

# *Energy That Never Runs Down*



DR. NORMAN VINCENT PETER

## MARBLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH

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## ENERGY THAT NEVER RUNS DOWN

Scripture: Isaiah 40:31; Acts 17:28; Hebrews 13:8

A big league baseball pitcher, a friend of mine, once pitched a game in Kansas City on a July afternoon when the temperature was 105 degrees in the shade. He told me that about halfway through the game in the fifth inning, it suddenly seemed as though all energy went out of him. He felt weak, listless, too washed out to continue. For a moment he thought he had better send a message to the manager asking to be taken out.

But this ballplayer isn't one to give up easily. He happens to be what is called a creative Christian who believes that in Christianity there are methodologies and formulas that are very workable under all situations. Therefore he walked around the pitcher's box for a moment while the batter stood waiting at the plate. As he did so, he repeated a passage of Scripture from the Old Testament, from the 40th chapter of Isaiah: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." And he also repeated a passage from the 17th chapter of the Book of Acts: "For in him we live" (that is, have vitality), "and move" (that is, have dynamic energy), "and have our being" (that is, completeness of personality).

He told me that as he passed these creative, re-energizing spiritual thoughts through his mind the effect was very

definite. Energy seemed to fairly surge back into him. He finished the game with energy to spare and reported that he never had a better time in his life with more feeling of mastery than that game in 105 degrees temperature. Christian of intelligence discovered a great truth - that the power of God flowing through this thing we call Christianity is not only concerned with ethical precepts and standards or with sociological and theological matters, but in a deep sense it has to do with the re-creation of the believer.

Almighty God; who created you in the first place, who gave you life, did not finish the creative process at that point. He not only creates; re-creates. Through Him you can have new life, new vitality, new energy every day of your life. In fact, you can possess energy that never runs down.

What is it that depletes energy? Is it something in the physical being, some malfunctioning, some sickness, such a condition can, course, siphon off energy. If there is no physical disease then the trouble must be in another area. Do you suffer a diminution of energy by reason of overwork? I doubt it. I know people who do prodigious work, in some cases working practically all the time, and experience no physical ill-effects. Seldom is energy depleted due to overwork alone. The factors resulting in our losing energy are usually in our minds. Usually the source of trouble is that we think tired, think depletion, think deenergization, or we have hate thoughts or resentment thoughts or guilt thoughts or prejudice thoughts. These thoughts siphon off our energy. If you keep your thoughts alive, keep them clean, keep them healthy, keep them normal, and if you are normal physically, you can have abundant energy all your life.

This I believe, for do not the Scriptures say: "In him that is the basic secret - "In him we live ... and have our being." By thinking of God you learn to think energy, vitality; you learn to think strength, enthusiasm; and then you have energy that never runs down. I have seen this demonstrated many times.

Modern life confronts us with energy problems of many kinds. Not long ago my wife remarked to me, "You know, it seems to me I have seen more tired-looking young people in the last few years than I ever did before." This is especially the case on college campuses. The students say they work so hard they are tired all the time. But the most chronic tiredness, whether in youth or in later years, is not because there isn't resilience in the body, but because there isn't resilience in the mind. This is the secret of abundant energy.

On Clark Street in Chicago one day a few years ago I stopped for a shoe-shine and was amazed by the marvelously comfortable chairs they had in this shoe-shining parlor. I said to the shoe-shiner, "Take it easy like on this chair."

Presently a man climbed into the chair alongside of mine, heaving a great sigh of weariness as he sat down. Noticing my curious glance, he confidently said, "I don't need a shine real bad, I love these chairs. I find them so restful I can't resist having a shine so I can rest a few moments. I get so tired sometimes I can hardly take it."

"What is the trouble with you?" I asked. "Illness of some kind?"

"No," he replied, "I've been to the doctor about it, but he doesn't find anything wrong with me. He says I'm in pretty good shape for a man past forty. He told me I should just forget it."



"Well, if it isn't physical," I said, "it must be psychological - could even be spiritual."

At that he looked at me intently and exclaimed, "Who you are! ~~thought~~ you were somebody I'd seen before. And you talk just like I figured you would!"

"But if there's no physical trouble making you tired," I persisted, "then it must be something in your mental attitude or some spiritual ~~why~~. don't you see a counselor? See where your thinking is wrong. But for now let me hand you a little dose of spiritual medicine that can help you." And I gave him that text beginning, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ..." I told him, "That means: don't get so nervous. Be patient. Stay with the Lord until His goodness saturates your life. Put that text in your consciousness. Let it sink from your conscious mind by a process of intellectual and spiritual osmosis into your unconscious until its healing potency pervades your whole being." I gave him a few other passages too.

By the time we parted the man seemed considerably cheered up. He said he was going to give my advice a try. Later he wrote to tell me that these texts had worked a strange miracle in his life. In addition to using the texts he had proceeded to go through the Bible underscoring verse after verse in which he found inherent energy. With these new ideas he had overcome his tiredness. He had found how to live with constant energy.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ... In him we live, and move, and have our being." Why, friends, I honestly feel that we ought to have a much loftier concept of who we are and what we can be. It is not necessary for you or for me to be depleted, to sink under the burdens of life, to give way under the struggles of daily

existence. I do believe that Almighty God intended us to be vital, energetic, strong and enthusiastic all the days of our lives, and He makes it possible for us to be just that.

I had a wonderful experience at the Intercollegiate Rowing Association dinner in Syracuse, New York. It preceded the great intercollegiate rowing regatta held on Lake Onondaga. This is the event of the year in rowing in the United States. At the banquet head table were the head coaches of the great universities of this country. Name after name of these men was known to me.

I read the sports news every day of my life. Everyone ought to read the sports pages. I read them before I read the front pages, because if you read the sports pages then you can stand the front pages. There are tremendous people to be found in the sports pages.

Up there in Syracuse that night I was in my glory. But the thing that was really unforgettable was the table at which sat every member of the great Naval Academy crew of 1920. Not one man had ~~died~~ one had fallen away because of sickness. They were all there, and that night they were formally ushered into the Athletic Hall of Fame. Some people say they were the greatest crew that ever rowed in the United States. In their day of 1920 they beat every competition in this country and went on to win the Olympic Games where they had an unforgettable victory. To be a crew member you have to be somewhat of a man. Rusty Callow who used to be the crew coach at the Naval Academy said, "Rowing is the nearest thing to religion because there are no innings, there are no interludes, there is no quarter time, there is no half time. When the whistle blows every man in the ~~crew~~ six to twenty minutes, gives everything he has; and these men are fused together into one rhythmic mechanism, every man

lost in the other man." And he continued, "This crew was the greatest of them all." I looked at those ~~estimated~~ each must be 65-66 years of age, admirals now, and captains. Every man was sturdy, vigorous, vital, full of humor, alert. I never saw any better specimens of humanity than the men at that table. It was thrilling to see.

As the young athletes gathered around to do them homage and honor, I said to the head of athletics of a large university, "How do you explain those men: their energy and vitality and vigor?"

"I know every one of them. I'll tell you how you explain them. Every one of them has kept himself toned up, and every one has kept in tune."

"I understand the former, but what do you mean by the latter?"

"What do you think I mean? Everyone of those men is in tune with the Source of continuing vitality and energy."

Athletics makes some great people. Christianity makes even greater people, because it takes people who could conceivably deteriorate and decay and it tones them up by keeping them in tune. So if you want to live with continuing energy, keep yourself toned up and keep in tune with God.

If you are declining in energy, if you have grown tired and a little weary, you ought to examine the following: How about your enthusiasm? How about those marvelous ideals you had in your youth? How about those dreams you had - bright, resplendent, glorious dreams - when you were young? What about all those goals, the wonderful things you were going to do in the world? Those splendid objectives. When you have these you have energy. When they decay your energy decays. So the thing to do is to go back where you lost them, or return to where they

first began to grow stale in you and get them refreshed. The time I was in Syracuse coincided with the date of our thirty-fourth wedding anniversary; and my wife met me the following day. Now, Syracuse happens to be where we were married. Before going up there our young daughter Elizabeth had said, "Daddy, when you go to Syracuse why don't you go into the church where you were married and do some thinking?"

Her remark occurred to me and I said to my wife, "Ruth, maybe we had better do that." So on the morning of our anniversary we went into the University Methodist church in Syracuse where we were married thirty-four years ago. It is a place I will always remember.

I was the minister at that church when I first met my wife, and how well I remember the day. I was holding a committee meeting following the church service and the door opened - strange how things happen, isn't it?

The door opened and in burst a girl. I should have been thinking about other things, but I said to myself, "That is the girl for me." And that was of course, I had a little job persuading her, but anyway that was it.

When she and I went into the church on the anniversary of our wedding day, there was nobody there but the organist and he couldn't see us from where he sat. So I said, "Ruth, go back there and burst through that door again." And she did. And believe me, friends, I would do it all over again!

Then we went and sat in the front pew, right up near the altar where we had knelt together thirty-four years ago.

It is a beautiful church. The walls are almost entirely stained-glass windows. There are soaring pillars rising to a vaulted roof. And there we sat and we prayed and had a wonderful time.



Then Ruth said, "Let's walk down the aisle."

So we walked down the aisle remembering the day when we walked down it after being pronounced man and wife. The church was packed to capacity that day. We had had such a crowd. (You see, the minister was getting married and this didn't happen every day. Besides, it was admission free!) The place was full.

As we walked down the aisle after being married, Ruth whispered, "What are you thinking about, Sweetheart?" "I'm thinking," I said, "what a pity it is we can't take up a collection now with this crowd!"

Next, my wife of thirty-four years went and sat where she had sat as the pastor's wife. I went up into the pulpit and I looked at her seated there, and I began to think of the dreams and ideals I had thirty-four years ago. Well, I have at times admitted that I was tired - you know, just now and then. But as I stood there again in that pulpit, I prayed to God, "Don't, Lord, ever let me lose these dreams, these ideals, these objectives. Above all, never let me lose my veneration, my love and devotion for the greatest figure who ever lived, the Lord Jesus Christ. Help me to tell people that He is the way to live here and He is life hereafter."

Then we went out and got into our car and came down the New York Thruway. It wasn't like it was in the old days when you meandered down the Cherry Valley Turnpike, known as Route 20, where you could go slow or fast, mostly slow.

I asked my wife, "How do you feel?"

With the same old light in her eyes she said, "The future is wonderful!" And I echoed her words. I felt deeply energized.

I believe that every human being ought to go back on

occasion to those glorious ideals which put vitality in life.

No matter how often you are defeated, no matter what the obstacles, never lose those ideals. Fight for them always. Then you will find life everlastingly good.

The great thing that keeps energy vibrant is spiritual experience. Did you ever stop to think that Jesus never runs down? He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and

forever." He is as alive now as He was when in physical form. He walked the roads of Galilee and Judea healing

bodies and souls and teaching the ways of God. I have found that people who have Jesus Christ deeply im-

bedded in their consciousness are alert, vibrant, vital all their lives. People who discover Him, who commit their

lives to Him, who build their days around Him, find that everything flows together.

One day I spoke at the Unity Center at Lee's Summit on the girl's seventy-fifth anniversary. I stayed in Kansas City

one night and the next morning when I got into a taxi the driver said to me, "I heard you last night, and now

you have the chance I would like to ask you a question. Why do I feel so good?"

"Say that again?" I asked. "That's different than I usually hear. Most people ask me why they feel so bad. Do you feel good?"

"I feel wonderful," he declared. "Life is good, I love people and I feel wonderful. But," he went on, "that wasn't always the case."

"What happened?" I asked.

"Somebody left a pamphlet on the rear seat of my taxi cab. It was a religious pamphlet titled 'Daily Word'.

I had never seen it before. It contained what they call affirmations.

I got some more of this literature and you'd be sur-

prised what it did to me. Then I got the idea this is all built around Jesus Christ. So I prayed and asked the Lord Jesus Christ what I had to do, and He told me to get rid of all the hates and anger I had. I did. I started living His way. And I defy anybody to make me mad any more. When anybody tries, I just send out love thoughts and blessing thoughts."

"It washes back to you, doesn't it?"

"It sure does. Every day is wonderful. I feel healthy. I feel energetic. Life is good."

You see, friends, why Christianity has endured for two thousand years? It has the answers, not only to the vast problems of social progress, but to the complicated personal problems of the individual. ~~From~~ you and I can have energy that never runs down.

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the marvelous blessings that Jesus Christ gives to us: continuing vitality, vigor, enthusiasm, dedication and energy of body, mind and soul. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.