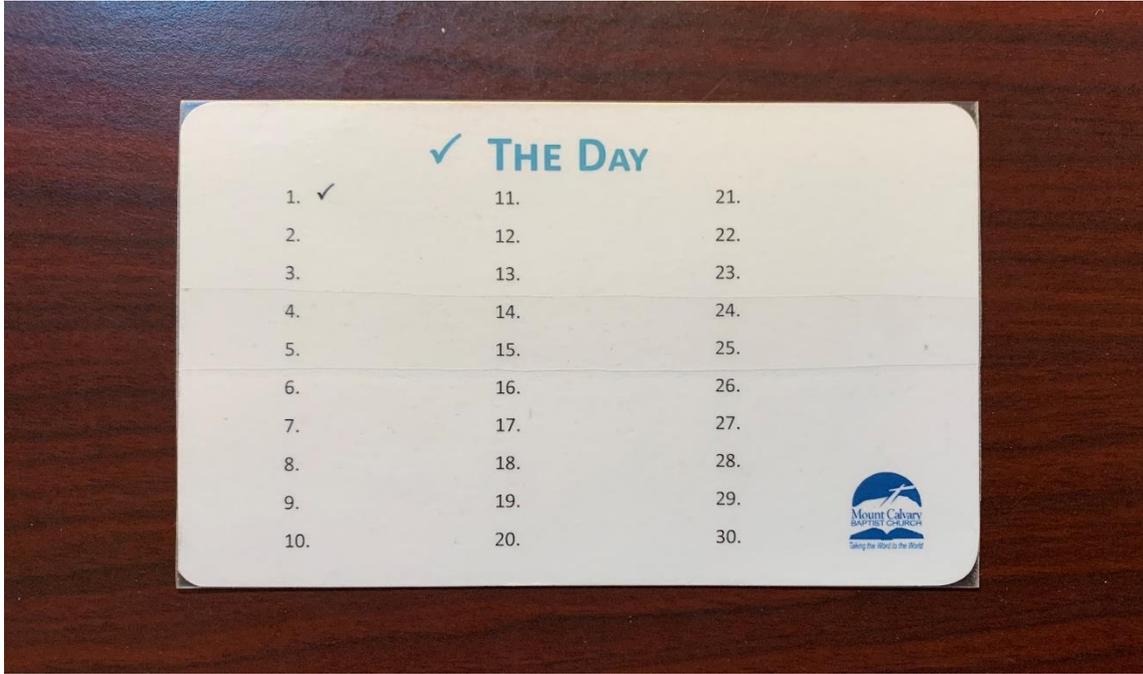
Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun. . .

The thirteenth stanza especially delighted me. It seems to capture exactly the way a Christian would want live and the way in which he *will* live someday.

I asked Shirley to put it on a little card that I could keep around and use for myself, but also could hand to others sometimes. I’ll show you a picture.



When I first began to use this as a portion of my own praying first thing in the morning, I thought it would help me to have a little device for keeping track of my consistency as I worked toward developing this as a new habit. So the back of the card served for a daily ✓.



I like the stanza very much for several reasons. One, of course, is because it concludes with the *chief end of man*. But also because the first two lines are so all encompassing, right down to *suggesting* our doings and sayings.

Even writing that, prompts me to want to quickly clarify that the word *suggest* is descriptive of something that I think the Spirit of God *does* do. But I also think that it is mysterious to the point of being unsearchable. And that no Christian ought ever to think that his *conscious* sense of those (for want of a better word) *impulses* is even close to infallible. In fact, in my own experience I seldom, if ever, allow myself to, as it were, “search” my spirit for some kind of “suggestion” from God. That’s dangerous. I’m not sure that I could even support doing so with scripture.

My understanding of what Ken would be referring to is simply our expressing to the Lord the *surrendered desire* that all through the day He would be prompting through the *ordinary processes* of our mind so that the decisions made and the actions taken are under His superintendence, rather than just self-generated.

The part of the stanza that’s impossible, of course, is, *all my powers with all my might*. That’s to come, when perfected in the Lord’s presence. Yet it’s the standard even now. Anything falling short of it is *sin; missing the mark*. Reminding myself of that keeps me honest with myself that I’m not *ever* sinless. That I always have wrong and failure to confess. And if I will, *He is faithful and just to*. . . You can finish that.

Praying this stanza has become a daily habit now. I’m sure that I seldom omit it, though it’s become so much a part of my natural thought that I don’t any longer try to keep track of doing it. Actually, various lines of it surface in my thinking or praying several times every day. I like that (smile).

So all that to say this. When Josh Perkins considered not having family worship, just for a second or two, and then had a second thought, I think it was the Spirit’s prompting. I’ll bet that Josh does as well (though I didn’t ask him about it). What a wonderful part of the whole exceedingly difficult event last Sunday night. The Perkins, and probably all the rest of us, will never forget it.

And we’d want to take away from it, at least this. We need to respond quickly to a

spiritual *prompt*; whether it be to gather everyone for family worship, to pray, to hand out a tract, to take out a pen and write down some notes on the SS lesson, etc., etc. What harm could it ever do to respond like that? What might be lost by dismissing it? Hmm. Better think about that (smile). Think about Josh last Sunday night. Think about two hours *later*.

Today

I hope that you'll have a really blessed day. Maybe it didn't begin just like you'd wished. That's *O.K.* Don't drop over in despair. Stumbling out of the gate happens sometimes. You're not perfect yet. None of us are. The important thing is recovering. And doing so immediately. Don't stay down another minute. Lift up your heart to the Lord. Do it promptly. Tell him your troubles. Take them to Him and leave them there. Quote a verse. If you feel that you're under Satanic attack, . . . well, Luther advised *singing to him!*

I don't know that it's really sound theology to be talking to the Devil, let alone singing to him (can't find either in the Bible), but I'm right with Luther's spirit (smile). The point is—don't take a Satanic attack sitting down. Get up and do something spiritually minded, and do it heartily! Singingly!

*Singing I go along life's road,
Praising the Lord! Praising the Lord!
Singing I go along life's road,
For Jesus has lifted my load.*

Amen! Glory, Hallelujah!

So come on . . . get up, get going, and count on it—the Lord still loves you (smile).

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick