Soul Keeping

Title: ***Soul Keeping: Caring For the Most Important Part of You***

Author: John Ortberg

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Book Summary:

When is the last time you thought about the state of your soul?

The health of your soul isn't just a matter of saved or unsaved. It's the hinge on which the rest of your life hangs. It's the difference between deep, satisfied spirituality and a restless, dispassionate faith.

In an age of materialism and consumerism that tries to buy its way to happiness, many souls are starved and unhealthy, unsatisfied by false promises of status and wealth. We've neglected this eternal part of ourselves, focusing instead on the temporal concerns of the world—and not without consequence.

Bestselling author John Ortberg presents another classic that will help you discover your soul—the most important connection to God there is—and find your way out of the spiritual shallow-lands to true divine depth. With characteristic insight and an accessible story-filled approach, Ortberg brings practicality and relevance to one of Christianity's most mysterious and neglected topics.

BookNotes:

The life of a village depended on the health of the stream. The stream is your soul. And you are the keeper. LOCATION: 161

Many years later I had moved to Chicago. Entering into a very busy season of ministry, I called Dallas to ask him what I needed to do to stay spiritually healthy. I pictured him sitting in that room as we talked. There was a long pause — with Dallas there was nearly always a long pause — and then he said slowly, "You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life." I quickly wrote that down…"There is nothing else," he said, generously acting as if he did not notice my impatience. "Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life." LOCATION: 224

"Your eternal destiny is not cosmic retirement; it is to be part of a tremendously creative project, under unimaginably splendid leadership, on an inconceivably vast scale, with ever-increasing cycles of fruitfulness and enjoyment — that is the prophetic vision which 'eye has not seen and ear has not heard.' LOCATION: 261

"The most important thing in your life," Dallas said, "is not what you do; it's who you become. That's what you will take into eternity. You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe." LOCATION: 271

"You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe. That's the most important thing for you to know about you. You should write that down. You should repeat it regularly. Brother

John, you think you have to be someplace else or accomplish something more to find peace. But it's right here. God has yet to bless anyone except where they actually are. Your soul is not just something that lives on after your body dies. It's the most important thing about you. It is your life."
LOCATION: 274

The soul knows a glory that the body cannot rob. In some ways, in some cases, the more the body revolts, the more the soul shines through. People may claim to believe that all you are is your body. But Pat said one time, "The only thing I can depend on with my body is that it will fail me. Somehow my body is mine, but it's not 'me.' " Greatness of soul is available to people who do not have the luxury of being ecstatic about the condition and appearance of their bodies. LOCATION: 346

"Brother John, why is there such value and mystery to your existence? The really deep reason is because of this tiny, fragile, vulnerable, precious thing about you called your soul. You are not just a self; you are a soul. 'The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.' You're a soul made by God, made for God, and made to need God, which means you were not made to be self-sufficient." LOCATION: 489

In one of his books, Dallas has further explained, What is running your life at any given moment is your soul. Not external circumstances, not your thoughts, not your intentions, not even your feelings, but your soul. The soul is that aspect of your whole being that correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimensions of the self. The soul is the life center of human beings. LOCATION: 493

If your soul is healthy, no external circumstance can destroy your life. If your soul is unhealthy, no external circumstance can redeem your life. LOCATION: 507

"The soul is the capacity to integrate all the parts into a single, whole life. It is something like a program that runs a computer; you don't usually notice it unless it messes up." According to Dallas, the soul seeks harmony, connection, and integration. That is why integrity is such a deep soul-word. The human soul seeks to integrate our will and our mind and our body into an integral person. Beyond that, the soul seeks to connect us with other people, with creation, and with God himself — who made us to be rooted in him the way a tree is rooted by a life-giving stream. LOCATION: 536

Your soul is what integrates your will (your intentions), your mind (your thoughts and feelings, your values and conscience), and your body (your face, body language, and actions) into a single life. A soul is healthy — well-ordered — when there is harmony between these three entities and God's intent for all creation. When you are connected with God and other people in life, you have a healthy soul. LOCATION: 546

To lose my soul means I no longer have a healthy center that organizes and guides my life. I am a car without a steering wheel. It doesn't matter how fast I can go, because I am a crash waiting to happen. LOCATION: 575

Our world has replaced the word soul with the word self, and they are not the same thing. The more we focus on our selves, the more we neglect our souls. LOCATION: 595

To focus on my soul means to look at my life under the care and connection of God. To focus on myself apart from God means losing awareness of what matters most. LOCATION: 600

Ironically, the more obsessed we are with our selves, the more we neglect our souls. LOCATION: 606

Self is a stand-alone, do-it-yourself unit, while the soul reminds us we were not made for ourselves. The soul always exists before God. So soul is needed for deep art, poetry, and music. Former opera singer Scott

Flaherty said it best: “I mean, when you sing you’re giving voice to your soul.” Imagine singing, “Then sings my self, my Savior God to thee,” or “Jesus, lover of my self.” Innately we know that the self is not the soul, even as we do everything we can to preserve it. LOCATION: 612

You are only able to live in a way that really helps and loves others when your soul feels its worth. Yet we often pay far more attention to our work or our bodies or our finances than to our souls. But the soul is what we will take into eternity.
LOCATION: 622

The salvation of your soul is not just about where you go when you die. The word salvation means healing or deliverance at the deepest level of who we are in the care of God through the presence of Jesus. Sooner or later, your world will fall apart. What will matter then is the soul you have constructed. LOCATION: 630

“Superficiality,” said Richard Foster, “is the curse of our age.” The desperate need of the soul is not for intelligence, nor talent, nor yet excitement; just depth. This is the cry of one of the great soul songs of the Psalms: “As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you. . . . Why, my soul, are you downcast? . . . Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls.”
LOCATION: 769

For much of our lives, we live in the shallows. Then something happens — a crisis, a birth, a death — and we get this glimpse of tremendous depth. My soul becomes shallow when my interests and thoughts go no further than myself. A person should be deep because life itself is deep. A deep soul has the capacity to understand and empathize deeply with other people — not just himself. A deep soul notices and questions and doesn’t just go through the motions. A deep soul lives in conscious awareness of eternity, not simply today. It notices and observes and reflects in surprising ways — we talk about a person of “hidden depths.” LOCATION: 788

Somebody said a long time ago that if the Devil can’t make you sin, he will make you busy, because either way your soul will shrivel. Our world will divert your soul’s attention because it is a cluttered world. And clutter is maybe the most dangerous result, because it’s so subtle. LOCATION: 818

I have been waiting. I am shy — terribly shy — even in the most boisterous person. I can only whisper, never shout. You may never even notice me. But I am here, waiting. I do not lie on the surface. If you look and listen, patiently, you will know. I speak through your confusion, through your wanting, through your hurt. When you stammer, when you say what you did not mean to say, it was I. When you watch a sunset, or hear a child laugh, or listen to a piece of music that causes you to suddenly become choked up, it is I that causes your eye to fill. When you are addicted, it is I that is chained. When the sun burns up and the universe melts away, I will be here. Like Glenn Close in the movie Fatal Attraction, I will not be ignored. I can be wounded, lost, repulsed, or redeemed. Your circumstances actually matter far less to your happiness than you think. It is my health that makes your life heaven or hell. I am your soul. I am here. LOCATION: 842

Sin ultimately makes long-term gratitude or friendship or meaning impossible. Sin eventually destroys my capacity even for enjoyment, let alone meaning. It distorts my perceptions, alienates my relationships, inflames my desires, and enslaves my will.
LOCATION: 864

This is what it means to lose your soul. It is not a cosmic threat. It is a clinical diagnosis. It is not “I could end

up there." It is "I could become that." If you are a lost soul, your surroundings don't matter — I mean this literally — one damn bit. LOCATION: 866

As I unburdened myself to Dallas, I began to understand another soul truth: Confession really is good for the soul. The soul is healed by confession. Sin splits the self. It split me. It meant I tried to pretend in front of Nancy; I tried to pretend before the church that I was a better husband than I was. Sin divided my will; I wanted closeness, yet I wanted to inflict pain when I felt hurt. LOCATION: 910

The apostle Peter says, "There are sinful desires inside you, and they wage war against your soul." Your soul is what integrates, what connects, what binds together your will, then your mind (those thoughts, feelings, and desires going on all the time), and then your body (with all of its appetites, habits, and behavior). God designed us so that our choices, our thoughts and desires, and our behavior would be in perfect harmony with each other and would be powered by an unbroken connection with God, in perfect harmony with him and with all of his creation. That is a well-ordered soul. LOCATION: 927

Your heart (that is, your will, your choices), your mind (all your thoughts and desires), your strength (all of your body), and your soul are all to be bound together and focused on love of God, and then the love of all that flows out of this. LOCATION: 938

When my will is consistently, freely, joyfully aligned with what I most deeply value, my soul finds rest. That is wholeness. When I live with half-hearted devotion, my soul is always strained. LOCATION: 953

Jesus made this diagnosis a long time ago when talking about temptation. "The spirit" — notice the language again — "is willing, but the flesh [the body] is weak." This is very true and largely ignored and forgotten in our day. Habits eat willpower for breakfast. So there is the will, there is the mind, and there is the body. They are working badly, sometimes in ways that are kind of humorous to us, but often in ways that are horrible and unspeakably tragic. Sin is the sickness that our souls have inherited. LOCATION: 991

How do I come to grips with the truth about my own soul? Why is it so evasive? Why can I often see other people more clearly than myself? Soul language has to involve sin language. Why? Because sin disintegrates, obliterates, wholeness. Your soul cannot function properly if sin is present. LOCATION: 1005

Unlike our legal system, sins are not weighted by their seriousness. There are no misdemeanors in the realm of sin. Sin is sin, and it is serious because of what it does to the soul. LOCATION: 1014

Every act of wrongdoing (sin) leads to the greater likelihood of another act. Start as small as you want. Stand in the express lane in the grocery store with too many groceries in your cart — seventeen grocery items in the twelve-or-less aisle. Try to board a plane when it's not yet your group's turn. "I'm not dishonest. I'm in a hurry. I'm too important to wait my turn."
LOCATION: 1062

Conviction is not just the pain of getting caught or pain over consequences. It means a God-given, really sober sense of remorse over what I ought to feel remorseful about. It's a God-given ache for goodness. LOCATION: 1108

The soul is a little like the king on a chessboard. The king is the most limited of chess pieces; it can only move one square at a time. But if you lose the king, game over. Your soul is vulnerable because it is needy. If you meet those needs with the wrong things, game over. Or at least, game not going well. LOCATION: 1139

Thomas Aquinas wrote that this neediness of the soul is a pointer to God. We are limited in virtually every way: in our intelligence, our strength, our energy, our morality. There is only one area where human beings are unlimited. As Kent Dunnington puts it, “We are limited in every way but one: we have unlimited desire.” We always want more: more time, more wisdom, more beauty, more funny YouTube videos. This is the soul crying out. We never have enough. The truth is, the soul’s infinite capacity to desire is the mirror image of God’s infinite capacity to give. What if the real reason we feel like we never have enough is that God is not yet finished giving? The unlimited neediness of the soul matches the unlimited grace of God. LOCATION: 1147

Our soul’s problem, however, is not its neediness; it’s our fallenness. Our need was meant to point us to God. Instead, we fasten our minds and bodies and wills on other sources of ultimate devotion, which the Bible calls idolatry. Idolatry is the most serious sin in the Old Testament, leading one scholar to conclude that the primary principle of the Old Testament is the refutation of idolatry. Idolatry, according to author Timothy Keller, is the sin beneath the sin. Anytime I sin, I am allowing some competing desire to have higher priority than God and God’s will for my life. That means that in that moment I have put something on a pedestal higher than God. That something is my idol. All sin involves idolatry. LOCATION: 1152

If your soul is devoted to something that becomes more important to you than God, that is your idol. The soul cannot give up its idol by sheer willpower. It is like an alcoholic trying to become sober by promising himself that he won’t drink anymore. It never works. LOCATION: 1184

The soul must orbit around something other than itself — something it can worship. It is the nature of the soul to need. LOCATION: 1201

What the soul truly desires is God. We may try to fill that need with other things, but the soul will never be satisfied without God. The psalmist describes that need in terms of losing consciousness: “My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD.” LOCATION: 1203

During my sabbatical, it was easy to “ruthlessly eliminate hurry from my life,” as my friend and mentor Dallas Willard had so wisely counseled. I found myself thinking that I’m a better person when I’m on sabbatical than I am when I’m working for God at a church, and I knew that was just plain wrong. I began to form a new goal: I want to be as relaxed as I am on vacation while being as productive as I am at work. LOCATION: 1250

A soul that is not kept properly will surely die. LOCATION: 1314

The formation of the soul is the most important process in the universe. LOCATION: 1316

Apparently, that’s a really important part of the human condition. Everybody here talks to themselves. In the Bible, people talk to their souls. The difference between talking to yourself and talking to your soul is that the soul exists in the presence of God. So you will see in the Psalms and elsewhere people speaking to their souls because when you speak to the soul, it naturally turns to prayer because in the soul God is always present. LOCATION: 1317

But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your soul is required of you.” When Jesus says the man’s soul will be required, he uses language from the business world; it’s a term that would describe a loan that had fallen due. Our souls are on loan to us. One day, God will review with us what our souls have become. That is what will matter from our lives. LOCATION: 1353

The keeper of your soul is responsible for its dents. You are the keeper of your soul. LOCATION: 1380

A very simple way to guard your soul is to ask yourself, “Will this situation block my soul’s connection to God?” As I begin living this question I find how little power the world has over my soul. What if I don’t get a promotion, or my boss doesn’t like me, or I have financial problems, or I have a bad hair day? Yes, these may cause disappointment, but do they have any power over my soul? Can they nudge my soul from its center, which is the very heart of God? When you think about it that way, you realize that external circumstances cannot keep you from being with God. If anything, they draw you closer to him.
LOCATION: 1511

There are two main enemies that lead to a soul disconnected from its center. One is sin. Sin cannot coexist with a soul centered on God. If I choose to live in bitterness, or to indulge lust, or to deceive my wife, I am choosing to keep God out of my thoughts. Conversely, when I center my soul on God, I am less likely to sin.
LOCATION: 1517

The other disconnect is what might be called the “troublesome thought.” This soul-enemy is actually much more pervasive. It’s not necessarily a sin. It’s simply a way of thinking that does not take God into account. The troublesome thought begins with any normal concern you might have. For example, you open your quarterly statement from your 401K and notice that instead of gaining, your fund lost a few hundred dollars. Certainly reason to be concerned, but then you begin a succession of thoughts that practically consume you: Will I have enough to retire? What if the next quarter posts another loss? Should I pull my money out of this fund? By entertaining these thoughts, you are allowing something to squeeze God out of your life. It’s one thing to pay attention to your retirement account, but when you leave God out of the equation, your soul loses its connection.
LOCATION: 1522

We have a radar for eternity. Human beings have an instinct that life does not end with the grave. And we have a hunger this world cannot satisfy. Again, you don’t have to believe in the Bible to see this. Look at the pyramids. Visit a nursing home. God has placed eternity in the human heart…The Bible says the reason God has done that is that we were made for an eternal existence with him. And the most important thing we are doing in this life is preparing for the life that is going to come.
LOCATION: 1580

The soul needs a future. God planted eternity in our hearts so that we would not stop seeking life beyond ourselves LOCATION: 1629

The soul seeks God with its whole being. Because it is desperate to be whole, the soul is God-smitten and God-crazy and God-obsessed. My mind may be obsessed with idols; my will may be enslaved to habits; my body may be consumed with appetites. But my soul will never find rest until it rests in God. LOCATION: 1691

Two people in love would go for a walk. It’s not really about the walk; it’s about being with someone. This God — this God of the Bible — is a God who wants to “be with.” Our souls were made to walk with God.
LOCATION: 1702

When the soul is with God it doesn’t matter if you are a dishwasher or a president. The soul thrives not through our accomplishments but through simply being with God. LOCATION: 1745

The “with God” life is not a life of more religious activities or devotions or trying to be good. It is a life of inner peace and contentment for your soul with the maker and manager of the universe. The “without God” life is the opposite. It is death. It will kill your soul. LOCATION: 1768

God wants to make every moment of my life glorious with his presence. This is the core of the “with God” life. It’s not just that he wants to be with us, but that he desires to make our lives “glorious.” LOCATION: 1778

That's the whole point of tending to the soul — to fill us so completely with his presence that the brilliance of his love shines through us. LOCATION: 1784

In the beginning, God created the perfect home for your soul: a garden of perfection where he could be with you. That is all God has ever wanted. Because of our choices, we separated ourselves from God, but he relentlessly pursued us, offering us a way to return to him and be with him. Because we no longer live in that perfect garden, we sometimes forget that he is there, and we continue to live without him. LOCATION: 1843

In the Bible, God never gives anyone an easy job. God never comes to Abraham, or Moses, or Esther and says, "I'd like you to do me a favor, but it really shouldn't take much time. I wouldn't want to inconvenience you." God does not recruit like someone from the PTA. He is always intrusive, demanding, exhausting. He says we should expect that the world will be hard, and that our assignments will be hard. LOCATION: 1853

Aim at having easy circumstances, and life will be hard all around. Aim at having an easy soul, and your capacity for tackling hard assignments will actually grow. The soul was not made for an easy life. The soul was made for an easy yoke.
LOCATION: 1858

All human beings face challenge and pain and demands. Jesus, however, lived in a divine rhythm where grace was constantly flowing into him and then flowing out from him. LOCATION: 1866

The alternative to soul-acceptance is soul-fatigue. There is a kind of fatigue that attacks the body. When we stay up too late and rise too early; when we try to fuel ourselves for the day with coffee and a donut in the morning and Red Bull in the afternoon; when we refuse to take the time to exercise and we eat foods that clog our brains and arteries; when we constantly try to guess which line at the grocery store will move faster and which car in which lane at the stoplight will move faster and which parking space is closest to the mall, our bodies grow weary. LOCATION: 1883

The soul craves rest. Our wills sometimes rejoice in striving; our bodies were made to (at least sometimes) know the exhilaration of tremendous challenge; our minds get stretched when they must focus even when tired. But the soul craves rest. The soul knows only borrowed strength. The soul was made to rest in God the way a tree rests in soil. LOCATION: 1917

The American devotional writer Lettie Cowman wrote about a traveler visiting Africa and engaging a group of carriers and guides. Hoping to make her journey a swift one, she was pleased with the progress of the many miles they covered that first day. On the second day, though, all the carriers she had hired remained seated and refused to move. She was greatly frustrated and asked the leader of her hired hands why they would not continue the journey. He told her that on the first day they had traveled too far too fast, and now they were waiting for their souls to catch up to their bodies. LOCATION: 1920

The soul was not made to run on empty. But the soul doesn't come with a gauge. The indicators of soul-fatigue are more subtle:

- Things seem to bother you more than they should. Your spouse's gum-chewing suddenly reveals to you a massive character flaw.
- It's hard to make up your mind about even a simple decision.
- Impulses to eat or drink or spend or crave are harder to resist than they otherwise

would be.

- You are more likely to favor short-term gains in ways that leave you with high long-term costs. Israel ended up worshiping a golden calf simply because they grew tired of having to wait on Moses and God.
- Your judgment is suffering.
- You have less courage. “Fatigue makes cowards of us all” is a quote so ubiquitious that it has been attributed to General Patton and Vince Lombardi and Shakespeare. The same disciples who fled in fear when Jesus was crucified eventually sacrificed their lives for him. What changed was not their bodies, but their souls.

LOCATION: 1942

Dallas pointed out to me once that there is a world of difference between being busy and being hurried. Being busy is an outward condition, a condition of the body. It occurs when we have many things to do. Busy-ness is inevitable in modern culture. If you are alive today in North America, you are a busy person. There are limits to how much busy-ness we can tolerate, so we wisely find ways to slow down whenever we can. We take vacations, we sit in a La-Z-Boy® with a good book, we enjoy a leisurely meal with friends. By itself, busy-ness is not lethal…Being hurried is an inner condition, a condition of the soul. It means to be so preoccupied with myself and my life that I am unable to be fully present with God, with myself, and with other people. I am unable to occupy this present moment. Busy-ness migrates to hurry when we let it squeeze God out of our lives. LOCATION: 1993

I cannot live in the kingdom of God with a hurried soul. I cannot rest in God with a hurried soul. LOCATION: 2001

But what about the mission to save the world? What about all the sick people who needed to be healed? I believe Jesus knew the power of a rested soul. He slowed his followers down so that their souls would not become fatigued. We seem to spend most of our time trying to draw crowds and please crowds; Jesus seemed to spend much of his getting away from them.
LOCATION: 2009

The psalmist says our job is not to heal our souls, but to make space for them so that healing can come. “He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters. He refreshes my soul.” LOCATION: 2023

The space where we find rest and healing for our souls is solitude. LOCATION: 2032

In solitude we liberate ourselves from the pressure of the world. You don’t do that by going into solitude with a list of things you want to work on. You don’t even approach solitude with the expectation that you will come away with some deep spiritual insight. It’s not about what you’re going to do; it’s about what you’re not going to do. In solitude you rest. LOCATION: 2055

Whether with an entire day, or periods of time set aside every day, your soul needs rest. Not a change of scenery or a spiritual retreat — those are fine and may contribute to rest. But to remain healthy, our souls need solitude with no agenda, no distractions, no noise. If someone asks you what you did in your “time apart,” the

correct response should be, “Nothing.” Doing nothing does wonders for the soul. LOCATION: 2096

We get double-dog dared all the time. Make it about sex. Make it about money. Make it about security. That tender object stuck frozen to the flagpole is your soul. It craves to be free, but we’re not sure what that means. LOCATION: 2114

Think of freedom coming in two flavors, two kinds of freedom. There is freedom from external constraints, somebody telling me what to do. This is freedom from. But there is another kind of freedom that might be called freedom for. There’s the freedom for living the kind of life I was made to live, freedom for becoming that man I most want to be — freedom for. LOCATION: 2174

How do you get the freedom that your soul craves? This is the great irony about freedom. To become truly free, you must surrender. Surrender is not a popular concept. It goes against everything we think we know about being free. Wars are not won by surrendering — have you ever seen a football team surrender in the Super Bowl? But surrender is the only way to achieve freedom for your soul. LOCATION: 2201

If you want to free your soul, you acknowledge that there is a spiritual order that God has designed for you. You are not the center of the universe. You are not the master of your fate. You are not the captain of your ship. There is a God, and you aren’t him. True freedom comes when you embrace God’s overall design for the world and your place in it. LOCATION: 2207

It is only when we surrender to God and his ways that our souls experience freedom. LOCATION: 2275

To love someone with your soul means your will, your choices, your mind, your thoughts, your feelings, your body, your behaviors, and your habits are aligned for the good of their entire being before God. We bless the soul when we love that way. That’s soul love. LOCATION: 2378

A paradox of the soul is that it is incapable of satisfying itself, but it is also incapable of living without satisfaction. You were made for soul-satisfaction, but you will only ever find it in God. The soul craves to be secure. The soul craves to be loved. The soul craves to be significant, and we find these only in God in a form that can satisfy us. That’s why the psalmist says to God, “Because your love is better than life . . . my soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods.” Soul and appetite and satisfaction are dominant themes in the Bible — the soul craves because it is meant for God. “My soul, find rest in God.” LOCATION: 2469

Whenever you’re disappointed, whenever you don’t get your way, take that disappointment as a chance to practice soul-satisfaction in God. LOCATION: 2489

Addiction, Kent explained, is a kind of worship, a kind of counterfeit worship. For the soul was created to worship. The soul requires a center to give it identity, to have a purpose for its activities, to give it a hope and a foundation. There is no such thing as an uncommitted

person. An addict is the supreme example of trying to satisfy the soul with all the wrong things. The more it's fed, the more it craves. One of the ways to diagnose your ultimate commitment is to ask yourself: What do you get most irritated about when your soul is threatened? LOCATION: 2520

The paradox of soul-satisfaction is this: When I die to myself, my soul comes alive. God says the wrong approach to soul thirst is through human achievement and material wealth. So soul-satisfaction is not about acquiring the right things but about acquiring the right soul. It is not something you buy, but something you receive freely from God. LOCATION: 2526

The default mode of the sinful human race is entitlement, the belief that this gift or that experience that God placed in my path is rightfully mine. I am owed. Here's the deal: The more you think you're entitled to, the less you will be grateful for. The bigger the sense of entitlement, the smaller the sense of gratitude. We wonder why in our world we keep getting more and more and more and keep being less and less and less grateful. This is precisely why. LOCATION: 2587

Because the soul is the deepest expression of the person, the soul is the place of greatest pain. We do not speak of the dark night of the mind, or the will, or even the spirit. Only the soul. The dark night of the soul. LOCATION: 2695

The dark night of the soul, as he described it, is not simply the experience of suffering. It is suffering in what feels like the silence of God. LOCATION: 2701

In the dark night, my prayers feel like they reach no higher than the ceiling. (Although, Dallas often said, if we truly understand how radically present God is in our world, reaching the ceiling is more than high enough.) In the dark night, the Bible I read turns to ashes. In the dark night, words and books and songs that once spoke to my soul now leave me cold. LOCATION: 2706

What do we do in the dark night? We do nothing. We wait. We remember that we are not God. We hold on. We ask for help. We do less. We resign from things, we rest more, we stop going to church, we ask somebody else to pray because we can't. We let go of our need to hurry through it. You can't run in the dark. LOCATION: 2731

We all have two worlds, an outer world that is visible and public and obvious, and an inner world that may be chaotic and dark or may be gloriously beautiful. In the end, the outer world fades. We are left with the inner world. It is what we will take with us. I am an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's glorious universe. LOCATION: 2831

The life of the village depends on the health of the stream. The stream is your soul. And you are the keeper. LOCATION: 2867

Note: should you wish to find any quote in its original context, the Kindle "location" is provided after each entry.