



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Jesus Culture](#)

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Prayer

Lord, I am so glad You understand when I feel confused about the person I am supposed to report to and to whom I am supposed to be accountable at work and at church. Sometimes I feel like my leaders send me back and forth, not knowing what to do with me or to whom I am supposed to report, which makes it hard for me to do my job. I know that those who are over me have their own challenges, so I want to be helpful to them, not judgmental of them. Please give me the wisdom to know how to behave in a godly manner in this environment. Let Your Words and thoughts be in my heart and come out of my mouth. I know Lord that I am not a judge, for You are the Judge and we will all stand before the judgment seat, and give an account for even every word said by us. I also know that I am not a miniature Holy Spirit, Lord help me to always remember this, and I ask when I am in error bring conviction, so that I may correct myself and my thinking. Forgive me for ever judging anyone, for first I must get the plank out of my own eye, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture

Numbers 2: 1-34 (AMP) and Introduction

1 THE LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 2 The Israelites shall encamp, each by his own [tribal] standard or banner with the ensign of his father's house, opposite the Tent of Meeting and facing it on every side. 3 On the east side toward the sunrise shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah encamp by their companies; Nahshon son of Amminadab being the leader of the sons of Judah. 4 Judah's host as numbered totaled 74,600. 5 Next to Judah the tribe of Issachar shall encamp, Nethanel son of Zuar being the leader of the sons of Issachar. 6 Issachar's host as numbered totaled 54,400. 7 Then the tribe of Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon being the leader of the sons of Zebulun. 8 Zebulun's host as numbered totaled 57,400. 9 All these [three tribes] numbered in the camp of Judah totaled 186,400. They shall set forth first [on the march]. 10 On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben by their companies, the leader of the sons of Reuben being Elizur son of Shedeur. 11 Reuben's host as numbered totaled 46,500. 12 Those who encamp next to Reuben shall be the tribe of Simeon, the leader of the sons of Simeon being Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai. 13 Simeon's host as numbered totaled 59,300. 14 Then the tribe of Gad, the leader of the sons of Gad being Eliasaph son of Reuel (Deuel). 15 Gad's host as numbered totaled 45,650. 16 The whole number in [the three tribes of] the camp of Reuben was 151,450. They shall take second place [on the march]. 17 Then the Tent of Meeting shall set out, with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps; as they encamp so shall they set forward, every man in his place, standard after standard. 18 On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim by their companies, the leader of the sons of Ephraim being Elishama son of Ammihud. 19 Ephraim's host as numbered totaled 40,500. 20 Beside Ephraim shall be the tribe of Manasseh, the leader of the sons of Manasseh being Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. 21 Manasseh's host as numbered totaled 32,200. 22 Then the tribe of Benjamin, the leader of the sons of Benjamin being Abidan son of Gideon. 23 Benjamin's host as numbered totaled 35,400. 24 The whole number [of the three tribes] in the camp of Ephraim totaled 108,100. They shall go forward in third place. 25 The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side [of the tabernacle] by their companies, the leader of the sons of Dan being Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. 26 Dan's host as numbered totaled 62,700. 27 Encamped next to Dan shall be the tribe of Asher, the leader of the sons of Asher being Pagieli son of Ochran. 28 Asher's host as numbered totaled 41,500. 29 Then the tribe of Naphtali, the leader of the sons of Naphtali being Ahira son of Enan. 30 Naphtali's host as numbered totaled 53,400. 31 The whole number [of the three tribes] in the camp of Dan totaled 157,600. They shall set out last, standard after standard. 32 These are the Israelites as numbered by their fathers' houses. All in the camps who were numbered by their companies were 603,550. 33 But the Levites were not numbered with the Israelites, for so the Lord commanded Moses. 34 Thus the Israelites did according to all the Lord commanded Moses; so they encamped by their standards, and so they set forward, everyone with his [tribal] families, according to his father's house.

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Numbers 2–4. The Organization of the Camp: Every detail was assigned with military precision. This was necessary in handling so vast a crowd of people. The tribes were arranged in specific locations around the tabernacle when they camped, and they also had a specific marching order when they traveled. The arrangement (see diagram) allowed for an orderly transition from camping to traveling. Judah and the eastern tribes led the march. The tabernacle was protected by the southern and western tribes to the south and north respectively, while the northern tribes brought up the rear. (Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History and Commentaries; page 166-167)

Chapter 2:....Now as we get into chapter two, we find God arranges the camp of Israel around the tabernacle. Verse two. Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with [the sign of their father's house or] the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch (Num 2:2). So it is interesting, as we get a picture in our minds of the great company of people that were moving through the wilderness. I don't know if there is any migration in history that actually parallels this particular migration as far as the length of time in which the migration took place and the number of people that were migrating. But to get the picture of the camp of Israel, first of all, the center of the entire camp was the tabernacle: the place of meeting. And the cloud rested on the tabernacle during the day and the pillar of fire rested on the tabernacle at night. It is very significant that the tabernacle set right in the center of the camp of Israel, because God was desiring to be at the center of the nation, the center of the hearts of these people. So that every man in Israel, when he would get up in the morning and walk out of the tent door looking to the center of the camp, he would see the cloud there resting upon the tabernacle and he was reminded of the centrality of God among these people. Oh how important it is that God is the centrality of a nation. When a nation is centered around God, that nation is destined for greatness. As long there is that consciousness of God at the center of a people there is always that potential for greatness. It is when people lose the centrality of the concepts of God and God is no longer the center of their life, God is no longer the center of the national life, then that nation is in decline. It is tragic indeed that where once God was the center of our nation and our nation was really founded upon God and our founding fathers sought to bring to these people a consciousness and awareness of God and the need of God in our national life. Printing on our coins "In God We Trust," which is today become almost a hypocrisy because we've come to trust in the coins, in the money, rather than in God. But as you look at the Constitution and as you look at the Bill of Rights and as you listen to the words of the songs of the National Anthem and all, we see how that they put God into the whole warf and woof of the national life of America. And as long as we had that centrality of God, our nation became strong. In the first public schools in the United States the Bible was the textbook. They taught the children how to read out of the Bible, they taught them the ABC's out of the Bible. It was the first textbook and in many schools the only textbook. And now our courts have ruled that it is illegal to use the Bible in public schools except to be taught in a class of literature and any expressed faith or belief is illegal. How tragic. Where our nation was really founded with God at the center, we have moved so far. And it is no wonder that we see the national decline that we see today in proportion to our endeavor to put God out of the national life of America. In that same proportion that God is being pushed out, in that same proportion we see our nation in a decline. Children of Israel had the tabernacle right in the center and the whole camp was encamped about the tabernacle. It was the center of their national existence. It was the center of their national life. What a beautiful place. So, in chapter two we find out that they placed the tribes all around the tabernacle beginning, first of all, with the tribe of Judah and Issachar and Zebulun. Now these tribes had for their ensign a lion, and they were encamped upon the east side of the tabernacle and the color was green. The color of the flag of these tribes on the east side was green. The total of the camp of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun was a hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred in their army. Now these were to set forth first. Then on the south side of the tabernacle was to be the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. The ensign of this tribe had the face of a man. The distinguishing color of the flag was red and they were camped upon the south side of the tabernacle, a total of a hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty in their armies. On the west side of the tabernacle were the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. Their ensign had on it the head of a calf and the color of the flag was golden. The total number of the camp of Ephraim was a hundred and eight thousand, one hundred. Then on the north side, the tribe of Dan and Asher and Naphtali. Their ensign was an eagle. The flag was red and white and the total number of the tribe of Dan was a hundred and fifty-seven thousand, six hundred. Now with these ensigns, we have first of all a lion, the face of a man and then we have the head of a calf and an eagle. What does that bring to mind? As we read the description of the cherubim in Ezekiel and in Revelation, we realize that these were actually the faces that are on the face of the cherubims. The four faces of the cherubim actually represented the ensigns of the camp of Israel. So you have the concept of the angels of the Lord encamping around about his people. God in the center, the tabernacle, the place of meeting God but encamped around the people of God the ensigns, which are reminding of the cherubim how the angel of the Lord is encamped around about the righteous. And so again, even in the banners and in the ensigns was the reminder of the spiritual nature of these people.

(Through The Bible; C-2000 Series; 1979-1986; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries)

Coming to Christ

By way of introduction let us bring before the readers the following Scriptures. (1) "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life": John 5:40. (2) "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest": Matthew 11:28. (3) "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him": John 6:44. (4) "All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out": John 6:37. (5) "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple": Luke 14:26, 27. (6) "To whom coming, as unto a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious": 1 Peter 2:4. (7) "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them": Hebrews 7:25. The first of these passages applies to every unregenerate man and woman on this earth. While he is in a state of nature, no man can come to Christ. Though all excellencies both Divine and human, are found in the Lord Jesus, though He is "altogether lovely" (Song. 5:16), yet the fallen sons of Adam see in Him no beauty that they

should desire Him. They may be well instructed in "the doctrine of Christ," they may believe unhesitatingly all that Scripture affirms concerning Him, they may frequently take His name upon their lips, profess to be resting on His finished work, sing His praises, yet their hearts are far from Him. The things of this world have the first place in their affections. The gratifying of self is their dominant concern. They surrender not their lives to Him. He is too holy to suit their love of sin; His claims are too exacting to suit their selfish hearts; His terms of discipleship are too severe to suit their fleshly ways. They will not yield to His Lordship—true alike with each one of us till God performs a miracle of grace upon our hearts. The second of these passages contains a gracious invitation, made by the compassionate Savior to a particular class of sinners. The "all" is at once qualified, clearly and definitely, by the words which immediately follow it. The character of those to whom this loving word belongs is clearly defined: it is those who "labor" and are "heavy laden." Most clearly then it applies not to the vast majority of our light-headed, gay-hearted, pleasure-seeking fellows, who have no regard for God's glory and no concern about their eternal welfare. No, the word for such poor creatures is rather, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccl. 11:9). But to those who have "labored" hard to keep the law and please God, who are "heavy laden" with a felt sense of their utter inability to meet His requirements, and who long to be delivered from the power and pollution of sin, Christ says, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." The third passage quoted above at once tells us that "coming to Christ" is not the easy matter so many imagine it, nor so simple a thing as most preachers represent it to be. Instead of its so being, the incarnate Son of God positively declares that such an act is utterly impossible to a fallen and depraved creature unless and until Divine power is brought to bear upon him. A most pride-humbling, flesh-withering, man-abasing word is this. "Coming to Christ" is a far, far different thing from raising your hand to be prayed for by some Protestant "priest," coming forward and taking some cheap-jack evangelist's hand, signing some "decision" card, uniting with some "church," or any other of the "many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29) of man. Before any one can or will "come to Christ" the understanding must be supernaturally enlightened, the heart must be supernaturally changed, the stubborn will must be supernaturally broken. The fourth passage is also one that is unpalatable to the carnal mind, yet is it a precious portion unto the Spirit-taught children of God. It sets forth the blessed truth of unconditional election, or the discriminating grace of God. It speaks of a favored people whom the Father giveth to His Son. It declares that every one of that blessed company shall come to Christ: neither the effects of their fall in Adam, the power of indwelling sin, the hatred and untiring efforts of Satan, nor the deceptive delusions of blind preachers, will be able to finally hinder them—when God's appointed hour arrives, each of His elect is delivered from the power of darkness and is translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. It announces that each such one who comes to Christ, no matter how unworthy and vile he be in himself, no matter how black and long the awful catalogue of his sins, He will by no means despise or fail to welcome him, and under no circumstances will He ever cast him off. The fifth passage is one that makes known the terms on which alone Christ is willing to receive sinners. Here the uncompromising claims of His holiness are set out. He must be crowned Lord of all, or He will not be Lord at all. There must be the complete heart renunciation of all that stands in competition with Him. He will brook no rival. All that pertains to "the flesh," whether found in a loved one or in self, has to be hated. The "cross" is the badge of Christian discipleship: not a golden one worn on the body, but the principle of self-denial and self-sacrifice ruling the heart. How evident is it, then, that a mighty, supernatural, Divine work of grace must be wrought in the human heart, if any man will even desire to meet such terms! The sixth passage tells us that the Christian is to continue as he began. We are to "come to Christ" not once and for all, but frequently, daily. He is the only One who can minister unto our needs, and to Him we must constantly turn for the supply of them. In our felt emptiness, we must draw from His "fullness" (John 1:16). In our weakness, we must turn to Him for strength. In our ignorance we must apply to Him for wisdom. In our falls into sin, we must seek afresh His cleansing. All that we need for time and eternity is stored up in Him: refreshment when we are weary (Isa. 40:31), healing of body when we are sick (Exo. 15:26), comfort when we are sad (1 Peter 5:7), deliverance when we are tempted (Heb. 2:18). If we have wandered away from Him, left our first love, then the remedy is to "repent and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5), that is, cast ourselves upon Him anew, come just as we did the first time we came to Him—as unworthy, self-confessed sinners, seeking His mercy and forgiveness. The seventh passage assures us of the eternal security of those who do come. Christ saves "unto the uttermost" or "for evermore" those who come unto God by Him. He is not of one mind today and of another tomorrow. No, He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1), and blessedly does He give proof of this, for "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Inasmuch as His prayers are effectual, for He declares that the Father hearest Him "always" (John 11:42), none whose name is indelibly stamped on the heart of our great High Priest can ever perish. Hallelujah! Having sought to thus introduce some of the leading aspects of the subject which is to engage our attention, we now propose to enter into some detail as the Spirit of Truth is pleased to grant us His much-needed assistance. Let us consider some of the I. Obstacles in coming to Christ. Under this head it will be our endeavor to show why it is that the natural man is unable to "come to Christ." As a starting point let us again quote John 6:44, "No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him." The reason why this is such a "hard saying," even unto thousands who profess to be Christians, is because they utterly fail to realize the terrible havoc which the Fall has wrought; and, it is greatly to be feared, because they are themselves strangers to "the plague" of their own hearts (1 Kings 8:38). Surely if the Spirit had ever awakened them from the sleep of spiritual death, and given them to see something of the dreadful state they were in by nature, and they had been brought to feel that the carnal mine in them was "enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7), then they would no longer cavil against this solemn word of Christ's. But the spiritually dead can neither see nor feel spiritually. Wherein lies the total inability of the natural man? 1. It is not in the lack of the necessary faculties. This needs to be plainly insisted upon, or otherwise fallen man would cease to be a responsible creature. Fearful as were the effects of the Fall, yet they deprived man of none of the faculties with which God originally endowed him. True it is that the coming in of sin took away from man all power to use those faculties aright, that is, to employ them for the glory of his Maker. Nevertheless, fallen man possesses identically the same threefold nature, of spirit and soul and body, as he did before the Fall. No part of man's being was annihilated, though each part was defiled and corrupted by sin. True, man died spiritually, but death is not extinction of being: spiritual death is alienation from God (Eph. 4:18): the spiritually dead one is very much alive and active in the service of Satan. No, the inability of fallen man to "come to Christ" lies in no physical or mental defect. He has the same feet to take him unto a place where the Gospel is preached, as he has to walk with to a picture-show. He has the same eyes by which to read the Holy Scriptures, as he has to read the world's newspapers. He has the same lips and voice for calling upon

God, as he now uses in idle talk or foolish song. So too he has the same mental faculties for pondering the things of God and the concerns of eternity, as he now uses so diligently in connection with his business. It is because of this that man "is without excuse." It is the misuse of the faculties with which the Creator has endowed him which increases man's guilt. Let every servant of God see to it that these things are constantly pressed upon their unsaved hearers. 2. We have to search deeper in order to find the seat of man's spiritual impotency. His inability lies in his corrupt nature. Through Adam's Fall, and through our own sin, our nature has become so debased and depraved, that it is impossible for any man to "come to Christ," to "love and serve Him," to esteem Him more highly than all the world put together and submit to His rule, until the Spirit of God renews him, and implants a new nature. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet waters, nor an evil tree produce good fruit. Let us try and make this still clearer by an illustration. It is the nature of a vulture to feed upon carrion: true it has the same bodily members to feed upon the wholesome grain the hens do, but it lacks the disposition and relish for it. It is the nature of a sow to wallow in the mire, true, it has the same legs as a sheep, to conduct it to the meadow, but it lacks the desire for the green pastures. So it is with unregenerate man. He has the same physical and mental faculties as the regenerate has for the things and service of God, but he has no love for them. "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image" (Gen. 5:3). What an awful contrast is found here from that which we read two verses before: "God created man, in the likeness of God made He him." In the interval, Adam had fallen, and a fallen parent could beget only a fallen child, transmitting unto him his own depravity. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" (Job 14:4). Therefore do we find the sweet singer of Israel declaring, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. 51:5). Though, later, grace made him the man after God's own heart, yet by nature, David (as we) was a mass of iniquity and sin. How early does this corruption of nature appear in children. "Even a child is known by his doings" (Prov. 20:11): the evil bias of its heart is soon manifested—pride, self-will, vanity, lying, averseness to good, are the bitter fruits which quickly appear on the tender but vitiated twig. 3. The inability of the natural man to "come to Christ" lies in the complete darkness of his understanding. This leading faculty of the soul has been despoiled of its primitive glory, and covered over with confusion. Both mind and conscience are defiled: "there is none that understandeth" (Rom. 3:11). Solemnly did the Apostle remind the saints: "ye were sometimes darkness" (Eph. 5:8), not merely "in darkness," but "darkness" itself. "Sin has closed the windows of the soul, darkness is over all the region: it is the land of darkness and shadow of death, where the light is as darkness. The prince of darkness reigns there, and nothing but the works of darkness are framed there. We are born spiritually blind, and cannot be restored without a miracle of grace. This is thy case, whoever thou art, that art not born again" (Thomas Boston, 1680). "They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer. 4:22). "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). There is in the unregenerate an opposition to spiritual and an aversion against them. God has made a revelation of His will unto sinners touching the way of salvation, yet they will not walk therein. They hear that Christ alone is able to save, yet they refuse to part with those things that hinder their coming to Him. They hear that it is sin which slays the soul, and yet they cherish it in their bosoms. They heed not the threats of God. Men believe that fire will burn them, and are at great pains to avoid it; yet they show by their actions that they regard the everlasting burnings as a mere scarecrow. The Divine commandments are "holy, just, and good," but men hate them, and observe them only so far as their respectability among men is promoted. 4. The inability of the natural man to "come to Christ" lies in the complete corruption of his affections. "Man as he is, before he receives the grace of God, loves anything and everything above spiritual things. If ye want proof of this, look around you. There needs no monument to the depravity of the human affections. Cast your eyes everywhere—there is not a street, nor a house, nay, nor a heart, which doth not bear upon it sad evidence of this dreadful truth. Why is it that men are not found on the Sabbath day universally flocking to the house of God? Why are we not more constantly found reading our Bibles? How is it that prayer is a duty almost universally neglected? Why is Christ Jesus so little beloved? Why are even His professed followers so cold in their affections to Him? Whence arise these things? Assuredly, dear brethren, we can trace them to no other source than this, the corruption and vitiation of the affections. We love that which we ought to hate, and we hate that which we ought to love. It is but the effect of the Fall, that man should love sin better than righteousness, and the ways of the world better than the ways of God" (C. H. Spurgeon, sermon on John 6:44). The affections of the unrenewed man are wholly depraved and distempered. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). Solemnly did the Lord Jesus affirm that the affections of fallen man are a mother of abominations: "For from within (not from the Devil!) out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21, 22). "The natural man's affections are wretchedly misplaced; he is a spiritual monster. His heart is where his feet should be, fixed on the earth; his heels are lifted up against Heaven, which his heart should be set on: Acts 9:5. His face is towards Hell, his back towards Heaven; and therefore God calls to him to turn. He joys in what he ought to mourn for, and mourns for what he should rejoice in; glories in his shame, and is ashamed of his glory; abhors what he should desire, and desires what he should abhor: Proverbs 2:13-15" (From Boston's "Fourfold State"). 5. The inability of the natural man to "come to Christ" lies in the total perversity of his will. "'Oh!' said the Arminian, 'men may be saved if they will.' We reply, 'My dear sir, we all believe that; but it is just the if they will that is the difficulty.' We assert that no man will come to Christ unless he be drawn; nay, we do not assert it, but Christ Himself declares it—'Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life' (John 5:40); and as long as that 'ye will not come' stands on record in Holy Scripture, we shall not be brought to believe in any doctrine of the freedom of the human will. It is strange how people, when talking about free will, talk of things which they do not at all understand. 'Now' says one, 'I believe men can be saved if they will.' My dear sir, that is not the question at all. The question is, are men ever found naturally willing to submit to the humbling terms of the Gospel of Christ? We declare, upon Scriptural authority, that the human will is so desperately set on mischief, so depraved, and so inclined to everything that is evil, and so disinclined to everything that is good, that without the powerful, supernatural, irresistible influence of the Holy Spirit, no human being will ever be constrained towards Christ" (C. H. Spurgeon). "Now here is a threefold card against heaven and holiness, not easily to be broken; a blind mind, a perverse will, and disorderly, distempered affections. The mind, swelled with self-conceit, says the man should not stoop; the will, opposite to the will of God, says, he will not; and the corrupt affections rising against the Lord, in defense of the corrupt will, says, he shall not. Thus the poor creature stands out against God and goodness, till a day of power come, in which he is made a new creature" (Thomas Boston). Perhaps some readers are inclined to say, Such teaching as this is calculated to discourage sinners and drive them to despair. Our answer is, first, it is according to God's Word! Second, O that it may please Him to use this article to drive some to despair of all help from themselves. Third, it makes manifest the absolute necessity of the Holy Spirit's working with such depraved and spiritually helpless creatures, if they are ever to savingly come to Christ. And until this is clearly perceived, HIS aid will never be really sought in earnest! (1933; Arthur W. Pink)