

# **Daily Encouragement**

*David Evans*

Christian Focus Publications

ISBN 1-85792-744-3

© David Evans 2001

Published in 2001  
by  
Christian Focus Publications  
Geanies House, Fearn  
Ross-shire, IV20 1TW, UK

[www.christianfocus.com](http://www.christianfocus.com)

Previously Published in 1989 By Marshall Pickering, London

All Scripture references are from the New International Version,  
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any  
means, electronic or mechanical, photocopying, recording or  
otherwise, without the permission in writing, of the publisher.

Printed and bound by  
Cox and Wyman, Cardiff Road  
Reading

Cover Design by Alister MacInnes

## Daily Encouragement

*May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God  
our Father, who loved us and by his grace  
gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,  
encourage your hearts and strengthen you in  
every good deed and word.*

*2 Thessalonians 2:16*

*By His grace He doth impart  
Eternal sunshine to the heart.*

*Martin Luther*

*It is in the eternal commonplaces of the Faith  
that all strength lies and all consolation and  
all hope.*

*R. W. Dale*

*Dedication*

To H. Gordon Legg-  
missionary pioneer, mission director, man of God.

## **Preface**

Missionaries are fascinating people. I have had the privilege of knowing hundreds of them. They often have a keen spiritual edge. They usually do their own home church a power of good if they spend some months in it during a home country assignment. In fact if the church is asleep they can often find ways of disturbing its rest! May their tribe increase!

David Evans and I have known each other for many years. We were fellow-students and I found friendship with him in those days both enjoyable and challenging. We are about the same age, but he had been a Christian already for many years and I benefited greatly from fellowship with someone who had such a settled faith and comparatively mature Christian experience. How often his face lit up whenever we talked about the Lord Jesus Christ! His gifts as a preacher of God's word too were already much in evidence. I read this book when he sent me a copy of its first edition soon after its publication, and my wife Eva and I used it that year for our daily times of prayer together. We found that it was the right kind of encouragement, because it did not give us a complacent pat on the back, but instead constantly stimulated us to love the Lord more dearly and to follow him more nearly.

David and his wife Margaret had many years of devoted service for Christ in southern Africa with the Africa Evangelical Fellowship. Having been converted and called to missionary service as a boy, David was greatly encouraged through camps run by this mission in North Wales. For twenty years he worked in Zimbabwe, establishing a Bible college there. Then for five years he was the missions executive director in Johannesburg, and then he had a fifteen-year period when he was the mission's Minister-at-Large, during which his main work was the encouragement of missionaries and local churches.

Without doubt the living quality of these daily notes is due to their genesis in his own fellowship with the Lord and his ministry of encouragement to others over many years. Eva and I are now reading them together once again to our great benefit. Without doubt, you too will find them a means in God's hand to encourage you in your Christian life and service.

Geoffrey Grogan

### **Appreciation**

I want to thank Stuart Mingham whose drawings of life in the Kalahari Desert in Botswana enhance this edition as they did the first. I am grateful to Gordon Croft who saw the need for a subject index and supplied it. Thanks also to Elaine Freney for her efficient typing. Above all I acknowledge with deep gratitude the vision and work of Doug McKay. The reappearance of this book is due in large measure to him.

David Evans

## Introduction

The first edition of this book came out in connection with the Centenary of the Africa Evangelical Fellowship (1889-1989). Since then AEF has merged with SIM (Serving In Mission). I would like to reiterate what I wrote in the original introduction.

The purpose of these daily meditations is to provide encouragement for all who may need them. They are written with the prayer that the Lord, who is the God of encouragement, will work through them to that end, whether they are used in private devotions or family worship.

I would urge all who read these pages to remember the true meaning of the Greek word translated by ‘encouragement’, ‘comfort’, ‘consolation’ or similar words in our English versions of the Bible. Leon Morris writes that the term *Parakaleo* in I Thessalonians 3:2 means ‘rather more than “comfort” in our sense of the term; it has the notion of strengthening, perhaps by way of exhortation or encouragement... if we are to render the word by “comfort” it must be in its original sense, in accordance with the Latin derivation (*con fortis*). It is not a gentle soothing, but a fitting for the battle.’

My intention has been to make each meditation brief, to the point and above all scriptural, ‘so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope’ (Romans 15:4). The passages chosen for meditation follow the order of the biblical books. All quotations are from the New International Version, unless otherwise stated.

David Evans  
Qualicum Beach  
Vancouver Island, B.C.  
2001

## January 1

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

Genesis 1:1

This is the first word about creation, as it is the last. For the believer it is a word of great encouragement. It is an encouragement to contemplate the whole creation - everything in earth, sky and sea with eyes of wonder and with an untrammelled mind. Anchored to this foundation truth, reverent investigation of and speculation about the methods of the Creator will have ample room in which to operate freely.

The word is an encouragement to trust in God, particularly in difficult circumstances. James Denney said, 'Just because creation is an index to God's resources it teaches us not to despair because we have come to the end of our own.' So Jeremiah cries out in a crisis hour, 'Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you' (Jer. 32:17). So Peter bids suffering Christians to commit themselves to 'their faithful Creator' (1 Pet. 4:19).

It is an encouragement to worship, to join our voices with the heavenly host:

You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honour and power,  
for you created all things,  
and by your will they were created  
and have their being.

(Rev 4:11)

## January 2

*...and he brought her to the man.*

Genesis 2:22

All the glory of marriage shines in these simple words which describe God himself bringing the woman to the man. This is the justification for the married state, the supreme reason why 'Marriage should be honoured by all' (Heb. 13:4), for marriage is ordained by God. The initiative is divine and provides the foundation for the relationship: 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh' (Gen. 2:24).

Herein lies the true source of satisfaction in marriage. The union is secure and permanent, because it is the work of God. Husband and wife are no longer two but one, because the Lord has joined them together (Matt. 19:6). The joys of such a relationship - physical, mental and spiritual - come from his gracious hand. Husband and wife know they were made for one another. Together they see their children as 'a heritage from the Lord' (Ps. 127:3).

This word from Genesis should shape the expectations of the unmarried. 'A prudent wife (or husband) is from the Lord' (Prov. 19:14). Happy is the young man who looks to the Lord's hand for such a gift; happy is the young woman who clasps that hand in order to be led to the man of his appointing.