



# GOOD NEWS GUIDE

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

Brother Roland, PO Box 14, Fayetteville PA 17222

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## "Use Me, Lord"

**Use me, Lord, use me today.  
Use me, Lord, in any way.  
I just want to serve you only,  
in any way I can.  
Use me up; fill me, Lord,  
and use me again.**

This is the chorus of "Use Me, Lord," a song by Jim Brittain, who used to live in Annapolis, Maryland. I have no idea what has happened to Jim since I last saw him over 25 years ago, but some of his songs, especially this one, have stayed with me. I can tell you that when Jim wrote this song, and when he played and sang it, he meant it, to the bottom of his soul.

I know I should mean it, too, and I think I do — I'm sure I do — at least some of the time. How about you? Can you join Jim in praying, "Use me, Lord"?

There are some things we ought to know as Christians, without any shred of doubt:

(1) **God loves us.** He loves you and He loves me. Without conditions. As foolish and selfish and stubborn as we all have been and still are, He loves us. He became a human being, and suffered horribly and died, to pay the required and righteous penalty for our sins.



# Choose Life

(2) **He created us for joy.** God has destined us to live in intimate closeness with Him forever. I said to my pastor last week, "All we

have to do is say 'Yes.'" He corrected me — "All we have to do is not say 'No.'" And he was right — salvation is free; we can't possibly earn it; we just must accept it rather than rejecting it. As the Bible says, we may "Choose life!"

(3) So why should we allow and invite the Lord to "use" us? Here's a Bible passage worth memorizing: *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:8-10)

As we've noted, salvation is free — "by grace." But God also wants to use us for His Kingdom purposes on earth. He has prepared "good works" ahead of time for each one of us to do. It is our privilege to please Him by doing, with the help of the Holy Spirit, those good works that he has prepared for us to do.

Jim Brittain, who wrote the song above, and his wife had a unique way of serving the Lord. On many Sunday mornings Jim and his wife would get in the car and go wherever the Holy Spirit led them. They would come to a church, and they'd stop and go in and ask the pastor if they might minister there that morning. Then Jim would play the guitar while he and his wife sang the songs he had written. They were being used by God to bring a beautiful blessing to that congregation on that day!

Ray and Bess Maloy, whom some of you may remember, were also glad to be used by God. After Ray retired at the age of 55, he and Bess went to Bible school. Then they became chaplains in the Washington County jail in Hagerstown, Maryland, and they were there every week, counseling and loving the jail's inmates, for the next forty years. What a blessing they were, and what an inspiration to all who want to serve God. Bess used to write some thirty letters to inmates every month, encouraging them with the beautiful truths of the Gospel. They also started this "Good News Guide" newsletter, and after I helped them with it for a while, they turned it over to me.

"Use me, Lord." We can all say it, and we can all be used. The key ingredient is love. No matter who we are or what we have done; no matter what gifts we have or think we don't have; no matter how age or incarceration restricts our movements or our abilities, there is always someone we can bless with a smile, a kind word, or a "Thank you."

**Attitude.** My former pen pal, David, was always at odds with the prison guards. He would resist them and make their job more difficult in any way that he could. Finally, after he realized that his attitude was the primary cause of most of his problems, he changed his ways. He began trying to get along, to cooperate, to be less of a hard case. Right away he started having fewer problems with the guards, because he was causing fewer problems. Eventually he had enough "good time" stored up to get out of maximum security and back to a regular prison, and eventually he was released.



Maybe the best we can do at a point in time is just be a pleasant person. But God isn't limited by our circumstances — He can use us to be a blessing to someone no matter who we are or where we are.

Here's something to think about. The best way to have a friend is to be a friend. The best way to begin a friendship is to be friendly. I know a lady who is a master at this. She meets someone, and instantly she is interested in them — in who they are and what they have to say. She smiles, she asks, and she listens. She might not be able to remember their names a few weeks from now, but she will remember things they said about themselves. "You had a brother in Chicago who was ill — how is he?" That kind of thing.

We can't all be like that, because God has not given us all the same gifts. If we're good at something, or blessed in some way, it's for a



reason. As Paul wrote, *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:6-8)*

We can use our various gifts to do the different jobs which God has prepared for us. Can you sing? Use your voice to praise God! Are you strong? Use your strength to do something good for others. Do you have more money than the person next to you? Share, and you'll both be blessed. If we pay attention to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we find that we are doing the works God has prepared for us to do. And if we miss the mark sometimes, that does not have to keep us from hitting it the next time. God is always faithful, even when we are not. But we are always blessed and a blessing when we do what He intends for us to do.

But here's a bottom line: One of the best things we can do for someone is tell him or her about Jesus — about His love; about what it means to be His follower; about the wonderful assurance we have of our Heavenly Home. But we can't just dump that on people. It doesn't work. We have to establish a relationship before that kind of conversation can take place fruitfully. Now some people can create that relationship almost instantly. Some of us can't — we have to work at it for a while. But if that's what God wants us to do, and if we are willing and ready to do it, then we can do it, with the help of the Holy Spirit. We can say, with Paul, *"I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)*

I like the way Dr. Bob Cook used to close his radio program: "Walk with the King today, and be a blessing." God bless you, today and always, my brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ, and give you His peace —

*Brother Roland*

Bible questions? I'll help if I can.  
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# Piano Players

A devotion by Pastor Fritz Foltz

*(1 Peter 5:5-7) You who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.*

Our small community has celebrated Martin Luther King's birthday for 42 years now. It started small, very small. A handful of people gathered in the huge college chapel to worship with local talent. The congregation grew as nationally known figures such as Ralph Abernathy spoke and world class choirs such as Morgan State University sang. However, we have always included friends and neighbors.

One of my favorite stories of all time took place back when we were making the transition from small to large. The Morgan State choir, under the direction of Nathan Carter, had started with three tremendous anthems. An elderly lady from one of our small Baptist churches stood to sing "He touched me". She was filled with the Spirit as she sang *a cappella*. However, she must have soon realized she was singing to a much, much larger audience than she had ever enjoyed. She began to fluster as she floundered off key.

I was on stage at the time, sharing her embarrassment. As things quickly got worse and worse, I began praying she would just stop and sit down.

But then I noticed Nathan Carter very slightly nod his head in a motion to his piano player. The young man got the message and began playing, first softly as he led the elderly lady back on key, and then in crescendo as he raised her to the heights, the piano booming and the elderly lady singing as if she were the lead soprano in the heavenly choir.

At the end of the song, the audience cheered and cheered, the elderly Baptist lady bowed and bowed, and the piano player, sitting on his work bench, quietly smiled. He knew very well what he had done, but he expected and received no credit.

I still remember that moment as a tribute to Nathan and the piano player, as well as a reminder that Christians are to be ready when God motions for us piano players to rescue the floundering.

Let us pray: Come, Lord Jesus, come and rescue our floundering world, save us from our self-destructive ways. Help us to remember all the piano players who, like Dr. King, have responded to your nod. Bring the Beloved Community, when enemies shall become friends and war shall be no more; bring the Day of Plenty, when all shall have enough and poverty shall be long gone; bring the Day of Courage, when justice shall prevail and love shall determine all. Fill us with your Spirit and overcome our fear so that we, too, might be ready when you nod. Amen.

# Living for God

It starts with being born again, newly created in the likeness of Christ; then setting our course to walk in that newness of life; and finally to be available and ready to be used by God every day for His divine purposes. All of that is our privilege and our calling. Enjoy the puzzle.

## Puzzle:

Y A L L P R A I S E A N D G L O R Y I A I W A O G C E R H Y S T A  
R N Y T W T V E X Y G H Z U Q E U M S C Z W S L V M W O J K H N S  
O D R S A I K M K R E N N I S A M A I K A T I D L H B O D G V F R  
L T O I L N K R A O S S T H B I W J L G C N C L O T R J I K H T N  
G O L R U O N O I T A E R C W E N A M A I H D L L N H F Y V A E O  
N M G H F W K F W S Q V D C W Q K U M D F M O O B F L I X O V J Q  
I Y S C Y V V D F I D W R Z L L U K U T O V H T K L I I N I I Q C  
S J D N B I E E F H H T I A F E H T P E E K L L I W I N G G Q P D  
N E O I L C U I Z S Y R O O M Y K T Y S L F Q W C V R R I T S T F  
G S G G Z T U D U I L C L D H I L N M J C Y I O I I O E M S A H A  
I U F N P O T O C Y W A S R A I S E D T O L I F E F V N Y L H E T  
E S O I M R F H I A H E S E T Y B P T P C Z E I S E O U L T I P H  
R P Y D F I G W K D C P N S W W I H Y V Z I N N R L W H I I Q A E  
D L R I T O M O R R O W I S A M Y S T E R Y I Y O I A C F R Q S G  
N T B B D U R Z D E K H A X V Y K E A P V S T R C V E S E I U T O  
A F W A U S G E C T D L B G U F D R J G L H E V E I W H S P S I O  
N T Y J X Y G G V S G V P O S C V F W L I A O S B N Z O N S H S D  
Q O E F I L W E N E V A H I O Y N G A N V F I J Q G G G E S V G F  
M J M M L L C B B Y R S T C B E L N G I W N T V E B E F W I Z O I  
A N D C O M E S H O R T N H K M C I C K N L W Y Y Y R Q C H B N G  
T N E S E R P E H T D E L L A C S T I E H I J P J L G V O Y L E H  
E C A R G Y B D E V A S E J S N I R D Q A A U A I I O U U B H F T  
V W B T N C W P C R A K P Y E T O A L M I G H T Y G O D R Y W A W  
M G F G Z D J M K R I X U W B T Y T I T O J A X V H G E S Q W H O  
W A L K I N G I N T R U T H J A G S N W O O N V E T X Z E S J W P

## Words:

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ALL HAVE SINNED  
AND COME SHORT  
OF GOD'S GLORY  
I AM A SINNER  
SAVED BY GRACE  
ALL SINS FORGIVEN  
I AM A NEW CREATION  
STARTING FRESH  
THE PAST IS GONE  
EVERYTHING IS NEW  
I HAVE NEW LIFE  
NO MORE A VICTIM  
NOW VICTORIOUS  
I CAN DO  
ALL THINGS  
BY HIS SPIRIT

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ABIDING IN CHRIST  
LIVING BY LIGHT  
WALKING IN TRUTH  
I WILL FIGHT  
THE GOOD FIGHT  
I WILL FINISH  
MY LIFE'S NEW COURSE  
I WILL KEEP THE FAITH  
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YESTERDAY IS HISTORY  
TOMORROW IS A MYSTERY  
TODAY IS A GIFT  
IT'S CALLED THE PRESENT

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ALL PRAISE AND GLORY  
TO ALMIGHTY GOD  
WHO LOVES ME  
AND TO MY JESUS  
WHO DIED FOR ME  
WAS RAISED TO LIFE  
AND REIGNS IN GLORY  
FOREVER