



September 11, 2024

# MESSENGER

## QUOTE FOR TODAY

"Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered."

James 5:10,11

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## "One Day at a Time" – Built into the Universe

"One day at a time" is a familiar slogan that people in the Twelve Step addiction recovery program use to encourage themselves and each other. The goal of living drug free for the rest of your life seems overwhelming, infinite, impossible, when you try to swallow it whole. But it seems more manageable when you take it in small 24-hour bites. At a Twelve Step meeting, members may be invited to fill out a "Just for Today" card, which asks them to make a commitment for that day to:

- Live through 24 hours, not your entire life
- Be happy for 24 hours
- Learn new things
- Perform a random act of kindness
- Be agreeable
- Follow the recovery program as best as possible
- Relax and reflect for 20 minutes
- Enjoy your day.<sup>1</sup>

I'm wondering if we should approach the Christian life in the same way. The idea of living up to the Old Testament Law throughout your life seems like an awesome challenge. Surely you're going to slip and cross some line of righteousness. That's why God provided ways for you to confess, repent, be forgiven. But even beyond the Law, following the challenges of Jesus Christ, to care for the poor and needy, to love those who hate you and to treat your enemies with kindness seem totally beyond reach, when you think of maintaining such high standards throughout your life. But **one day**? Can you control your lower impulses for **twenty-four hours**? That seems like something you might be able to manage. Especially if you had a friend by your side, saying, "Just for today!"

*Continued on other side...*

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## (Continued from other side)

Actually, there are a number of Bible verses that encourage us to focus on the potential of one day:

*This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

(Psalm 118:24)

*Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.*

(Proverbs 27:1)

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

(Lamentations 3:22-23)

*Give us today our daily bread.*

(Matthew 6:11; The Lord's Prayer)

*Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.*

*Today's trouble is enough for today.*

(Matthew 6:34)

*Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money." Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*

(James 4:13-14)

*We do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.*

(2 Corinthians 4:16)

There's a reason why we don't say, "One month at a time." That could seem like an eternity. Nor do we say, "One second at a time." That's not long enough to test our resolve. **God has built a pattern into the universe**, with the sun rising each morning and setting

each evening. After the sun sets, God quiets our environment so that we can get eight hours or so for our anxieties to settle down and we can be refreshed by sleep. Between sunrise and sunset, however, he gives us maybe sixteen hours to manage our behavior and our interactions with the world around us. That's enough of a challenge for us to deal with.<sup>2</sup>

I mentioned above that a person can handle things "Just for Today," with the help of a friend alongside. Well, **Jesus promises to be that Friend for you.** Just ask him . . . every morning, one day at a time.

Pastor George Van Alstine

<sup>1</sup> <https://jameshaggertyrecovery.com/blog/one-day-at-a-time/>

<sup>2</sup> Right now I hear Dinah Washington singing: "*What a difference a day makes; twenty-four little hours.*"