

## PRESSING ON TO HIGHER GROUND

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The Christian life is the highest form of living.
2. It demands our becoming "More Like The Master" each day.
3. The ultimate destination is an eternal home with God.

### I. BASIC PRINCIPLES ARE INVOLVED IN MOVING TO HIGHER GROUND.

1. I Must Learn to Deny MYSELF.
  - A. Matt. 16:24-25: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"
2. To Live a Life of TOTAL Commitment.
  - A. Luke 6:46: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"
3. This Involves a Daily Renewal of One's Life.
  - A. Rom. 12:2: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
4. This Involves Keeping My Eye on the End of the Road.
  - A. Luke 9:62: "But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'"
5. Being Accountable for My Own Life.
  - A. Rom. 14:10-12: "... For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

“I am careful of the words I say  
To keep them soft and sweet;  
I never know from day to day  
Which ones I'll have to eat.”

6. I Must Become MASTER of My Fate.

“One ship drives east and another drives west  
With the self-same winds that blow.  
Tis the set of the sails  
and not the gales  
which tell us the way to go.

Like the winds of the sea are the ways of fate,  
As we voyage along through life:  
Tis the set of a soul  
That decides its goal,  
And not the calm or the strife.”

7. To Throw Off the Chains Which Make the Road Harder.

- A. Chained by Sins, Mistakes, and Failures of the Past.
- B. Chained by Harmful Habits.
- C. Chained by the Fear of Failure.
- D. Chained as a Prisoner of Procrastination.

“Mr. Meant-To has a comrade,  
And his name is Didn't Do;  
Have you ever chanced to meet them:  
Did they ever call on you?”

These two fellows live together  
In the house of Never-Win,  
And I'm told that it is haunted  
By the ghost of Might-Have-Been.”

Unknown

8. Must So Live That I Can Accept Myself.

MYSELF

I have to live with myself, and so  
I want to be fit for myself to know.  
I want to be able, as days go by,  
Always to look myself straight in the eye;

I don't want to stand, with the setting sun,  
And hate myself for the things I have done.

I want to go out with my head erect,  
I want to deserve all men's respect;  
But here in the struggle for fame and pelf  
I want to be able to like myself.  
I don't want to look at myself and know  
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.

I can never hide myself from me;  
I see what others may never see;  
I know what others may never know,  
I never can fool myself, and so,  
Whatever happens, I want to be  
Self-respecting and conscience free.

Edgar A. Guest

9. I Shall Learn to Live TODAY and Not in the Past.

I've shut the door on Yesterday  
Its sorrows and mistakes;  
I've locked within its gloomy walls  
Past failures and heartaches.

And now I throw the key away  
To seek another room,  
And furnish it with hope and smiles,  
And every springtime bloom.

I've shut the door on Yesterday  
And thrown my key away -  
Tomorrow holds no doubt for me,  
Since I have found Today.

Unknown

10. I Shall Approach Each New Day With a Noble Purpose:

- A. To awaken each morning with a smile brightening my face.
- B. To greet the day with reverence for the opportunities it contains.
- C. To approach my work with a clean mind.
- D. To hold ever before me, even in the doing of little things,  
The Ultimate Purpose toward which I am working.

- E. To meet men and women with laughter on my lips; and love in my heart;
- F. To be gentle, kind, and courteous through all the hours.
- G. To approach the night with weariness that ever woos sleep, and the joy that comes from work well done.
- H. This is how I desire to waste wisely my days.

If I can stop one heart from breaking,  
 I shall not live in vain;  
 If I can ease one life the aching,  
 Or cool one pain.  
 Or help one lonely person  
 Into happiness again  
 I shall not liven in vain.

Emily Dickinson

11. I Shall Spend What Time I Have Left Prudently.

TIME

So the sands of Time that slowly flow  
 From out my hour glass  
 Will all too soon have ebbed away,  
 My life will then be past.

So I must make the most of time  
 And drift not with the tide,  
 For killing time's not Murder,  
 It's more like suicide.

12. To Live a Life of Integrity.

- A. Prov. 19:1: "Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than *one who is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool."
- B. Prov. 20:6-7: "Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man? The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."

To live as gently as I can;  
 To be, no matter where, - a man;  
 To take what comes of good or ill  
 And cling to faith and honor still;  
 To do my best, and let that stand;

The record of my brain and hand;  
And then, should failure come to me  
Still work and hope for victory.

Edgar A. Guest

13. To Make an Honest Daily Appraisal of Myself.

THE GUY IN THE GLASS

If you get what you want in struggle for self;  
And the world makes you king for a day;  
Then go to the mirror and look at yourself,  
And see what that guy has to say.

For it isn't your father, or mother, or wife,  
Who judgment on you must pass;  
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life  
Is the man staring back from the glass.

He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest,  
For he's with you clear to the end;  
You have passed your dangerous, difficult task,  
If the guy in the glass is your friend.

You may be like Jack Horner and chisel a plum,  
And you think you're a wonderful guy;  
But the man in the glass says: "You're a bum,"  
If you can't look him straight in the eye.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years  
And get pats on your back as you pass;  
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears,  
If you cheated the guy in the glass.

Oscar R. Gruter

14. To Maintain an Enthusiasm for Life.

- A. People grow old by deserting their ideals.
- B. Worry, doubt, self-distress, despair, these bow the head, and turn the growing spirit to dust.
- C. Years wrinkle the skin - but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

Note: You can't live wrong and die right.

### HOW OLD ARE YOU?

Age is a quality of mind.  
If you have left your dreams behind,  
If Hope is cold,  
If you no longer look ahead -  
If ambitions' fires are dead -  
Then you are old.

But if from life you take the best,  
And if in life you keep the jest,  
If love you hold;  
No matter how the years go by,  
No matter how the birthdays fly -  
You are not old.

H. S. Fritsch

### 15. With an Iron-Clad Will I Shall Press On - To Higher Ground.

#### STATE OF MIND

If you think you are beaten, you are;  
If you think you dare not, you don't;  
If you'd like to win, but you 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 you find  
Success begins with a fellow's will -  
It's all in the state of mind.

Life's battles don't always go  
To the stronger or faster man;  
But soon or late the man who wins  
Is the fellow who thinks he can.

Unknown