

Daily God Walk

Promises
Volume Five



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Another Day in Your
Journey of Faith

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV). All other translations used will be credited using these abbreviations:

(KJV) – King James Version

(NKJV) – New King James Version

(TLB) – The Living Bible

(TM) – The Message

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Using The Daily God Walk As A Tool For Small Group Bible Study Is Effective

We use the Daily God Walk at our "walk in" ministry center at 5th Ave and Hwy 20. Robert, one of our men who is growing in ministry, has a group meeting every day and they use the Daily God Walk as a tool to deepen their faith and strengthen their walk.

Many have found the format of this devotional to be very effective for use in small groups. Every devotional has an inspirational thought and many include a challenge which calls us to greater consistency in our walk.

Notice that each devotion now has a second page that has four sections:

- ✓ The first is a summary of the message of the devotion and is appropriately titled: Message.
- ✓ The second section is called Affirmation. This section is affirming the message of the devotion and is good to be used when meditating upon the message and is often used in prayer.
- ✓ The third section is called Reflection and gives a question, or a statement to be considered as you are thinking about the message of the devotion. It also provides food for thought and material for discussion in small groups.
- ✓ The final section is My Notes. This section is good for journaling and for writing in thoughts and questions for small group discussion.

Contact us if you would like to use the Daily God Walk for small group discussion and Bible study. We can make the Daily God Walk available to you in a bulk order of 5 or more. To get more information go to website below:

<http://nhmresources.org/small-groups.html>

A Ministry Report

We continue to see God doing great things here in Lucerne, Ca. We are able to open our office six days a week with volunteers staffing it from about 6AM until afternoon.

Daily, Robert, Mickey and Gloria are there at the office giving coffee and whatever food we have available to everyone who comes by. There will usually be between 20 and 30 people drop in during the time we are there.

It isn't just about the coffee and snacks. Those who stop by are getting a good dose of God's word as well as prayer. We are seeing folks come to faith when they think they are just coming for coffee.

We want to thank all of you who have been able to support this outreach ministry. If it wasn't for people like you who hear God speak to them this work would not be able to continue. Please keep praying and listening to God.

The Daily God Walk is not only a tool we use for personal devotions and small group studies, but it is also a vehicle which provides some support for this work. We thank those of you who are responding to this ministry.

Recently a four year old girl stopped me on the street and asked if I would pray for her and her daddy. Often we are approached by people on the street in our small town who want prayer. There are many who drop by Church in the Park and consider New Hope their Church, but never into a building called "the church."

Please keep praying for the ministry of New Hope Community Outreach - We are a church without walls to a people without hope. We offer the only sure hope there is and that is the hope which comes through faith in Christ.

Day One

Hope In Distressing Circumstances

I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice. He ransoms me unharmed from the battle waged against me, even though many oppose me. God, who is enthroned forever will hear them and afflict them.

- Psalm 55:16-19

Sometimes it seems like we are fighting an uphill battle with those who would oppose us. Jesus taught us that offensive people are unavoidable, but he also said those who are offensive are in grave danger (Matthew 18:7).

At the time of this writing David is having one of those times in his life when he is under assault and is crying out morning, noon and evening. He is so burdened that he feels that he is in the middle of a war zone - then he remembers that God is his source.

The psalmist is reminding us that God is still on the throne and that he will rescue us from our oppressors. When we are in the midst of the storm we must remember that it is not our strategy, or our ability that will bring us deliverance; it is the arm of God's justice that extends to vindicate those who will trust him. God in heaven hears our distressed plea for help and rescues us unharmed.

Don't listen to the naysayers, neither be affected by their taunts. God will intervene. When you are in right relationship with God just stand and see his salvation from your enemies.

Prayer: Lord, there are times I feel like I'm being attacked on every side - grant me the grace to trust that you will vindicate me at those times. In Jesus name. Amen.

Hope In Distressing Circumstances

Message: When we are in the midst of the storm we must remember that it is not our strategy, or our ability that will bring us deliverance; it is the arm of God's justice that extends to vindicate those who will trust him. God in heaven hears our distressed plea for help and rescues us unharmed.

Affirmation: I do not listen to the voice of those who would seek to destroy me, but rather I listen to the voice of God who has promised to do battle for me and I trust Him to deliver me from my adversary.

Reflection: Jesus told us that offense would come, but woe to the one who causes it (Matthew 18:7). We are to trust God rather than respond on our own to naysayers.

My Thoughts:

Day Two

Hope Demands That We Wait

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning...Put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. - Psalm 130: 5-7

It is hope that drives the world. If we did not believe in some force or authority outside of ourselves we would be in complete despair. That is why people submit to governments; they need a power greater than themselves to do what they cannot do.

We know that every institution of man, including government, is limited in its ability to protect and provide for our needs. We need something greater than an institution established and run by men. We need to be connected to a hope of divine origin and authority.

The psalmist in this passage is reminding us that the Lord is that hope. His love is eternal and His care for us is unending. When we have made Him the source of our hope then it is not difficult to wait for Him to be our answer.

When we recognize our own limitations it becomes easier to surrender our will to God and trust his sufficiency as we wait on him.

Don't despair, but wait upon Him. He is the All Sufficient one.

Prayer: OK God, there are times when I become anxious and waiting on you is difficult. At times I think I can do it myself and there is no need to wait. Grant me the grace to trust you and to have faith that you, and you alone, hold the key to my future and you offer hope if I will just wait on you. In Jesus name.

Hope Demands That We Wait

Message: When we have made God the source of our hope then it is not difficult to wait for Him to be our answer. When we recognize our own limitations it becomes easier to surrender our will to God and trust his sufficiency as we wait on him.

Affirmation: I rest in the hope that God is my source for every difficult situation.

Reflection: What is David saying when he says, "I wait for the Lord and in his word I put my hope"? Does recognizing our own limitations imply weakness on our part? Examine yourself to see if your trust is in the government, the economy, or perhaps even your family.

My Thoughts:

Day Three

Hope In The Next Life

The Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...Therefore encourage each other with these words.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

What a promise! When I read this passage I can almost see the clouds opening and angels with trumpets announcing the coming of our king. I can hear him calling us up to Him and living with Him eternally. Amen and amen.

All pain and sorrow will be over. No more sickness and no more disappointments. All of the things that have frustrated us in our life here will be forgotten and we will be with Him and the believers of all the ages for all of eternity.

Jesus is returning to usher true believers into his eternal kingdom. We can endure the hardship of life in this body because we know that He is coming.

We need to be reminded of this hope every once in a while. Sometimes we get to thinking about this world, it's achievements and it's things, and we forget that all we can see around us is just temporary - none of it will stand the test of time and eternity.

I think I can hear the angels practicing the trumpet now...

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the comfort of the hope you offer. I trust that you are preparing a time and place and I wait in hope. In Jesus name. Amen.

Hope In The Next Life

Message: This is our hope: In the next life all pain and sorrow will be over. No more sickness and no more disappointments. All of the things that have frustrated us in our life here will be forgotten. We will be with Him and the believers of all the ages for all of eternity.

Affirmation: My hope is in Christ and the eternal life He has promised and I encourage others with this hope.

Reflection: Can you imagine a world without pain and no sorrow? How does having the hope of eternal life with Christ help in coping with the challenges of life today?

My Thoughts:

Day Four

Preparing To Grow

Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left. - Isaiah 54:2-3

Isaiah was giving a message to Israel about the day when God would begin to restore her to the land and to the promises he had given her. This prophecy is about new beginnings.

The Lord is using the analogy of a woman who is barren and who has lost her husband. He goes on to say, "Your Maker is your Husband, the Lord Almighty is his name."

The message in this passage to believers today is that when we come to God we are empty and do not have a sense of fulfillment. We come to him filled with hurts and broken dreams. In the middle of all this pain and spiritual barrenness God is saying, "Get ready for a time of growth."

Faith in God's promises requires that we prepare ourselves for their fulfillment.

We need to prepare a place in our life for God to expand our influence and to strengthen our hope. He is telling us that we are being led into a time of fruitfulness and that we must have a place to bring the harvest.

He is calling us to have our hearts open and our spirit filled up with His Spirit. Our hope and expectation must be in him and him alone. God is not expanding our capacity.

Prayer: Father, I look to you as my source. Grant me the grace to trust you as I expand my expectations and prepare for a bountiful harvest. I need your strength. In Jesus name. Amen.

Preparing To Grow

Message: We come to him filled with hurts and broken dreams. In the middle of all this pain and spiritual barrenness God is saying, "Get ready for a time of growth." We need to prepare a place in our life for God to expand our influence and to strengthen our hope.

Affirmation: I am expanding my arena of influence because God is preparing me to greater service in his kingdom.

Reflection: How do we prepare ourselves for God to expand our influence and effectiveness? Give some thought to some practical steps to take in getting prepared.

My Thoughts:

Day Five

Jesus Is Our Sacrifice Of Atonement

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. - Romans 3:23-25

This passage reveals two immutable truths. The first is that all of mankind has fallen short of the glory of God - we have all sinned. The second is that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Heaven, and a right relationship with God, is an unattainable objective. We have taken our best shot and have fallen short. I've hunted with a bow and arrow before and I know the frustration of shooting at a target that is just beyond reach. I can see it, but I can't reach it with the arrow. That is the way it is in our relationship with God. We can see that it is available, and being offered, but we can't reach it with the tools we have.

That is why Jesus came to earth, died and rose again. Jesus is our atoning sacrifice. He has taken the necessary steps to open a way for us to be in right relationship with God.

We have a choice. We can continue trying to reach God with our inadequate tools (our own poor performance) or we can trust what Christ has done and put our faith in him. It's our choice.

Confess to God and yourself that all of your own efforts fall short of reaching the goal of right standing with God then you can have peace with God through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, my life seems to full of trying, but I'm always coming up short. I need your grace to walk in the faith of Christ. Grant me faith. In Jesus name.

Jesus Is Our Sacrifice Of Atonement

Message: We have a choice. We can continue trying to reach God with our inadequate tools (our own poor performance) or we can trust what Christ has done and put our faith in him. It's our choice.

Affirmation: My sins are forgiven, not because of my righteous deeds but because Jesus presented himself as the atoning sacrifice.

Reflection: There seems to be a tension between living in grace and trying to secure our relationship with God through good works. How would you describe the way you deal with this?

My Thoughts:

Day Six

God's Word Is A Guide For Our Life

My son, keep your father's commands... Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. - Proverbs 6:20-22

Many folks look at the commands of God as being hard to follow. They feel like God is a harsh judge who is looking for a chance to condemn them. Nothing could be further from the truth. All of the laws of God are given so that we might obtain a life of abundance and blessing.

It is only when we stray from his teaching that we find ourselves being constrained to obey the laws of fleshly indulgence that lead to destruction. There is life in following God's laws.

Our problem is that we have tried and it just doesn't seem to be possible. All of the do's and don'ts just seem to be too much. Well, the truth is that it is too much for us to accomplish on our own; that's why He gives us Christ. When our efforts fall short he gives us the ability to live righteously before God.

We cannot fulfill the will of God in our own strength - but we can through Christ who gives us His strength and His righteousness.

We can only live out the commands of God by putting our faith in the righteousness of Christ and by ever keeping the word of God before our eyes.

Prayer: Lord, too often I have found myself trying hard and failing to follow your commands. I ask you for the faith to trust Christ and the grace to follow his leading as he guides me into His righteousness. In Jesus name. Amen

God's Word Is A Guide For Our Life

Day Seven

When Others Are Angry With You

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. - Proverbs 15:1

The boys had been arguing for a little while, then it turned nasty. As the level of anger rose the words became more harsh and hurtful. By the time I got to their room name calling had escalated to throwing punches.

I separated the boys and asked what had started this altercation. One of them said, "He said I was..." - I can't even remember what he said, but whatever it was it led to a physical altercation that resulted in both boys being grounded.

I quoted this passage to them and asked, "Wouldn't it be better if you just returned a gentle answer and went on with your business?" They replied, "Yeah, but he was wrong!" "That's right," I said." Now both of you are wrong and both of you are going to suffer. What did you accomplish by demanding that your brother make it right?"

How often have we gotten caught up in a situation that became embarrassing to all concerned and realized later that we could have avoided the whole thing if we had just taken the high road and responded with a kind word instead of an ego driven word with the purpose of proving the other wrong?

Responding to an unkind word from another with unkind words of our own sows seeds of anger and separation. Purpose to pray for those who are unkind to you and do not respond with the same attitude.

Prayer: Why is it so hard to take the high road on this issue Lord? Grant me the grace to surrender my ego and accept the words and actions of others with only kindness as a response. In Jesus name. Amen.

When Others Are Angry With You

Message: Responding to an unkind word from another with unkind words of our own sows seeds of anger and separation. Purpose to pray for those who are unkind to you and do not respond with the same attitude

Affirmation: I have learned that offering a kind word in a tense situation tends to relieve the tension and prevent anger from taking over.

Reflection: The problem with returning kindness to one who is harsh and angry is that it runs counter to our nature. I have seen this approach be affective in many situations. Purpose to begin practicing this approach and see how it will save you from angry altercations.

My Thoughts:

Day Eight

When You Feel Insecure In Your Faith

We are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Romans 8:37-39

There are times when we just feel like it isn't working. God seems a million miles away and all of our troubles are right there in our face. Our emotions are not emoting, and we don't feel God. We ask ourselves, "Where is He now?"

The answer to our doubting question is simple; He's right here where he has always been. Nothing has changed with him - His love, care and concern for us is the same. So, what has happened when we feel this way? It is us. Something in us is causing us to either feel rejected or we just don't feel anything.

When that is happening to us we must make a conscious choice of our will. We must choose to believe God and His word over our own feelings. When the word of God says nothing can separate us from the love of God then that is exactly what it means. We don't have to "feel" it - we just have to know it.

Too often our own actions cause us to lose confidence in God and we do not feel that He loves us, But God's love is not based in what we have done or how we feel. Even when we don't feel God's love He is loving us and nothing can separate us from his love.

Prayer: Lord help me to live by faith and not by sight. Grant me the grace of faith to trust you and your word. Father, I put my confidence in you and not my feelings. In Jesus name. Amen.

When You Feel Insecure In Your Faith

Message: When the word of God says nothing can separate us from the love of God then that is exactly what it means. God's love is not based in what we have done or how we feel. Even when we don't feel God's love He is loving us and nothing can separate us from his love.

Affirmation: God is faithful and I know he will never desert me neither will he allow anything to separate me from his love. I am secure in Him.

Reflection: Have you struggled with feeling secure in your faith? Then I suggest you set aside a time of searching Scripture which speaks of God's faithfulness and His plans for those who trust him. Then practice quoting those verses until they become a part of your belief system.

My Thoughts:

Day Nine

Have Trouble Forgiving

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. – Luke 6:37-38

How many times have we heard verse 38 quoted in reference to giving money? I've used it myself many times over the years. Well, guess what? It is not talking primarily about money. It is talking about having a non-judging attitude and being gracious to forgive those who have offended us.

The promise is that when we are not quick to judge others, and we are quick to forgive others, then the same generous attitude will be measured back to us.

The message Bible, a paraphrase version, has an interesting interpretation of this passage:

Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults – unless of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back – given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.

Being generous in forgiveness begets generous forgiveness. How generous are you about forgiving others?

Prayer: Lord, forgiveness is one of the hardest things to give, especially when I know I'm right and they are wrong. I ask you Lord that you will grant me the grace of being generous with my forgiveness so that the harvest I get will be a bounty of forgiveness for my own shortcomings. In Jesus name.

Have Trouble Forgiving

Message: The promise is that when we are not quick to judge others, and we are quick to forgive others, then the same generous attitude will be measured back to us.

Affirmation: I practice forgiving and not judging. I do not ascribe motives to the actions of others but rather I am quick to overlook what others might see as faults.

Reflection: "Don't judge me brother." Have you ever heard someone say that? If someone is guilty of a sin it is not judging to bring it to their attention, but it is judging to condemn them for their action. Placing a sentence on the action is presuming intent on the part of the other and that is not our job. Give that some thought.

My Thoughts:

Day Ten

The Blessing Of Obedience

This is what the Lord says - your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
- Isaiah 48:17-18

Too often we see the commands of God as being restrictive, but in reality they are guides to freedom. Isaiah is telling us that the Lord is trying to teach us what is the best course to take in order to release abundance into our lives.

Most of us, like Israel of old, think we have a better way of doing things. When God says “yes” we think “maybe.” When God says “no” we say, “That depends.” We tend to question and come to our own conclusions - and we all too often wind up in trouble because our way just doesn’t work that well.

The Lord makes a sad lament over Israel when he says, “If only you had paid attention to my commands.” He is saying that they missed His blessing because they ignored His will. There is a warning there for us. If we will listen to Him and follow His will he will bountifully bless us.

Isaiah is saying that the promise of the Lord is that when we live in obedience to His revealed will our peace will be like a river ever flowing and our righteousness as constant as the waves of the sea.

Peace and righteousness flow in abundance to those who walk in obedience to the will of God.

Prayer: Lord, all too often my way seems to be the best and when I try it the result is not what I expected. Grant me the grace to trust you and follow you in obedience. In Jesus name. Amen.

When The Way Becomes Confusing

Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” - Matthew 12:34-37

Jesus is addressing a very critical issue in this passage. He is instructing the people that the things which are in their heart, whether it is good or bad, is what comes out in their life and in what they say.

He then says that our words will either acquit us, that is, give us life, or condemn us, or give us death. It seems that what He is saying is not so much that the words themselves have that much power, but that the words are a statement of what is in our heart. It is what is in our heart that will actually give us life or death and we speak out what is in our heart.

In verse 33 Jesus says, “Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.” It is the same concept. An apple tree will only grow apples, and an orange tree will only grow oranges.

A pure heart will only produce pure thoughts and pure words, but a polluted heart will at least be conflicted between good and bad and will not be consistent with either.

What kind of fruit (words and thoughts) do you produce?

Prayer: Sometimes I am surprised by what comes out of my mouth. I didn't know that was in my heart. Father, I need your grace to make my life a good tree; change my heart to be more like you. In Jesus name. Amen.

When The Way Becomes Confusing

Message: A pure heart will only produce pure thoughts and pure words, but a polluted heart will at least be conflicted between good and bad and will not be consistent with either. Keep your heart pure and your words will follow your heart.

Affirmation: I work diligently to keep a pure heart because I know that my heart is the source of my words and I want my words to speak life.

Reflection: In our Scripture passage for today, is Jesus speaking of the power of our words or is the primary thing the power of what is in our heart? If our words simply recite what is in our heart then which is more powerful?

My Thoughts:

Day Twelve

Believers Have A Different Viewpoint

You have overcome them because the one in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. - 1 John 4:4-6

Have you ever tried to explain the gospel to someone who was spiritually obtuse? They don't understand the concept of God becoming man and dwelling among men. They can't see how the suffering and death of one man can bring healing and restoration to all of mankind. All of this leaves them with a benign smile on their face and they will usually say something like, "Well I'm glad it works for you, but I just can't see it."

I met a woman not long ago who had an unusual stumbling block to believing in Christ. She just couldn't accept the fact that a person could live a vile and wicked life then in the last moment of their life surrender to Christ and all their sins be taken away. She was blind to the grace of God.

Then there are those who are in the agony of life and are looking for something, or someone, to give them hope for a future. Those people respond to the good news of being reconciled to God, renewed in their spirit and restored to the person they have always wanted to be - and the person that God too has wanted them to be.

We use up a lot of energy trying to convince people of who Jesus is instead of showing them who He is by giving them love and showing concern for their needs.

Prayer: Lord, give me the ability to find people who are ready to receive the good news and grant me the grace of being able to share the good news effectively. In Jesus name. Amen.

Believers Have A Different Viewpoint

Message: Some are in the agony of life and are looking for something, or someone, to give them hope for a future. Those people respond to the good news of being reconciled to God, renewed in their spirit and restored to the person they have always wanted to be - and the person that God too has wanted them to be.

Affirmation: I came to God searching and now I have been reconciled to God, renewed in the Holy Spirit and I am being restored to the person God intends me to be.

Reflection: Some people are not ready to hear the message of Christ, and don't understand it when they hear it. Others are ready and waiting for you to share Christ with them. Ask God to show you who they are.

My Thoughts:

Day Thirteen

Life And Health Found In God's Word

My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body. - Proverbs 4:20-22

There are many Christians who see the word of God as good for religion and showing the way to eternal life, but they don't really see it as a guide for their daily life. Those people miss out on one of the great purposes of God's word.

The writer of Proverbs, in this passage, is telling us that we should keep the words of God ever before us because they are a vital source of life. In fact, to the surprise of many, when we have put the word of God in our hearts, we not only have an enriched life, but we are also promised health to our whole body.

Many years ago two doctors collaborated to write a book titled, *None Of These Diseases*. In this book they showed how that teachings in the Old Testament of diet, hygiene, even circumcision, are factors in good health for those who would follow them.

Too many skeptics discount the Bible as a book of myths and faulty history and ignore the benefit of the teachings on health, hygiene, and human relations.

It is interesting that much of what is taught in the Old Testament about unclean things and how to be purified after contacting unclean things was totally foreign to the world of that day and in fact contradicted contemporary wisdom. Only God knew those things and he revealed them to man.

Prayer: Father, I plead guilty to allowing my own desires (for unhealthy food and other things) to diminish the abundance of life and health that your word declares I can have. Grant me the grace of obedience to your word. In Jesus name.

Day Fourteen

Submit to Civil Authority

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men... who are sent by Him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. – 1 Peter 2:13-15

I'm not sure that when Peter wrote these words he knew just how corrupt civil authorities could be. With our tax money going for purposes to which we are morally opposed, and special interests getting a large portion of the countries resources, how are we going to continue to live subject to such abuse of power?

Have you had any of those thoughts, or am I the only one to think such things? So, what are we to do? According to Peter we are to submit to them for "the Lord's sake," for the sake of the kingdom of God.

God has called us to be at peace with all men when possible so the truth of the good news of the kingdom of God will be heard. If our protesting and demonstrating is so loud that they cannot see the good that we do we are defeating our purpose.

The way we silence the ignorant talk of foolish men (Peter's words not mine) is through doing good. Some people think Christianity is all about big buildings and rich televangelists. How can we counter that image? By doing good works.

When we offer food, shelter, clothing and medical help to those in need we are doing the work of the kingdom and doing the work of the kingdom leaves skeptics without a complaint and silences the ignorant talk of foolish men.

Prayer: OK Lord; I concede. It has been easier for me complain about the bad than it has been to overcome the bad with good. Forgive me and help me to do better. In Jesus name. Amen.

Day Fifteen

Enduring To The End

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. – Hebrews 12:1

Many of us know chapter 11 as the faith hall of fame. People like Noah, Abraham and David are mentioned for their faith. Some of those mentioned had overcome great odds in the expression of their faith, and others had died still holding firmly to their faith. It is in this context that the author writes, “Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses.”

We are called to endure both the good and the bad as we live out our faith destiny. There are some behaviors that would hinder our faith journey and those must be set aside. Some of those things are sins, and some of them are simply distractions from the purposes to which we have been called.

There are times for all of us when the demands of life become rigorous and we have to make choices between those things that are good and those things that are essential. It is in those times that we must endure and persevere in the race that has been marked out for us.

We must never forget that we are in a contest, a race if you will. The contest does involve the evil one, but the real contest is between our human nature and the purposes of God for our life. We can surrender to our nature or we can exert discipline to follow God’s plan.

Let us lay aside every weight so we can run the race with confidence.

Prayer: Lord, I really need grace in this area. I ask you to give me the faith to walk this journey; the courage to make right choices; and the endurance to finish the race. Amen.

Day Sixteen

God Holds Our Hand In Tough Times

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand... For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you , “Do not fear; I will help you.” - Isaiah 41: 10-13

All of us have had times of severe trial, and many of us have had times of tragedy in our lives; but all of us have times when our strength is just not enough to endure and we need someone to help us. That someone is the Lord God.

There is comfort in knowing that regardless of how tough things may become there is one who will hold our hand through it all and who will give us his divine strength.

Some folks have the view of faith that it will keep us from difficult circumstances. If our faith is strong enough we won't get sick, we won't have financial troubles, and disaster won't come upon us. But, the reality is that these things do come on us, even upon those who have great faith.

I am so often reminded of the poem, Footprints in the Sand. When there is only one set of footprints in the sand it is because he is carrying us through the tough times. He may not keep us from the tough times but he will take our hand and say, “Do not be afraid, I AM with you.

The promise is not that difficult times won't come; the promise is that when those times do come we should not fear because he will take our hand and say, “Come on child, I'll walk with you.”

Prayer: God, strengthen my faith. Grant me the kind of faith that does not despair when things are not going well. I need your strength to be faithful and trust you to hold my hand through the trial. In Jesus name. Amen.

Day Seventeen

What To Run From And What To Pursue

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. – 2 Timothy 2:22

This passage is teaching us that there are some things we just need to stay away from, and there are other things we should diligently seek after. Paul points out the challenge that all of us face; we desire righteousness but the desires of our flesh lead us down a different path.

Three issues are addressed in this one verse. There is first the issue of what we should avoid. “Flee the evil desires of youth.” Then there is the issue of what we should seek after, “pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.” And finally there is the issue of those with whom we should seek identity, “those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

I have known many well meaning believers who have become messed up in their walk because they didn’t follow those three bits of instruction. We must identify the weaknesses of our flesh and flee from them. We must identify righteous objectives and pursue them.

It is also critically important that we associate with those who will strengthen our faith walk.

When we focus on righteousness, faith, love and peace, the desires of our flesh are diminished. It is a spiritual principle. You can’t pursue good and evil at the same time – they are mutually exclusive.

I encourage you; deny your fleshly desires, pursue righteous goals and associate with people who are pure in heart. Do that and you will experience God’s best for you.

Prayer: Father, my problem seems to be that I grow weary in pursuing righteous goals and I tend to yield to the desires of my flesh. Grant me the grace of consistently seeking you and give me the desire to fellowship with those who are pure in heart. In Jesus name. Amen.

What To Run From And What To Pursue

Message: Three issues are addressed in this one verse. There is first the issue of what we should avoid. “Flee the evil desires of youth.” Then there is the issue of what we should seek after, “pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.” And finally there is the issue of those with whom we should seek identity, “those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

Affirmation: I avoid evil, pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, and I identify with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Reflection: Give some thought to the three issues mentioned in the message section and make a strategy to implement them.

My Thoughts:

Day Eighteen

Your Body Is The Temple Of God

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

When we invite Jesus to come into our heart we are offering ourselves to be His temple. Too often people who come to the Lord do not understand all that implies.

A lot of people want forgiveness, and they want eternal life, but they do not realize what that will cost them. In Romans Paul speaks of offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices, then he calls that our reasonable act of worship. That is what is happening when we receive the life of Christ into our hearts.

It is true that we do not pay the price to obtain salvation, that has already been paid; but it is also true that when we accept what Christ has done we are committing to be the place where God dwells here on earth. And being the dwelling place of God carries responsibility with it.

Paul is referring to sexual immorality in this passage, but the application goes beyond that to include any behavior which is not acceptable for the temple of God.

Jesus rid the temple of those who would take advantage of travelers and give them a bad exchange for their money. We should take a hint from that event in considering how we must conduct ourselves as the temple of God. To receive Christ means to set our heart to be the temple of God.

Think about it - What kind of temple are you?

Prayer: Lord, sometimes I forget that I have committed myself to be under your lordship and that I am not my own. I ask you to help me to be consistent in my surrender to you and to be a temple worthy of you. In Jesus name. Amen.

Day Nineteen

The Lord Shows Himself To Us

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

- John 14:21

People often come to us and want to know God's will for their life. They want us to pray that God will reveal His will to them. Does that really work? I mean, does it work for one person to pray that God will reveal His will to another person?

Jesus tells us how to have God's will revealed to ourselves. It is real simple; love Him, hear His word, obey His word and He will show himself.

The Lord truly wants to reveal himself to all believers, but he will not do that until he has our heart. If our life is about pursuing our own interests, and as an afterthought we want to know the will of God, he is probably not going to reveal it to us.

Here is an interesting thought; God doesn't reveal further truth until we are obeying current truth. When you are training your children do you give them a list of things to do, and if they don't do it do you then give them another list? No! You don't give them further instructions until they have followed the last instructions.

When you have a job description you don't keep going to your supervisor asking what to do next, you just follow your job description. The teachings of Christ are our job description. Do you want to know him? Love Him; Hear Him; Obey Him.

Prayer: OK Lord, I get the point. Grant me the grace to hear your word, and obey what I hear from your word so that you can reveal yourself to me. In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord Shows Himself To Us

Message: The Lord truly wants to reveal himself to all believers, but he will not do that until he has our heart. If our life is about pursuing our own interests, and as an afterthought we want to know the will of God, he is probably not going to reveal it to us.

Affirmation: I daily read God's word and seek Him because I am committed to knowing and doing His will.

Reflection: Is it practical to seek God for His specific will for our lives when we have yet to follow what He has revealed to be His will for all believers? Will God give us further insight into His will for us when we haven't yet obeyed what He has already revealed?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty

The Holy Spirit Gives Inner Strength

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

- James 1:26-27

The promise is inner strength, through His Spirit. The purpose of the promise is so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. What is implied is that without His Strength in our inner person Christ cannot dwell in your hearts.

Receiving Christ is more than accepting a theological concept. It is literally entering a new arena of life. We who were weak in the flesh have now become strong in His Spirit. He empowers us to live righteously through faith in Christ.

It appears that this means Christ dwelling in our hearts is the equivalent of the Holy Spirit being in our inner person. And in fact, that is very similar to what Jesus said in John chapter 14. Jesus speaks of being with the disciples but he will be in them. He also says he will not leave them without a counselor but he will come to them. Then He says that he will send the Holy Spirit to be their counselor.

What He seems to be saying in this passage is that the Holy Spirit, that we have received through faith in Christ, will give us the ability to be strong in faith and in righteousness.

God's plan is that Christ, who is the embodiment of the of the kingdom of God on earth, would express the kingdom through those in whom he dwells.

Prayer: God, I help me to understand that I need the Holy Spirit working fluently in my inner being so that Christ can be expressed through me. In Jesus name. Amen.

The Holy Spirit Gives Inner Strength

Message: Receiving Christ is more than accepting a theological concept. It is literally entering a new arena of life. We who were weak in the flesh have now become strong in His Spirit. He empowers us to live righteously through faith in Christ.

Affirmation: I once was weak in my flesh, but now I am made strong by His Spirit. Christ can live in my heart because I am cleansed and made strong by His Spirit.

Reflection: In our passage today James speaks of inner strength being given us by the indwelling of Holy Spirit. What are some of the other purposes for Holy Spirit dwelling in us?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty One

A Promise For Trying Times

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. – 1 Peter 1:6-7

A hymn we used sing often had this line in it; “Trials dark on every hand and we cannot understand, all the ways that God would lead us to the blessed promised land.” And so it is in life. None of us are immune to trials, regardless of how much faith we have.

The fact is, as Peter writes here, it is through our trials that our faith is proven genuine. Many have thought their faith strong until they faced trials they had not been expecting, then their cute faith phrases turn to grumbling questions about the faithfulness of God.

Then I have known believers who have weathered the most severe storms in life but who have come through with a rock solid faith; their faith had been proven genuine.

I have a precious brother who had a horrible accident as a child which left him disabled. His walk was affected and his speech was also affected. He fell and severely broke his leg. When I visited him in the hospital he was smiling and full of joy. He never made one negative comment about his situation but he continued to rejoice in the Lord.

Does your faith crumble under trial or is it made stronger?

Prayer: Lord, I confess that there are times when my faith has wavered when it should have been strong. Too often in trials I have turned to my own resources rather than trust. Grant me genuine faith that brings glory to you. Amen.

Day Twenty Two

Do Not Forget To Be Grateful

When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God... Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees... Otherwise... your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God. - Deuteronomy 8:10-14

Sometimes I think we have been cursed with blessings. I have a good friend, a brother in the Lord, who serves God well under pressure. When finances go bad and health goes south on him he is in church every time the doors are open, even if he has to drag himself in. But it is a different story when times are good.

It isn't always the hard times that reveal our faith - it is often how we respond to the good times that our faith is demonstrated.

I remember a cartoon I saw in a religious publication many years ago. The first picture was a man watching the offering plate go by and he was saying, "I wish I had something to give." The second picture was the same man with a fist full of money and he was saying, "If I give this to the church the pastor is liable to backslide and spend it on wrong things."

I recently saw a program on TV that was showing how people have been affected by winning millions of dollars. Some of them handle it fine, but for others it destroys their life. Their blessing became their curse.

Have you been blessed with the blessing or has the blessing become a curse to you?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, give me the grace to accept the good and the bad with the same faith. And especially, when the good times come help me to continue to be mindful of you. In Jesus name. Amen.

Do Not Forget To Be Grateful

Message: When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God... Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees... Otherwise... your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God.

Affirmation: I am careful to be grateful to God for the blessings He gives lest I forget Him and my heart be drawn away.

Reflection: I have heard it said that it is not what you have that affects your faith walk but rather your faith walk is affected by what has you. How must you guard your heart to keep from being drawn into trusting the blessing rather than trusting the one who blesses?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Three

Reject Unwholesome Talk and Thoughts

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

- Ephesians 4:29

How do we do that? I mean, it just seems that saying the wrong things comes natural to us - A funny joke that is just a little off color, an insult to another, all in good humor, of course. These come as natural as saying "good morning," but they are exactly what Paul is addressing in this passage.

Our purpose in communicating should always be to build another up and should never be to belittle or tear down another. There are enough enemies of our soul who are more than willing to do that - we don't need to help them.

I challenge you today to carefully evaluate everything you say for the next 24 hours. Before you speak ask yourself, "How will what I am about to say build up another person?" Another question to ask is, "Who could possibly be hurt by what I am about to say?" If what you are about to say could hurt another person, or have a negative effect on another person, then don't say it.

Another challenge for today is to ask yourself, "What can I say that will build up those who hear?" When you have completed these challenges repeat them tomorrow, and the next day.

A friend told me that she was frustrated with a supervisor on the job. My friend decided she couldn't change her supervisor but she could change herself. She changed the way she thought about the supervisor and strangely enough the supervisor began to change toward her. Interesting.

Prayer: Lord, give me insight as to the impact of my words on others. I want to build others up instead of hurting them. Give me the grace to do that. In Jesus name. Amen.

Reject Unwholesome Talk and Thoughts

Message: Our purpose in communicating should always be to build another up and should never be to belittle or tear down another. There are enough enemies of our soul who are more than willing to do that - we don't need to help them.

Affirmation: I am committed to focusing on how I can build up and encourage others rather trying to belittle them and tear them down.

Reflection: Can you accept the two challenges given in this devotion? And when you have completed them today can you repeat it tomorrow, and the next day too?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Four

The Way To Eternal Life

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. – John 3:15-16

Of all the scriptures that speak of hope and faith this is the one that has moved more people than all of the rest combined. It goes to the very core of the greatest fear that man has; death and the afterlife – and it gives us hope.

We are caught in this world of decay and death, and there is no way to escape it. We see things happening around us which can only cause despair and leave us hopeless. There are people who have lost everything and all they have left is in a bag thrown over their shoulder. It is to those people Jesus spoke John 3:16.

Recently I was talking to a woman who had no sense of personal value and felt that everyone was rejecting her. To show her how much God valued her I quoted this verse in this manner; “For God so loved [her name] that he gave his one and only Son, that [her name] shall not perish but have eternal life.” She began to realize her value to God that day.

The way something is valued is by what one is willing to pay to purchase or maintain it. We’ve all valued something at a certain amount then when we tried to sell it we found that others put a different value on it. God showed us the value he places on us when He gave His only Son so that you and I could have eternal life. That’s value.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I cannot imagine anyone on earth having such value that I would give my only child for – yet that is what you did. Grant me the ability to realize the value you have placed on us and to tell others about you. In Jesus name. Amen.

The Way To Eternal Life

Message: The way something is valued is by what one is willing to pay to purchase or maintain it. We've all valued something at a certain amount then when we tried to sell it we found that others put a different value on it. God showed us the value he places on us when He gave His only Son so that you and I could have eternal life. That's value.

Affirmation: I have chosen to honor the value God has placed upon. I have believed upon Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

Reflection: Jesus mentioned Moses and the snake in the wilderness. Read about in Numbers 21:4-9. What are some similarities between Jesus on the cross and the snake?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Five

God's Word Speaks Direction To Us

How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you... Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way; walk in it." -Isaiah 30:19-21

Isaiah had been prophesying a time of great distress that was coming upon the people because of their waywardness. Then in the middle of this time of judgment he writes, "How gracious he will be when you cry for help!" Isaiah is telling us, and the people of his time, that God is like a loving father; when we have done wrong he disciplines us and when we turn from our waywardness he is gracious to us.

When we come to realize that our way is in conflict with God's way and approach him with a repentant heart, his grace is released upon us. He will speak gently to us with direction for our life. When we would turn to the left or to the right he is there to guide us in making the right choices.

Has disaster come to your life? Do you feel the frustration of your life being out of order and you feel the creeping tentacles of chaos trying to destroy you? If you do, take hope in this passage. He is gracious when you cry for help and "as soon as he hears , he will answer you."

Do not despair! If you veer from the path He will be the voice behind you saying, "This is the way, go this way, and I will be with you."

Prayer: Lord, I need answers. Grant me the grace of clear direction for my life, and give me the ability to hear your voice. In Jesus name. Amen.

God's Word Speaks Direction To Us

Message: When we come to realize that our way is in conflict with God's way and approach him with a repentant heart, his grace is released upon us. He will speak gently to us with direction for our life. When we would turn to the left or to the right he is there to guide us in making the right choices.

Affirmation: I have found the Lord to be gracious when I cry for help. He is always there when I need him.

Reflection: Think about the setting of this prophecy by Isaiah. Israel is facing God's wrath for centuries of failing to follow him. Yet, in the middle of pronouncing calamity God says he will be gracious when they call on him. What does this tell you about the nature of God?

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Six

Jesus Is Our Example Of Servanthood

You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

- John 13:13-15

They called him "Teacher," then he taught them the lesson of serving one another. I find a very interesting point in this story. He washed the feet of all the disciples - He even washed the feet of the one who would betray him.

It is easy for us to serve someone who will return the favor some day, but it is unheard of to serve the one who you knew would ultimately betray you. Jesus knew that love knows no boundaries and when we are driven by love (not duty) we know no boundaries of service.

A common question today is, "What can I do to help you?" Or it may be phrased, "How can I serve you?" Those phrases are usually thrown around by customer service reps on the telephone. They often really mean, "How can I get you off the phone quickly so I can get credit for another call?"

It is different for we who are representatives of Christ. Our offer to help, even to those who would use us unjustly, should be genuine and come from a heart of love.

If you are willing to love the unlovely and serve God through serving them you will find that others will respond to the love of God which flows from you.

Prayer: Yes Lord, I need to learn this lesson of serving others. Too often my "self" and ambition drive me rather than your love. Grant me the grace to serve with your love. In Jesus name. Amen.

Day Twenty Seven

He Will Keep Us From Stumbling

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore, amen. – Jude 24-25

The message of this short letter to the churches from Jude focuses upon keeping the faith. He writes about those who are seducing believers to following after deceitful doctrines. He writes, “I urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (v3).

It’s as if Jude were writing to the church today. He speaks of those who abuse the grace of God and justify their immoral, and even perverted, behavior under the banner of tolerance, love and grace.

Our battle today is no less intense than it was when Jude wrote this letter to the church. We who contend for the pure and undefiled faith delivered to the saints sometimes grow weary in our defense of this wonderful salvation.

In this context Jude reminds us that the Lord himself will keep us from falling prey to the defilement of this deception and keep us pure and without fault to stand accepted before Him.

We must always remember the warning Jesus gave us all when he gives the parable of those coming before him in the end time declaring, “Lord, we did great works in your name,” and Jesus replies, “Depart from me, I don’t know you” (Matthew 7:21-23).

Prayer: Thank you Lord the promise of strength to endure to the end. Grant me the grace to be strong in the face of compromise and to hold to the truth of the gospel. In Jesus name. Amen.

He Will Keep Us From Stumbling

Message: We who contend for the pure and undefiled faith delivered to the saints sometimes grow weary in our defense of this wonderful salvation. Jude reminds us that the Lord himself will keep us from falling prey to the defilement of this deception and keep us pure and without fault to stand accepted before Him.

Affirmation: When I grow weary from the battle against the world, the devil, and the flesh, I am reminded that He is able to keep me from falling and to present me before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy.

Reflection: Enough said.

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Eight

God Will Test Our Faith

Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. – Deuteronomy 8:2

Forty years is a long time to be in a faith testing pattern. Yet, that is what God is telling Israel. I know there were many factors involved in the wilderness wanderings, but God is bringing out the point in this passage that He was testing them to see if they would keep His commands.

There are several things at play here. One is that God will use hard times to open our hearts to His will. Another is that He will use hard times to test our faith and commitment. Though it is not always readily apparent what God's purposes are for a continued trial we do know that His purposes in a trial will determine how quickly He responds to our plea for deliverance.

Jeremiah writes in Lamentations, "It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord" (3:26). A test of our faith and faithfulness is how we respond to trials. I recently heard a pastor teach that at times when we are in a trial and God is silent it is the same as when we are in school; when a teacher is giving a test he will not answer questions because you are being tested. God may be waiting to see if we pass the test before he gives us the answer.

Don't put a time limit on the test God gives you. Let him be the judge of when it is over. We must remember that God is faithful and tough times are a test he wants us to pass.

Prayer: Lord, give me the grace to accept your terms for the test and endure it and give me the courage to endure the test and pass it. Then give me the patience to accept your timing. In Jesus name. Amen.

God Will Test Our Faith

Message: A test of our faith and faithfulness is how we respond to trials. Don't put a time limit on the test God gives you. Let him be the judge of when it is over. We must remember that God is faithful and tough times are a test he wants us to pass.

Affirmation: A trial is a test of faith. I will trust God to take me through the trial and strengthen my faith.

Reflection: Jeremiah writes, "It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." The KJV reads, "A man should both hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." Think about this: when we are in a trial we hope (wait expectantly) in Him and wait for His deliverance.

My Thoughts:

Day Twenty Nine

Sin Is No Longer Our Master

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. – Romans 6:14

The problem with the Law is that it only points out what we already know by nature; we fall far short of God's intention for us. Though we know that we are sinners by nature, without the rules and commands of the law we would not know the full extent of how offensive our behavior is to the Lord.

That's all the Law does. It gives us a standard by which we can compare our own performance, but it gives us no power to overcome the issues of life that negatively affect us. The Law reveals this one thing; in our natural state we are slaves to sin.

But thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, we have been freed from the Law and sin is no longer our master. The grace which comes from God through faith in Jesus Christ has dealt with the issue of the sin in our hearts and has freed us from its tyrannical grasp. Sin is no longer our master, we are free.

Continue to walk daily in the grace of God because sin eagerly waits at the gate of your heart to reestablish itself as master of your life.

Prayer: Lord, I keep drifting back under the law and trying to perform according to the rules. Grant me the grace to allow you to change my heart so that your will lives in me and flows from me giving me freedom from sin. In Jesus name. Amen.

Day Thirty

He Has Given Us Power Over Spirits

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. – Luke 10:18-20

The setting for this passage is the time when Jesus had sent out 72 disciples to minister the kingdom of God to the world of that day. When they returned from their ministry trip they remarked that even the demons were subject to them as they preached the kingdom of God.

Jesus has given the same commission to His body today. He has told us to go preach the kingdom of God, and as we go out in obedience, his power working in us will overcome the enemy and we will have power over evil spirits.

God is calling believers today to become awakened to the power and authority He has placed in us. He is calling us to step out in faith and allow His spirit to demonstrate the truth we preach with power to heal and deliver.

The minds of the people around us have been filled with human reason which denies the existence of the spirit realm. Reasoning alone will not convince people to believe the truth; there must be a demonstration of the power of God.

As believers in the Christ we have been commissioned to bring the message spiritual freedom to the world around us. It is up to us to effect change in the wickedness of the evil one. That is not done by demonstrating with placards but with a demonstration of Holy Spirit power.

That's our mandate – are you up for it?

Prayer: Lord, I have been hesitant to expect you to demonstrate truth with power. I ask you to give me faith for that. In Jesus name. Amen.

He Has Given Us Power Over Spirits

Message: Reasoning alone will not convince people to believe the truth; there must be a demonstration of the power of God. As believers in the Christ we have been commissioned to bring the message spiritual freedom to the world around us. It is up to us to effect change in the wickedness of the evil one. We need Holy Spirit Power.

Affirmation: I am committed to being an effective witness of the power of God to save, heal and deliver men and women.

Reflection: How effective is your witness? Do you see Holy Spirit manifesting himself to unbelievers as you present the message of Christ? Mark 16 speaks of signs and wonders confirming the word preached. Should we expect that to happen today?

My Thoughts:

Day Thirty One

Be Self-Controlled and Alert

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. – 1 Peter 5:8-9

Some time back I heard the story of a child in Florida being taken by an alligator. The family had built their house close to a river where there were alligators. Their small child was playing near the river when an alligator caught him and took him into the river. That is a tragedy that no one should have to go through.

Yet, there were some fundamental errors made which set things up for this tragedy to take place. First, the family did not have to live near this river. And second, knowing the river had alligators, they should never have allowed their child to play unattended. I am certain that the parents have had those thoughts many times since the tragedy.

We can see the mistakes that family made, but what about our own carelessness in spiritual matters? Peter says the devil is like a lion lurking about looking for someone to devour. I would ask about the things you do and the places you go – have you considered the danger?

Perhaps we should be evaluating the effect our activities are having on our spiritual life and those who depend upon us for leadership and guidance in spiritual matters.

Prayer: Lord, give me wisdom in the choices I make for my life and the choices I make for my family. Make me conscious of the evil that is ready to destroy. In Jesus name. Amen.

Be Self-Controlled and Alert

