

Section Four

Optimism, Commitment, Positivity

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134. Be Strong and of a Good Courage

As Joshua began to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land he received this counsel from the Lord, "Be Strong and of a Good Courage." That injunction was given to him three times with this promise, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Joshua 1:5-7, 9). What a promise Joshua received! But, if you think about it the Lord extends the same promise to each of us. If we are faithful He will help us to accomplish all of the things that He has commanded us, but we need to be sure that we are doing what he asks us to do. In the dark days of the civil war a person approached Abraham Lincoln, knowing that Lincoln was a man of prayer. He asked President Lincoln if he prayed that God would be on their side. Lincoln replied, "I don't ask so much that He is on our side but that we are on His side." That observation is a key to success in life. Oftimes we are too concerned about having the Lord do our will when in fact we should always be seeking to do His will. As we do His will the promises are extended to us that as we act in faith, we will have the power to do whatsoever thing is expedient to the Lord. **We need to step forward when the Lord calls, act in faith and endure to the end and He will be with us, magnify us and carry us forward triumphantly in whatever He asks us to do.**

135. All Things Are Possible

All Things Are Possible

All things are possible to him that believeth,
All things are possible to those filled with faith.
That faith is within us and starts as a seed
But when it is grown, it becomes a great tree.
A tree filled with fruit from the vine of our Lord.
And we are the branches believing His word.

Help Thou mine unbelief once pleaded a father.
Lord, have compassion and help my dear son.
His faith in the Savior, though unsure at first,
Became ever brighter and his soul did thirst.
His son was then healed by faith in the Lord.
He followed the Savior, believing His word.

All things are possible when we know the Savior.
All things are possible when we pray in faith.
That seed is within us, let's help it to grow.
Let's follow the Savior, the path He will show.
Let's follow the Savior in faith and in love,
And His tender mercies will flow from above.

Chorus:

All things are possible to him that believeth
All things are possible when we take His hand.
All things are possible through faith in the Savior.
All things are possible when we take His hand.
RTS

Just as the father knew that his faith was not perfect, even so his faith became knowledge as his son was healed. **Even so, our faith may grow brighter and brighter toward the perfect day as we walk by faith and see answers to our prayers through the tender mercies of the Lord.**

136. The Best I Can Do Today

The best I can do today is not a single act, but rather a pattern of living. There are several ingredients, which when blended together make each and every day a day of joy and fulfillment.

The best I can do today is pray and harness my energy with the power of God to do all things.

The best I can do today is be grateful and recognize the many blessings that are mine.

The best I can do today is to listen to the spirit to guide my every thought and action.

The best I can do today is to be of service to someone, in some way that benefits mankind.

The best I can do today is to read the word of God, which will enlighten my mind and spirit.

The best I can do today is to smile and brighten someone else's day

The best I can do today is to learn something new and to challenge my mind.

The best I can do today is to obey every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

The best I can do today is become more Christlike in all that I do and say.

The best I can do today is to show love to every person I meet, seeing him/her through

The eyes of God. (RTS)

137. The Kingdom of God or Nothing!

"The kingdom of God or nothing!" That was the motto of President John Taylor, the third president of the church. He was with the prophet Joseph at Carthage jail and received four balls but miraculously his watch stopped one bullet near his heart and he survived. He gave his all to the gospel and lived true to his motto. It has been said that if we don't put the gospel first in our lives, in the end it won't matter what else we may have put first, for other things will drift away like the sands on the seashore if we are not anchored in the gospel of Jesus Christ. For John Taylor, the choice had been made once and forever. To him there were no distractions, no second guessing as to which course of action to follow. He simply did that which he knew his Father in Heaven would have him to do. What is your motto in life and where will it lead you? May we develop the tenacity and commitment of John Taylor, and be able to say as he did: "The kingdom of God or nothing!"

138. All In

Have you ever heard the term, **"All in?"** It denotes a total commitment to a cause. It reflects placing in the highest priority with every fiber of our being, to accomplish the quest before us. There are sacrifices to make for one to be "All in." Sacrifices of time, effort, financial resources, but even a higher plane of focusing our mind and our being on accomplishing the desire of our hearts. There are many in the world of sport that focus tremendous amounts of energy to refine and hone their skills to attain the highest level of performance. There are those in the world of business who take years and sacrifice much to maximize their effectiveness and influence many in their particular area of endeavor. When one is "all in," one hopefully strives to bring into harmony all aspects of one's life: the mental, physical, social and spiritual aspects that each add immeasurably to the experience of one's life. When we are "All in" hopefully we set our course for a lifetime of growth and achievement. Even when we give our all in being "All in," we still fall short of perfection; but as we give our all, there is an ennobling grace that synergistically expands our efforts, lifts our minds and makes us equal to the task before us, whatever that task may be.

139. Have a Can Do Attitude

Attitude is an attribute that often makes all the difference between success and failure. Sometimes it takes different approaches, but those who keep trying end up being successful. Have you noticed in life that some people, when asked to do nearly anything worthwhile, will respond: "Sure, I'll be happy to." That can do, optimistic attitude leads to action and perseverance that leads to success and fulfillment. Those with a can do attitude have a success oriented approach to life that helps them regardless of the field of activity. Those with a "can do" attitude will form a plan for success and "sit down to count the cost" and then go forward to achieve it. Have you noted that there are some coaches who find success wherever they go. Their success usually starts with attitude and commitment, "We will commit ourselves to do whatever is needed to be successful." Realize that any failure need not be permanent, but can become a stepping stone toward greater achievement. As a bronc rider tries to break a horse he may get bucked off many times but it's not how many times he gets bucked off; it's whether or not he gets back on again until the job is done. The same pattern for success followed Abraham Lincoln, Helen Keller and so many others who have risen from the ranks of the ordinary to achieve greatness. We were sent here in this life to be successful; to grow in talents, abilities, service, joy and happiness. **Choose to be happy and choose to have a CAN DO attitude and it will bless you in all aspects of your life**

140. The Great Quests of Life

The great quests of life are mastery over self and obedience to God. The Lord, speaking to Abraham said: "We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." (Abraham 3: 25). Agency, or the ability to choose, is the most cherished possession we have. We have a lifetime to find out who we will become. Our character is formed through the choices we make and the lessons we learn through the challenges we overcome. It has been said that choices determine destiny and our choices do indeed, define us. Life becomes clear to us as we face thousands and indeed millions of choices during our respective lifetimes. The true test of life is whether or not we are willing to submit our will to the will of God by keeping His commandments. The wonderful lesson is that as we submit our will to God, that is the way that we become truly free.

141. See What You Do Have

It is easy for some people to see everything they don't have and not recognize what they do have. If you think about it, we have more today than nearly everyone in the history of the world before us. Most of us have access to three meals a day and a roof over our heads. Most of us have access to a car or other transportation. Many of us even have cell phones and computers. Most of us have a friend or friends and a reasonable state of good health. The freedom that we enjoy is only dreamed of by many who live and have lived upon the earth. Often it appears that the grass is greener on the other side of the hill but in reality usually it is not. In addition to the material things we enjoy we understand who we are and our place in the universe. We have minds to study and learn and we have the wonderful beauties of nature created for our enjoyment. Instead of focusing on what you don't have, focus on what you do have. The apostle Paul taught the Philippians: **"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need."** (Philippians 4:11-12). Let us learn as the apostle Paul to be content in whatever circumstance we find ourselves in and recognize and give thanks for the wonderful blessings that our Heavenly Father bestows upon us from day to day, hour to hour, at all times and in all places that we may be in.

142. Keep Paddling

The world of today seems to be in a downward spiral in its morals and values. How can we stand the onslaught of negativity and evil that is all around us? It has been said that all that is needed for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing. For us to withstand the evil day we need to keep moving forward. The downward current will make us stronger as we steadily keep paddling forward, keeping our eyes on the Savior and doing his will. We keep paddling as we search the scriptures daily, pray, and then act on the impressions we receive from the Holy Ghost. We keep paddling when we make and keep baptismal and temple covenants. Often it may not seem like we are getting anywhere, but as long as we keep paddling, we are moving upward toward the ultimate goal of eternal life. Let us be like the frog who found himself stuck in a bucket of milk. He just kept paddling and paddling and before he knew it the milk had turned to butter and he jumped off the pile of butter out of the bucket and went on his merry way. **However bleak things may appear or how dark the night may be, keep paddling, and before you know it the wondrous daydawn will break into a bright and glorious day.**

143. Choose You This Day Whom Ye Will Serve

In Joshua's final counsel to his people he declared this timeless message: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15). There are choices before us each and every day. Choices that will bring us closer to God or push us further from Him. Our choices may be small but they develop patterns. **"Sow a thought, reap an act, sow an act, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character, sow a character and reap an eternal destiny."** We are the captains of our ship and the choices we make will determine our eventual outcome. President Monson has truly stated, "Decisions determine destiny." The choice is ours. Which path will we follow? If we always look up to the Lord in our lives we will have no regrets, no doubts and we will walk in the light of the Savior's love along the path that will lead to our eternal home. Remember we are free to choose, but not free to choose the consequences, for they will follow as part of eternal law.

144. The Extra Mile

Often the difference between being good and being great is going the extra mile. It often means the person who gets the job when there is much competition is the one who does more than is required and gives of him/herself above and beyond the task at hand. The Savior taught that as we are compelled to go a mile we should go with them twain. The champion is one who practices on, long after the others have stopped to rest for the day. Going the extra mile requires that one stay focused on the task at hand and not be distracted with calls that may come to follow a lesser path. Going the extra mile demands a deeper commitment and a clearer vision of the prize in store. It means getting up again and again when we suffer setbacks, continuing to stay the course, evaluating and implementing the measures we can to hasten our progress. **There is always room at the top for the one willing to pay the price and exhibit the dedication necessary to complete the task.**

145. Continuous Effort

The British statesman, Winston Churchill offered a keen insight into attaining our potential. He said: **“Continuous effort, not strength or intelligence, is the key to unlocking our potential.”** It is the person who never stops trying who ultimately succeeds. In every venture there is a time and place for the weak hearted to turn back. The great Leonardi da Vinci offered a parallel thought into the importance of doing. He stated: “I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough, we **Must Do!**” Continuous effort is the key to success. **Once the decision has been made the time for action has arrived.** Of course, adjustments need to be made along the way; but overcoming the small obstacles and failures is the key to ultimate success. Unwavering commitment along with constant effort and doing were the keys to allies success in World War II. Had it not been for the dogged determination of Churchill and others, Britain would probably have fallen, but due to the courage, tenacity and never say die attitude they helped preserve the freedoms that we enjoy today.

146. Keep Your Face to the Sunshine

Helen Keller once said **“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows. It’s what the sunflowers do.”** Have you ever watched sunflowers during the course of a day? They truly do follow the sunlight. That thought can set a pattern for our lives. There is so much of good and so much of evil in the world; likewise there is so much of beauty and so much of filth. The choice that we need to make in life is to determine where we will look. Some people focus only on the negative, looking for the thorn in the rose or the one supposed fault in a beautiful tapestry. Blessed is the person who can see the beauty in the sunrise and the tranquility of a sunset. Blessed is the person who chooses to look toward and follow the light of Christ and to turn away from anything that would lead to a downward course. Take some time every day to “Look Up” and see the beauty of God’s creations and his handiwork spread over the entire earth. Choose to find beauty in adversity and the ray of sunshine that shines and penetrates through dreary days. Choose to keep your face to the sunshine and your life can be filled with beauty, peace and love.

147. Dare Greatly

Theodore Roosevelt served as our country’s 26th president and was a noted statesman, conservationist, and writer. During his tenure as president he greatly expanded our National Park system that has preserved many of the beauties of our country that we enjoy today. He loved adventure and this quote reflects his attitude: “It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows the end in triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.” (Theodore Roosevelt).

148. A Fire Burns

Winning life's battles doesn't always go to the strongest or superior team. Winning life's battles usually goes to those with the deepest fire of desire and courage to come out victorious regardless of the odds against them. During the revolutionary war John Paul Jones was involved in a battle on the high seas. His ship was heavily damaged and the foe asked if he was ready to surrender. John Paul Jones' inspiring response was "I have not yet begun to fight." Inspired, his crew fought like dragons and on to victory against a far superior foe. We all face the furnace of affliction at some time in our lives. We all seem to be at the brink of failure in some of our pursuits, but it is in those moments that our true character can shine through. If we are prepared and striving toward a worthy cause we are entitled to a power greater than man's. God did not send us here to fail, but we must demonstrate the burning desire to draw out the best in us and to achieve the greatest victories. This song refers to some challenges of life and the need for that fire in our souls during our most desperate hours.

A Fire Burns

There's a feeling inside of me that carries me on.
There's a power that lifts me and drives me along.
There's a vision to reach for that lights me inside.
There's a burning and will to win that makes me alive.
There's a fire now burning, the fire won't die.
There's a will to go on, There's a fight I must win.
I must shoot for the stars, I must never look down.
I must see the grand prize, I must pay the full price.
I must go win the race and give it my all,
Then I'll know that I've done my best.
The fire will burn as I give my all, the fire, my will to win.

When the breaks never go your way, you feel down and out.
When the others seem better and you start to doubt.
Just remember the words of John Paul Jones,
I have not yet begun to fight, then stand straight and tall.
There's a strength that's within you, a strength you will find.
You must reach deep inside, you must answer the call.
Have faith in yourself as you come to the line.
Have a vision within as you reach for the stars.
Find a heart with a will to never give up, then focus with all your might.
The power's within you to be the best. The fire can always burn.

Conclusion:

Go run the race, play the game, lift up your eyes to the prize
Never say die, stay alive, give your all, yes your all.
Go feed off the fire of desire my friend, yes, give it your all, do your best. RTS

149. If at First You Don't Succeed Try, Try Again

Failure need not be permanent. Michael Jordan was cut from his 9th grade basketball team, but became one of the greatest players in NBA history. Abraham Lincoln suffered failure in business, in elections, in many ways, but he became one of the greatest presidents our country has ever seen. Thomas Edison failed 10,000 times in trying to create the light bulb but see what an effect it has had on the world. Just as the baby chick must struggle to break out of its shell, so must we struggle, and fail on occasion, in order to gain the strength that we need to become successful in our lives. If we want to achieve greatness, we must not fear failure. Indeed it is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all. **When you get knocked down in life, get up again and try harder; find a different approach to your problem, call upon the Lord for help and then do all that you can do and leave the rest in the hands of the Lord.**

150. If You Can't Fly Then Run

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk. If you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." Martin Luther King Jr. After serious injury or illness it may be all a person can do to crawl a few steps and later stand. It may take supreme effort just to walk across the room. **It is interesting that some of those who have suffered the greatest loss express the greatest gratitude for that which they still have.** As we progress in our lives, first as a baby learning to crawl and then to walk, we take great joy in seeing the miracle of the patterns of life. As we see little ones begin to run and then to skip and jump we see the profound miracles of the human body. Even today we need the help of a parachute or a plane to fly but as we progress we see that all things are indeed possible. Wherever you are on the pathway of life, learn to take the next step and you will indeed, fulfill the measure of your creation.

151. Don't be Afraid to Try

It has been said that if you never reach beyond what you have already mastered you will never grow. Don't be afraid to try anything THAT IS GOOD! We don't need to experience the bad to know that it is bad, enough bad things will come naturally. Many skills can be gained with a few simple attempts such as tic tac toe, but others may take weeks, months or years to accomplish. Learning the piano is a good example. Many people say, "I wish I would have taken piano lessons when I was younger." It's never too late to begin. Some sports such as basketball, gymnastics or equestrian takes years and thousands of repetitions of practice to achieve the highest level of performance. There are many things that you may never be an expert at but it is good to experience and try a variety of skills in sports, music, cooking, speaking, communicating, studying and additional skills of self-reliance. Some athletes only participate in team sports that they will probably never play in once they graduate from high school. It is a benefit to participate in lifetime activities that will last for many years at a level you are comfortable with. There are many basic skills such as cooking, laundry, shopping and other skills that become absolutely essential to be successful when you go to college, serve a mission or even prepare for marriage. Never be afraid to try and fail for it is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all.

152. The Man Who Thinks He Can

There is a wonderful poem, written by Walter D. Wintle entitled "The Man Who Thinks He Can." It is a source of inspiration and is a reminder of the power of positive thinking and the message that our thoughts become us. Truly as is taught in the scriptures, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7.) King Benjamin also taught us to watch our thoughts, our words and deeds and to keep the commandments. (Mosiah 4:30) Enjoy this poem and its message.

The Man Who Thinks He Can

If you think you are beaten you are.
If you think you dare not, you don't.
If you'd like to win but think you can't
It's almost a cinch you won't.
If you think you'll lose, you've lost.
For out in the world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will,
It's all in the state of mind.
If you think you're outcasted you are.
You've got to think high to rise.
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man;
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can. (Walter D. Wintle)

153. Put On the Whole Armour of God

As Paul taught in Ephesians 6:11-17: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We must indeed, put on the whole armour of God. We must have our loins girded with truth and put on the breastplate of righteousness. We must have our feet shod with the gospel of peace. Above all we should take the shield of faith to be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked and wear the helmet of salvation. We must be worthy to have the sword of the spirit which is the word of God, praying always with all sincerity and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Indeed we live in troubled and turbulent times and we must stand fast and ready. Extra and wonderful blessings are available to us through our temple covenants, which truly help us to put on the whole armour of God. **Remember principles of truth, righteousness, living the gospel by faith leading to salvation, and having the spirit with us that we may be able to overcome any trial or temptation that is placed before us.**

154. I Think I Can

Do you remember the story about the little engine that could? **The words “I think I can” are powerful.** Why, because if our belief and faith are strong enough our actions will follow. It was not the strongest or the fastest or the shiniest, but when the other engines stayed on the sideline it was the one that stepped forward. It took that first step and said, “I think I can, I think I can” and soon after it had climbed the steep hill said, “I thought I could, I thought I could.” It has also been said that whether you think you can or whether you think you can’t you’re right. It has been said that anything the mind can conceive, the will can achieve. Truly we can accomplish miracles if we roll up our sleeves and go to work. The little engine first believed it could do something but then it went further and took that leap of faith, the first action to start moving forward, and from then on it could do nearly anything. When you are faced with challenges in life, look the challenge straight in the eye and say, **“I think I can.”**

155. Be Your Best Self

President Gordon B. Hinckley frequently taught, **“Do your best.”** Does that mean we are close to perfect? No, far from it, but when we do our best we will grow. Compare a young boy in the fifth grade doing his best in comparison with the same young man as a senior. Is there a difference? Of course! The young boy in the fifth grade was doing the best he could with his limited resources, and as he did, he grew from one skill to another, from conscious effort to automatic response. Was the same young man as a senior done growing and learning? Of course not. Just as it takes years to develop skills on the basketball court, so it takes a lifetime of learning and growing to become what Heavenly Father sent us here to become. When we “Put on the mind of Christ” we become our best self, trying to say what He would say and do what He would do; yet we still fall far short of perfection, even with our best effort. But our best is good enough for now, for the Savior will make up the difference for our shortcomings and weaknesses. As we are taught in section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants, heirs of the Celestial Kingdom are: “They who are just men (and women) made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood. These are they whose bodies are celestial.” (D&C 76:69-70). May we follow the counsel of President Hinckley: “Do your best” and leave unto the Lord the rest.

156. Achieving the Happy, Abundant Life

President David O. McKay taught: **“There are three means of achieving the happy, abundant life: first, making God the center of one’s life; second, using the free agency given to man; and third, rendering service to others.”** These three elements all fit perfectly together to form an abundant life. As the Savior taught, the first and great commandment is to love the Lord, our God with all of our heart, might, mind, and strength and the second great commandment is to love (and serve) our neighbors as ourselves. As we use our free agency wisely, the commandments do not restrict us. They liberate us from the ill effects of sin. As we strive to do God’s will He can certainly make much more of us than we can make of ourselves, and as we serve others we develop relationships of love, compassion and understanding that bring true meaning to life. President McKay’s keys to achieving the abundant life form a simple yet beautiful pattern to achieve happiness and joy, not only in this world but in the world to come.

157. The Impossible Dream

President Packer taught that we live far beneath our privileges. It is estimated that we use only about 3% of our brain capacity. There are those who expand their horizons and change the world, such as Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Benjamin Franklin and others. We frequently limit ourselves because we think we can't do something so we don't try. The words to the song, "The impossible Dream" opens the possibility that we can reach beyond our present circumstances and accomplish far more than we think we are capable of. The words to the song were written by Jake Marion and sung in the play "The Man of La Mancha."

The Impossible Dream

To dream the impossible dream, to fight the unbeatable foe
To bear the unbearable sorrow, and to run where the brave dare not go
To right the unrightable wrong, and to love pure and chaste from afar,
To try when your arms are too weary to reach the unreachable star

This is my quest, to follow that star no matter how hopeless no matter how far.
To fight for the right without question or pause, to be willing to march,
March into hell for that heavenly cause
And I know if I'll only be true to this glorious quest, that my heart will be peaceful and calm
When I'm laid to my rest. And the world will be better for this,
That one man scorned and covered with scars still strove with his last ounce of courage
To fight the unbeatable foe; to reach the unreachable star. Joe Marion

Truly in our lives, there is no limit when we consider the great and marvelous things that the Lord has prepared for us as we faithfully return home to Him.

158. Turn Your Life Over to God

President Ezra Taft Benson shared a wonderful thought that pertains to each of us. It goes as follows: "Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He can deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls and pour out peace." Just as Paul taught that "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13). We can become tools in the hands of the Savior to accomplish all things before us and we can be molded by His hand to become what He would have us be. I would invite you to "Turn Your Life Over to God" and see what He can indeed make of you.

159. Carpe Diem-Seize the Day!

There are moments in our lives where decisions hang in the balance, moments where we can propel ourselves forward, stay where we are, or fall backward. In those moments "Seize the Day" CARPE DIEM. There are moments when the game hangs in the balance. Don't be timid or fearful; be bold, seize the day. There are moments when you choose whether or not to go on a mission, to make a huge choice about furthering your education, or whether or not to go to the temple; Carpe Diem, Seize the day. Also there are chaotic moments when you stand fast amid great turmoil or challenges, times when you must be prepared to stand alone if needed. And lastly, there are times when you have the opportunity to show Christlike love until your cup indeed, will run over with love. Live in the moment and when those moments of consequence arrive, Seize the day and your life will be blessed forever.

160. Querer es Poder

This is a Spanish phrase: To want to do is to have power to do. The depth of desire is often the determining factor between success and failure. A young man once asked the wise Socrates how he could gain as much knowledge as he had. Socrates took the young man out in the ocean and thrust him under the water. Bewildered, the young man came up gasping for air. A second and finally a third time Socrates plunged the man under the water until he was nearly ready to drown. Finally the young man struggled with all of his might and came up out of the water. Socrates told him simply that when he wanted knowledge as much as he wanted air he would find his treasure of knowledge. How much do you want something and what price are you willing to pay? Make sure that you choose wisely to obtain those things of most worth. It has been said that whatever the mind can conceive the will can achieve. Look at the achievements of technology in man going to the moon and the advancements in the computer. Could we not place as great an effort in improving interpersonal relationships and creating a Zion type society? We may get what we ask for, so choose wisely what you set your heart and mind on achieving.

161. This Is the Day

The psalmist wrote: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalms 118:24). As we consider this day and every day we have to enjoy here on the earth, let us rejoice with gladness. Let us see the light, the beauty, the majesty of our God! Let us see the innocence of a newborn child and the beauty in the aged in a life well lived. Let us rejoice at the words of living prophets and in reading the holy scriptures. Let us rejoice and be glad at the miraculous way our bodies function and move. Let us treasure our relationships and make them ever stronger. Let us have a spirit of gladness.

Today is the day to show love.

Today is the day to be kind.

Today is the day to serve.

Today is the day to say "Thank you."

Today is the day to smile.

Today is the day to pray.

Today is the day to be happy and find joy.

Today is the day to rejoice.

Today is the day to forgive.

Today is the day to remember.

Today is the day to obey.

TODAY IS THE DAY! RTS

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

162 Search Diligently

“Search diligently, pray always and be believing, and all things will work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenant wherewith ye have covenanted with one another.” (D&C 90:24). We must search for those things that are worthy and uplifting in life, always praying to the Father that He will guide our steps. We must walk uprightly, keeping the commandments that we may have His spirit to guide us in the choices we make. We must be believing and have faith and walk forward in that eye of faith. We must be diligent, persevering in difficult times until we have passed triumphantly through the trials and rigors of life. We must always remember our covenants and strive to live worthy of them. **For as we keep our covenants, our covenants will keep us safe, both spiritually and temporally.** When we have done our part, God will indeed bless us that all things will indeed work together for our good.

163. You'll Get It

There is much to be said about desire and perseverance. The prize usually comes after much struggle and persistent effort. There is always room at the top for those willing to pay the price and go the extra mile in order to make their dreams a reality. The author is unknown to this poem but it shares a pattern for success and achievement. It goes as follows:

You'll Get It

If you want a thing bad enough to go out and fight for it,
Work day and night for it, give up your time for it,
If only desire of it makes you quite mad enough never to tire of it,
Makes you hold all other things tawdry and cheap for it,
And all that you scheme and you dream is about it,
If gladly you sweat for it, fret for it, plan for it,
If you'll simply go after that thing that you want
With all your capacity, strength and sagacity,
Faith, hope and confidence, stern pertinacity
If neither sickness nor pain of body or brain
Can turn you away from the thing that you want,
If dogged and grim you besiege and beset it,
YOU'LL GET IT.

164. I Have Fought a Good Fight

In one profound verse in 2 Timothy, Paul teaches us three of the great purposes of life: **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"** (2 Tim 4:7). The first realization is that life truly is a battle, a battle between good and evil, a battle to overcome adversity and trials, and a battle within ourselves to become the best person we can become. The second profound lesson that Paul shares with us is that he has finished his course. Each of us has a mission, so to speak, in life. We were sent here to learn and to accomplish certain things that were fore-ordained for each of us to achieve. We have great potential but must learn and grow through the trials and adversities of life. Paul had his share of trials being shipwrecked three times, and being beaten with thirty nine stripes five times. He was also stoned and faced some unknown infirmity that he beseeched the Lord to remove from him, but which he had to continue to endure. Third and finally, his great lesson and message to us was this: **"I have kept the faith:"** That is the ultimate test for each of us, to endure to the end, facing whatever trials or infirmities we must pass through. Paul gave us a wonderful example of achieving these three missions in life and the Savior provided the perfect example for each of us, to fight a good fight, finish our course, and to keep the faith.

165. The Pessimist, The Optimist

"The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty." These words were uttered by England's great statesman, Winston Churchill. These are two great fields with a wide separation, pessimism and optimism. To some everything in the world is awry, they see only the gloomy, the negative and the wrongs in the world. Happiness for them is a fleeting memory of days gone by with little to enjoy in the present. On the other hand, the optimist chooses to see the good things in life, the beautiful, the positive, the enlightening. Yes, there is much of good and much of evil, but when it comes right down to it in most cases, **"WE FIND WHAT WE LOOK FOR!"** The next time you can see only the negative in your home life, your work setting, or in society around you, choose to look upward and thank God for all of the beauties of life, the acts of kindness, the smiles from loved ones and the depth of relationships that add unmeasured treasures as we walk through this great journey of life.

166. They That Be With Us Are More Than They That Be With Them

In 2nd Kings 6:16-18 Elisha the prophet was with a young man when the hosts of Israel were surrounded by a great host of Syrians with many horses and chariots. The young man asked Elisha, "How shall we do?" Elisha answered, "Fear not for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Elisha then prayed for the Lord to open the eyes of the young man, "and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The Lord then smote the Syrians with blindness and the hosts of Israel were saved. In our struggles we may feel that we are outnumbered or at the mercy of those around us. **We need to remember in those times that if God is on our side we need not fear; there are also unseen hosts of heaven that will strengthen us and carry us forward in our moment of need. When you feel alone remember, "If God be with us then who can be against us?"**

167. All Our Dreams Can Come True

“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” These words were spoken by the man who created Disneyland, “The Happiest Place on Earth,” Walt Disney. Disney was the creator of Disneyland, Disney World and the marvelous movies created through the years by Disney studios. He added to the previous quote: “All the adversity I’ve had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles have strengthened me...You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing for you.” His motto was: “Dream, Believe, Dare, Do.” Obstacles and adversity will be the lot of all of us in life. **May we have the courage to Dream, Believe, Dare and Do, and we will be able to achieve remarkable things, indeed.**

168. I Must Obey

At a young age, Nephi learned of the great faith and obedience of his father Lehi. In 1st Nephi 2:2-3 it records that: “The Lord commanded my father, even in a dream, that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness. And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him. Later, when Nephi was given an invitation to respond to a commandment of the Lord, he declared, “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.” (1 Nephi 3:7). Later Nephi and his brothers did have to give up all their gold and silver and all manner of riches. As the journey progressed Nephi was instructed by the Lord to build a ship and he responded simply, “Whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?” (1 Nephi 17:9). Time and time again, Nephi was obedient to the will of the Lord. In his final message, even final words to us, he declared, “Thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey.” (2nd Nephi 33:15). May that be the course for each of us; that we have no more desire to do evil, but do good and be obedient continually to the end of our lives.

169. Life is a Daring Adventure

The great educator and author, Helen Keller, wrote the following: **“Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.”** Helen Keller, the great activist, was struck blind and deaf at the age of nineteen months. After years of frustration she started to explore her world with the help of Ann Sullivan. She overcame many obstacles to attain remarkable achievements. Her perspective as she started to learn and grow was to learn as much as she could and to heighten the awareness and senses she had remaining. It has been said that “most men live lives of quiet desperation.” Such was the case with George Bailey in “It’s a Wonderful Life” until his eyes were opened, so to speak, to understand the importance of his own life. Life should be a daring adventure for each and every one of us, with the opportunity to dream and work toward those dreams, and the opportunity to see and experience the beauties of this wonderful world. Life is an opportunity to develop relationships of love and harmony, of peace and understanding. Life is the opportunity to develop our thoughts and expand our minds to ever greater heights. Let us choose to make our lives that daring adventure we dream of that lies within our grasp as we reach to ever expand our circle of knowledge, service, love and exploration in all that we do.

170. The Greatest Glory

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.” Nelson Mandela. Everyone falls down at times, but the courage to get up again is what often makes the difference between ultimate success or failure. As we climb the spiritual mountains in our lives we each have a safety rope to catch us when we fall. That safety rope is found in the Savior through His great atonement and enabling power. Life is a series of stepping stones and we learn through both our successes and our failures. At times we are bloodied and bruised, but those are usually the times of our greatest growth. Just as the baby learns how to walk by falling over and over, but getting up and trying again, our lives are designed to expand and grow and flourish through the process of trial and error that leads to ever greater accomplishments. If we want to attain the greatest glory we must not fear failure but focus on the ultimate success that will come as we have mastered the great challenges and experiences of life.

171. Press Forward

As Nephi concluded his ministry among his beloved brethren, the Nephites, he counseled them regarding the “Doctrine of Christ.” He taught of faith, repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost and then he offered this wonderful admonition: “Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, have a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.” (2 Nephi 31:20). Marvin K. Gardner composed a wonderful song, “Press Forward, Saints,” that carries the message and the promise of pressing forward and enduring to the end, that we may achieve the great gift of eternal life.

Press Forward, Saints

Press forward Saints, with steadfast faith in Christ,
With hope's bright flame alight in heart and mind,
With love of God and love of all mankind.
Press forward, feasting on the word of Christ.
Receive his name rejoicing in his might.
Come unto God; find everlasting light.
Press on, enduring in the ways of Christ.
His love proclaim thru days of mortal strife.
Thus saith our God: “Ye have eternal life!”
Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Marvin K. Gardner

172. Positive Energy-Negative Energy

There are two types of energy that affect our performance on the stage of life. The first is a positive energy of creativity, confidence and accomplishment. The second type of energy is a negative force of worry, doubt and anxiety. This energy does not lead us on an upward course, but rather on a downward cycle. When an athlete has adrenaline pumping through his body he can run faster and jump higher, but if he is the quarterback he may overshoot his target. Energy that is focused and controlled in a positive direction leads to a successful outcome. The negative energy of worry and anxiety lead to a tentative approach which unfortunately can lead to failure. We all struggle with both of these energies at some point in our lives. By focusing on positive energy we will accomplish much more than if we let our worries and anxiety take center stage. **Do Your Best and Leave Unto the Lord the Rest.** That should be our motto and will allow us to leave behind our worries, doubts, and feelings of insecurity as we face the battles of life.

173. A Wonderful Life

In the classic movie, "It's a Wonderful Life" Jimmy Stewart plays the role of George Bailey, a businessman in a small town. Through a course of events George's Uncle Billy loses a very large sum of money for the bank deposit and George faces financial ruin. As he contemplates the consequences George considers taking his own life but ends up saving the life of Clarence Odbody, who is his guardian angel. George has the experience revealed to him of what life would be like if he had never been born and he came to understand that he did make a difference, and that life was indeed a wonderful gift. As he returned to face the consequences many people came to his aid and the debt was paid. His heart was overwhelmed with joy at seeing how others cared for him and came to him in his hour of need. **There may be times in your life when circumstances look bleak and hopeless. Know that there are so many who love you and care about you and will come to your aid. Know that you do make a difference and that there will be brighter days ahead.** Know that even in difficult times that life is indeed a wonderful gift and opportunity and we have much to be grateful for. Know that there is a God in heaven who loves you, for you indeed are His child. Know that you have a Savior who has paid the price, so that you may one day return home to that loving Father in Heaven and loved ones that you cherish. Always try to live worthily so that your reunion will be a joyous and glorious one as you return home with honor.