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# Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower  
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

**—Proverbs 18:10**

## Portrait of a Soul Winner

His ears are open to the cries for help emanating from a lost and dying world.

His eyes are always searching for a receptive heart, in which to plant the word of God.

His lips are always ready and willing to proclaim the glory of God.

His hands are always turning the pages of God’s word, seeking God’s will for his life.

His feet are always on the move to carry out the word of Christ and to preach the gospel to every creature on earth.

His heart is beating and breaking with the urgency to reach the lost before it’s too late.

His head is bowed in prayer to the Father in heaven, to give him wisdom and strength to carry out His mission.

His face glows with the hope that is in him.

His life is like the light of a city set upon a hill that cannot be hidden.  
*—author unknown*

# You Thought I Was Just Like You

In Psalm 50:16–21, God addresses the wicked. He says,

What right have you to tell of My statutes,  
And to take My covenant in your mouth?  
For you hate discipline,  
And you cast My words behind you.  
When you see a thief, you are pleased with him,  
And you associate with adulterers.  
You let your mouth loose in evil,  
And your tongue frames deceit.  
You sit and speak against your brother;  
You slander your own mother's son.  
These things you have done, and I kept silence;  
You thought that I was just like you;  
I will reprove you, and state the case in order before your eyes.

What a fitting description of the wicked, even in our world today. Many pay lip-service to God and speak of His ways, but have no intention of discovering or obeying His will. They totally ignore God's word. They participate in wrongdoing. They associate with and celebrate evil people. It is distasteful and disturbing to hear such people even speak the name of God.

God says, "These things you have done, and I kept silence." So far, God has not moved in judgment. In fact, God has done the opposite. He has blessed the world, sending "rain on the righteous and unrighteous" (Matt. 5:45).

But, we must not mistake God's silence and delay for tacit approval. Rather, "God is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God's patience benefits all of us. If God sent a lightning bolt to smite people every time they committed sin, nothing would be left of any of us—Christians included—except sooty stains on the pavement.

Some of us are thankful for the extra time to get our lives right, to do a better job of glorifying our heavenly Father, to prepare to see His face. But the delay causes the wicked to harden their hearts. As Solomon pointed out in Eccl. 8:11, “because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.” It’s a sad truth that divine grace and mercy becomes for many an excuse to stop fearing God. Read Paul’s condemnation of this attitude:

Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds; to those who, by perseverance in doing good, seek for glory and honor and immortality: eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness: wrath and indignation (Romans 2:4–7, *cf.* Isaiah 57:11).

Whether one receives eternal life or eternal wrath has everything to do with making the most of God’s kindness and patience in this life.

What’s more, the silence of God has led evildoers to conclude that He not only winks at their deeds, but that He is in hearty agreement with their deeds. Or, to state it even more strongly, the silence of God has led evildoers to conclude that God Himself is *like* them. “You thought I was just like you!”

This is the very height of idolatry, the very definition of crafting a god in man’s own image. God declares, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:9). How dare we think that because we can’t seem to be faithful to one wife, that God is a philanderer (or has a wife at all). How dare we think that because we can’t seem to tell the truth that God lies when it is convenient. How dare we think that because we

crave food that God needs to be fed. How dare we think that because we get tired walking around the block that God gets tired.

And yet, this is precisely the concept that the ancient Greeks had concerning their own Pantheon, that the gods such as Zeus, Apollo, Hera, and Hermes, were as conniving, as limited, as hungry, as wretched, as disloyal, and as passionate as they were. Instead of bringing their own lives up to the holy standard of God, they brought the gods' lives down to the lowly standard of man.

Let all know for sure, that our God is a holy God. And let us all know for sure that a day is coming very soon when God will break His silence, He will "state His case," and reveal His wrath and judgment upon mankind. As the beginning of the psalm says, our God will

...come and not keep silence;  
Fire devours before Him,  
And it is very tempestuous around Him.  
He summons the heavens above,  
And the earth, to judge His people... (3-4).

While His word has already declared His holiness, His judgment will prove it. On that day,

...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

—John Guzzetta

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### **Quote of the Week:**

"It is one of the beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without also helping himself."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson