

## A Rusty Mind

Many people across the country were caught-up in the hype of the da Vinci Code. It was intriguing but obviously not real. It is a shame that Hollywood and authors have manipulated things in such a way as to sell products to the world. Leonardo da Vinci's contributions to art, science, and engineering establish him as one of the great geniuses in history. Whether it be designing a flying machine or painting the Mona Lisa, his mind was alive, observant and creative. He is credited with making this comment about maintaining mental sharpness: "Iron rusts from disuse; stagnant water loses its purity...even so does inaction sap the vigor of the mind."

When I read that statement, I thought about my Christian life. Is it possible to become stagnant in my Christian walk? Do I find myself growing comfortable with things and find myself never really reaching out of my comfort zone? I wonder if this was part of the problem that the Hebrew writer was addressing. I think that the writer saw the symptoms and knew the cure. "*Solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*" (Hebrews 5:14).

The word exercised is from the Greek word gymnasium and relates to our idea of a disciplined workout. I am always impressed by those athletes who commit to a regime of work that will get them prepared for whatever event they participate in. How much would the Christian benefit if he realized the importance of growing in knowledge so that he would be able to choose the right path, knowing what God wanted him to do and not to do. This comes when we continually go back and look into the word of God.

I want to encourage myself as well as you to take a fresh look at the Bible and ask God for new insights on how it affects your relationship with Him and with others. I think it would be a great idea if we all adopted the idea that we were going to "work at staying spiritually fit."

Search the Scripture's precious store

As a miner digs for ore,

Search, and you will surely find

Treasures to enrich your mind

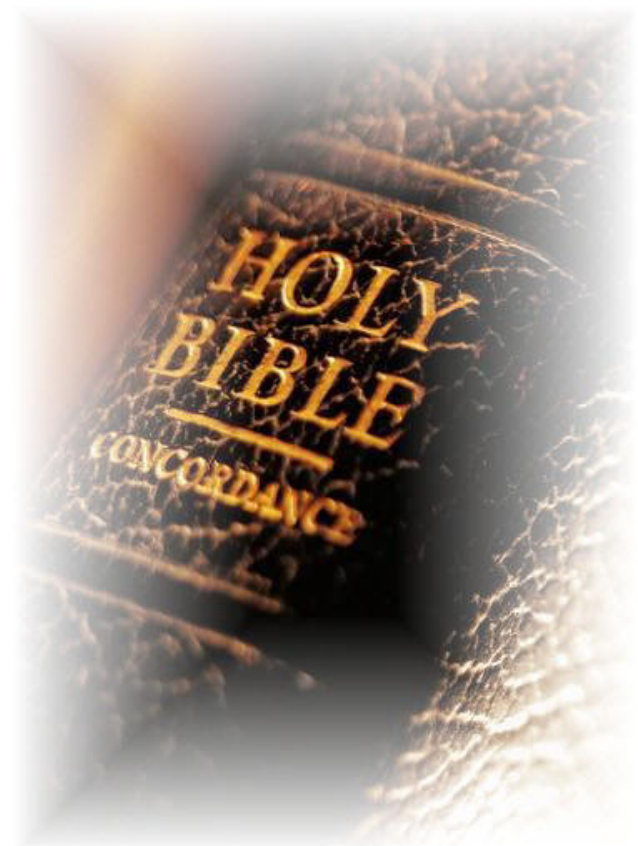
# Enjoy the climb in 2009

## Onward and Upward

*From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

*Psalm 61:2*

### Bible Reading for March and April



## A priceless gift

Recently I read a story that made me think about two things. One is the priceless gift that was given to me by God. The other thought was how much appreciation I have for that priceless gift. The story is about a doctor who was working in a remote area of Minnesota many years ago. He was approached by a Native American family that begged him to come and help their elderly grandmother who was gravely ill. The journey to their home took the doctor to an even more remote area. When he arrived at their home he went and diagnosed her condition. He followed this with detailed instructions for her care.

Remarkably the grandmother recovered. In a few weeks the entire family made the journey to the doctor's office in town. They ceremoniously presented him with a 150 year old pair of moccasins made by a great-great-grandfather. As the doctor held the moccasins in his hands, he began to protest about the gift. This gift was a cherished, treasured item for the family. When the doctor continued his protest saying that he could not take this family treasure, the head of the clan spoke up and said; "You saved my mother's life. We insist that you accept these moccasins. We do not express great appreciation with a cheap gift."

There is a story in the Old Testament concerning David who was told to offer a sacrifice to God on land owned by Araunah. As king, David could have taken the piece of land and the animals to make the sacrifice, but instead he purchased them. Araunah offered to give David what was needed, but David said he would not "*offer burnt offerings to the Lord...with that which cost him nothing*" (II Samuel 24:24).

I trust that we all deeply appreciate the sacrifice that was made for each of us. We have spent the year 2008 discovering various aspects of God, his greatness, goodness, grace, and good news. We remember the sacrifice of His son each Lord's Day. What do we do in return? Do we force ourselves to attend Sunday morning worship but never Sunday evening? Do we put a dollar in the collection plate but never give of ourselves in serving God. Do we profess to be Christians, but never share the gospel with others? Maybe I have put it into too simple a manner. I do however think that many times our appreciation for what the Lord has done does not come close to what it should be. We need to remember that sacrifice is the true measure of our giving. Do I sacrifice to show my appreciation for the great gift that God has given me?

## Sunday March 1, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 17-18

**Thought for the Day:** A religion without mystery must be a religion without God

### Questions

1. What goal can I set for the month of March that will help me in my climb of 2009?

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2. Who am I going to pray for this week? Be specific

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3. Name one blessing of the past week?

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## Monday March 2, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 45-50

**Thought for the Day:** There is within every soul a thirst for happiness and meaning.

## Tuesday March 3, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 23-25

**Thought for the Day:** The Holy Spirit is not a blessing from God, He is God

## Wednesday March 4, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 1-2

**Thought for the Day:** Every creature is a divine word because it proclaims God

## Thursday March 5, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Genesis 36-39

**Thought for the Day:** I'd rather get ten men to do the job than to do the job of ten men.

Thoughts

1. In my own words the months of March and April of 2009 were:

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2. What am I looking forward to accomplishing in the next two months of 2009:

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3. What am I going to be able to do to help grow the kingdom here at Maple Hill in the next two months?

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4. Am I pleased with my relationship with the Lord in 2009? Explain

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Friday March 6, 2009

**Bible Reading:** The book of Ruth

**Thought for the Day:** Leadership is found in becoming the servant of all.

Saturday March 7, 2009

**Bible Reading :** Psalm 27-29

**Thought for the Day:** The doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, which was one of the main teachings of Jesus, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought.

Sunday March 8, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 19-20

**Thought for the Day:** The best is yet to be.

Questions

1. Name a blessing of this past week.
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2. What specific thing am I going to do to enhance my climb in 2009?
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3. Who am I going to pray for during the week and why?
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Monday March 9, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 51-55

**Thought for the Day:** I exhort you, press on in your course, and exhort all men that they may be saved.

Tuesday March 10, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 26-28

**Thought for the Day:** Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow him

Monday April 27, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Jeremiah 22-26

**Thought for the Day:** The most universally awesome experience that mankind knows is to stand alone on a clear night and look at the stars. It was God who first set the stars in space; He is their Maker and Master...such are His power and His majesty.

Tuesday April 28, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 13-14

**Thought for the Day:** There are only two ways to live...one is as though nothing is a miracle...the other is as if everything is.

Wednesday April 29, 2009

**Bible Reading:** II Corinthians 1-3

**Thought for the Day:** Open your hearts to the love God instills...God love you tenderly. What He gives you is not to be kept under lock and key, but to be shared.

Thursday April 30, 2009

Bible Reading: Exodus 17-20

**Thought for the Day:** Eating lunch with a friend, hearing the rain patter against the window. There is no event so commonplace but that God is present within it, always hidden, always leaving room to recognize Him or not to recognize Him.

Wednesday March 11, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 3-4

**Thought for the Day:** There is no better evangelist in the world than the Holy Spirit

Thursday March 12, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Genesis 40-43

**Thought for the Day:** A prayerless soul is a Christless soul

Friday March 13, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 1-5

**Thought for the Day:** For a soul to come to Jesus, is the grandest event in its history.

Saturday March 14, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 30-32

**Thought for the Day:** The Bible applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, is the chief means by which men are built up and established in the faith, after their conversion.

Sunday March 15, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 21-22

**Thought for the Day:** We're in spiritual combat—cosmic combat for the heart and soul of humankind.

Questions

1. How was I blessed this week? Be specific!

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2. Did I help anyone this past week? Be specific!

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3. What one thing really stands out in my mind about what I read the past week.

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Wednesday April 22, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 15-16

**Thought for the Day;** Fear knocked at the door and faith answered. No one was there.

Thursday April 23, 2009

**Bible Reading;** Exodus 13-16

**Thought for the Day:** No God, No peace, Know God, Know peace

Friday April 24, 2009

**Bible Reading;** II Samuel 1-4

**Thought for the Day:** If you have a song of faith in your heart, it will be heard by the look on your face.

Saturday April 25, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 48-50

**Thought for the Day:** If the only prayer you ever say in life is "Thank you"...that is enough.

Sunday April 26, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 33-34

**Thought for the Day:** We are at peace with God and all mankind when we hear the silence and do not feel alone.

Questions:

1. How has the Lord blessed me this past week?

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2. How have I been a blessing to the Lord this past week?

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3. What will my prayer be for Maple Hill this week?

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Monday March 16, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 56-61

**Thought for the Day:** Quit sweating, quit wrestling. It is not TRY but TRUST.

Tuesday March 17, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 1-2

**Thought for the Day:** A theology without spirituality would be a sterile academic exercise.

Wednesday March 18, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 5-6

**Thought for the Day:** Knowing that I am not the one in control gives great encouragement. Knowing the One who is in control is everything.

Thursday March 19, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Genesis 44-47

**Thought for the Day:** By perseverance the snail reached the ark

Friday March 20, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 6-10

**Thought for the Day:** The golden rule for understanding in spiritual matters is not intellect, but obedience.

Saturday March 21, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 33-35

**Thought for the Day:** Never think that God's delays are God's denials. Hold on; hold fast; hold out. Patience is genius.

Sunday March 22, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 23-24

**Thought for the Day:** All earthly delights are but "streams." But God is the ocean.

Saturday April 18, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 45-47

**Thought for the Day:** Faith is daring the soul to go beyond what the eyes can see.

Sunday April 19, 2008

**Bible Reading:** Job 31-32

**Thought for the Day:** Thank you Lord, for the sheer joy of wanting to get up and help the world go around.

Questions

1. Am I at all like Job? If so how?

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2. Who in the congregation needs my help? And what will I do about it?

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3. What can I do to make our country a better country to live in?

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Monday April 20, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Jeremiah 17-21

**Thought for the Day:** Worry is a total waste of time. It doesn't change anything. All it does is taint your mind and steals your joy. You can't have joy without peace, and there is no peace without God.

Tuesday April 21, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 11-12

**Thought for the Day:** Those who have faith need no explanation, for those who have no faith, no explanation is possible.

Questions

1. Who will I pray for in a very specific way this week?

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2. Did I turn down any opportunities to serve this past week?

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3. Do I have the heart of a servant? If yes, how will I serve?

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Monday March 23, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 62-66

**Thought for the Day:** No one who really wants to count for God can afford to play at Christianity.

Tuesday March 24, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 3-4

**Thought for the Day:** Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. Faith is the belief that God will do what is right.

Wednesday March 25, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 7-8

**Thought for the Day:** Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.

Thursday March 26, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Genesis 48-50

**Thought for the Day:** I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

Friday March 27, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 11-15

**Thought for the Day:** Lord, give us faith that right makes might

2. Name one person who was a blessing to you last week and why?
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3. How has it been a blessing to be a part of the family at Maple Hill?
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Monday April 13, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Jeremiah 12-16

**Thought for the Day:** The root of all difficulties is a lack of the sense of the Presence of God.

Tuesday April 14, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 9-10

**Thought for the Day:** Above all else, know this: Be prepared at all times for the gifts of God and be ready always for new ones. For God is a thousand times more ready to give than we are to receive.

Wednesday April 15, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 13-14

**Thought for the Day:** The heart that is generous and kind most resembles God.

Thursday April 16, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Exodus 9-12

**Thought for the Day:** My job is to take care of the possible and trust God with the impossible.

Friday April 17, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 26-31

**Thought for the Day:** Fear ends where faith begins.

Saturday March 28, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 25-26

**Thought for the Day:** If I am not (in a state of grace), God bring me there; If I am, God keep me there.

Sunday March 29, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 25-26

**Thought for the Day:** If the people do not like the doctrine of grace, give them all the more of it.

Questions:

1. As the month of March comes to an end, what can I look back on and say "well done."

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  2. What would I want people to pray for if they prayed for me?

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  3. Did I do anything to make Maple Hill a better place this week? Be specific!
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Monday March 30, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Jeremiah 1-6

**Thought for the Day:** God, never suffer us to think that we can stand by ourselves, and not need Thee

Tuesday March 31, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 5-6

**Thought for the Day:** God is even kinder than you think

Wednesday April 1, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 9-10

**Thought for the Day:** No matter how steep the mountain the Lord will climb it with you.

Tuesday April 7, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Mark 7-8

**Thought for the Day:** Every day do your best. God will do the rest.

Wednesday April 8, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Corinthians 11-12

**Thought for the Day:** All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.

Thursday April 9, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Exodus 5-8

**Thought for the Day:** Frequently remind yourself that God is with you, that He will never fail you, that you can count upon him. Say these words, "God is with me, helping me"

Friday April 10, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 21-25

**Thought for the Day:** The Lord will either calm your storm...or allow it to rage while He calms you.

Saturday April 11, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 42-44

**Thought for the Day:** Anything God asks us to do He supplies us with the energy and grace to do

Sunday April 12, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 29-30

**Thought for the Day:** It is such comfort to drop the tangles of life into God's hands and leave them there.

Questions:

1. Will I take time to pray for one of our staff members?
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Thursday April 2, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Exodus 1-4

**Thought for the Day:** I would rather err on the side of faith than on the side of doubt.

Friday April 3, 2009

**Bible Reading:** I Samuel 16-20

**Thought for the Day:** Faith is a bird that feels dawn breaking and sings while it is still dark.

Saturday April 4, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 39-41

**Thought for the Day:** When the heart weeps for what is lost, the spirit laughs for what it has found.

Sunday April 5, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Job 27-28

**Thought for the Day:** Prayer releases the power and wisdom God into a situation.

Questions:

1. What am I going to do this week to challenge myself?  

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2. Name one thing that stands out in your mind about what Wayne spoke on.  

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3. Yes or no! Am I enjoying the climb in 2009? Why?  

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Monday April 6, 2009

**Bible Reading:** Jeremiah 7-11

**Thought for the Day:** Calmness is the way we show that we are trusting God