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**PRAYER FOR A NEW DAY** Nancy F. Summers,  
*LIVING FAITH, April-June '92*

“O God, for this new day now dawning, make me an optimist. Although there are signs of hope surrounding me, sometimes I see only the negative, the imperfections, the decay. Teach me to refocus on the marvelous possibilities, the great potentialities, the vibrant new life which fills my world each new day. Whenever my vision is darkened by pessimism, open my eyes, Lord, to the light of hope. Amen.”

**TWO PRIMARY CHOICES** Dr. Denis Waitley

“There are two primary choices in life: to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.”

**ON HOPE** Eugene Kennedy  
*The Joy of Being Human*

“Hope tells us that we are not victims and that what we do to and with each other makes a difference in the course of events. Hope tells us that tomorrow can be different from today. Hope is the virtue that is possessed by people who try to believe in and love each other. God does not deny hope to anyone who faces life and its many discouragements straight forwardly.”

**COMMITMENT: OF THE HEART** Nido Qubein  
*YourSuccessStore.com*

“A decision is made with the brain. A commitment is made with the heart. Therefore, a commitment is much deeper and more binding than a decision.”

**CONSCIENCE OF THE STATE** Martin Luther King, Jr.  
*Strength to Love, p. 62*

“The church must be reminded that it is not the master or servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant



social club without moral or spiritual authority.”

**LIVE FOR SOMETHING** Thomas Chalmers

“Live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten.”

**COURAGE: GREATEST VIRTUE** Dr. Samuel Johnson

“Courage is the greatest of all the virtues. Because if you haven't courage, you may not have an opportunity to use any of the others.”

**WINNING CHAMPIONSHIPS** Michael Jordan

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.”

**STORIES ENLIGHTEN** Paul J. Wharton  
*Stories & Parables for Preachers & Teachers, p. 1*

“People tell stories to provide meaning and understanding for life and existence. People tell stories to put the listeners and narrators in touch with the mystery of God, the mystery of the world, and the mystery of humanity. When asked who we are, we tell our own stories.

...Stories can capture the imagination, challenge, enlighten, provoke, instill values or deeply disturb people. Stories can put us in touch with God and ourselves....”

**STRUGGLE WITH TODAY** Hugh Prather  
*Notes to Myself*

“There are occasions when I talk to someone who is riding high on some recent insight or triumph, and for the moment life probably seems to have no problems. But I just don't believe that most people are living the smooth, controlled, trouble-free existence that their careful countenances and bland words sug-



**Martin Luther King, Jr.**  
remembered

gest. Today never hands me the same thing twice and I believe that for most everyone else life is also a mixture of unsolved problems, ambiguous victories and vague defeats – with very few moments of clear peace. I never do seem to quite get on top of it. My struggle with today is worthwhile, but it is a struggle nonetheless and one I will never finish.”

**ACHIEVEMENT BEGINS** William Arthur Ward

“Achievement often begins at the crossroads of imagination and determination.”

**FIND YOUR PURPOSE** Phillips Brooks

“Find your purpose and fling your life out into it; and the loftier your purpose is the more sure you will be to make the world richer with every enrichment of yourself.”

**A BETTER WAY TO LIVE** Og Mandino, p. 53

“RULE ONE: Count your blessings. Once you realize how valuable you are and how much you have going for you, the smiles will return, the sun will break out, the music will play, and you will finally be able to move forward toward the life that God intended for you...with grace, strength, courage, and confidence.

[Y]ou cannot even begin to turn a hopelessly bruised and defeated existence around or jump off that dreary treadmill...that seems to have doomed you to failure and low esteem until *you appreciate the assets you already possess.*

**GOD IS IN OUR 2<sup>ND</sup> THOUGHTS** Dennis Burke  
COMMONWEAL, April 7, 1995

A man had a vineyard in the Napa Valley and it was time to get ready for the harvest. So he went to one of his sons and said, “Chablis, will you help me in the vineyard today?”

Chablis answered, “Of course.” But Chablis quickly was distracted by friends, got in his sports car and drove down to San Francisco and the bright city light.

The father then went to his other son, Zinfandel, and asked him to help out in the vineyard. Zinfandel replied, “No, I’m too busy.” Zinfandel, before he goes too far, has second thoughts and goes out into the vineyard to assist with the harvest.

You see, God can come to us in our second

thoughts, the time between thought and action. Not in the temptations that propel us to what is wrong, no, God is in those brief moments before we decide or act, those moments we catch ourselves considering things; those moments we call – second thoughts.

So, this month, when temptations come, and you are given a choice to make a decision – will you choose Chablis or Zinfandel. Listen for God in your second thoughts.

**HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS** Ernest Kurtz, et al  
*The Spirituality of Imperfection*, p. 172

“Any human relationship requires alertness to the difference between the *attachment* that becomes the claim to *possession* and the *detachment* sufficient to allow true *participation*. The first and essential “detachment” must be from the attempt and the claim to control others.”

**A YEAR OF TIME** Steven B. Cloud,  
*Pulpit Helps*, Vol. 14, # 2

“Though even thinking on the subject of time may prove discomforting, it is not a bad idea – especially at the beginning of a new year.

As we look into 2012 we look at a block of time. We see 12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes, 31,536,000 seconds. And all is a gift from God. We have done nothing to deserve it, earn it, or purchased it. Like the air we breathe, time comes to us as a part of life.

The gift of time is not ours alone. It is given equally to each person. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, strong and weak – every man, woman and child has the same twenty-four hours every day.

Another important thing about time is that you cannot stop it. There is no way to slow it down, turn it off, or adjust it. Time marches on.

And you cannot bring back time. Once it is gone, it is gone. Yesterday is lost forever. If yesterday is lost, tomorrow is uncertain. We may look ahead at a full year’s block of time, but we really have no guarantee that we will experience any of it.

Obviously, time is one of our most precious possessions. We can waste it. We can worry over it. We can spend it on ourselves. Or, as good stewards, we can invest it in the kingdom of God.

The new year is full of time. As the seconds tick away, will you be tossing time out the window, or will you make every minute count?

