

Word Studies

(adapted from material by Paul Rockwell)

Daily devotions for August 20-26, 2023

Study guide for Sunday August 27, 2023 Bible class

See — See Not — be aware- to enlighten, make to see — voluntary observation - earnest inspection- casual vision

August 20, 2023

Matthew 7:5 “Thou hypocrite first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”

Jesus teaches the lesson of proper judging. He teaches with the same attitude we find fault in other people's life, they will with like manner find fault in our life. When we exalt the small mistakes in other's lives and ignore even larger mistakes in our lives we shall be found to be a hypocrite. Jesus advises us to clean up our own life then we will be in a position to help another to clean up their life. This passage is not forbidding one to help another when he sees a mistake of a brother engaging in sin. James tells us if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him, let him know that he which converts a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins. (James 5:19-20) Therefore the apostle Paul admonishes us “if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness considering thyself lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1 & Acts 8:18-22)

Discussion question: Do you have to be perfect to be able to help someone correct their sinful choices? What is Jesus condemning in this text?

August 21, 2023

Matthew 11:7 “And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John. What went ye out into the wilderness to see, a reed shaken with the wind?”

John the Baptist cried unto those in the wilderness to repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand. Multitudes of people went out to see and hear this man. Jesus raises the question to them, what went ye out into the wilderness to see, a reed shaken with the wind? A reed was a tall slender plant that would sway with the wind. John was not a man that could be easily influenced by pressure from others. He could not be bent by every breath of applause or displeasure. He was not a man clothed in soft raiment. He was dressed in camel's hair. He did not attract people by his dress. He was not a man who was accustomed to the soft life of royal palaces, but he was the one that Old Testament prophets spoke about. Did they go to see a prophet, yes more than a prophet for he was the forerunner of the Christ, who was to come. Jesus said among them that are born of women there hath not risen one greater than John the Baptist. (Matthew 11:7-11)

Discussion question: In what ways do people tend to find what they are looking for? Can bias and predetermined ideas cloud our vision?

August 22, 2023

Matthew 13:14 “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith by hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive.”

Esaias or Isaiah said it would happen with God's people, Israel they would hear and hear but would not understand. They would look and look but would not see. Jesus said the reason for this was their heart was waxed gross. Their mind had become dull of hearing. They refused to receive teaching that required a change of mind or life. Their eyes they had closed. They did not see the truth on account of their spiritual ignorance. The desire to see spiritually is essential to clear perceptions of truth. Jesus said, if they did not do this, they would see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts then they would be changed in their ways and he would heal them. The reason they and men today do not understand and change their lives is because they refuse to hear and see.

Discussion question: Does seeing, always make one a believer?

August 23, 2023

Ecclesiastes 2:3 “I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.”

Solomon said he tried to find happiness by way of drinking wine, yet at the same time he allowed his mind to acquaint him with wisdom. He saw that this was vanity and vexation of spirit. He was searching for that which was good for the sons of men to do under heaven during the few years of their lives. He states in chapter 3:22, he has seen nothing is better than that a man should be happy in his work. He saw that this was from the hand of God. Again, he establishes this in chapter 5:18. “It was good and right for a man to eat and drink and to be happy in all the work he does during his life that God has given him, for this is his pay. He concludes that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) He will bring all things into judgment good and bad.

Discussion question: After Solomon tried to see what was good to the eyes of men, what did he conclude?

August 24, 2023

Matthew 24:6 “And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet.”

Jesus is answering the question asked by his disciples in verse three. He had told his disciples when they had departed from the temple in Jerusalem and were talking about the great stones of the building, Jesus said the time will come when there will not be one stone left upon another. They ask him, when they were on the mountain in private, when shall these things be? What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world? Jesus in the next verses describes events that were to occur that they would see before that destruction of the temple and city would occur. Then in verses 35-44, he speaks of the coming of the end of the world. Of this event there were no signs given except the sign of the time of Noah and the flood. No man, even himself or angels, knew when that event was to occur.

Discussion question: Are all the plans and works of God visible?

August 25, 2023

Matthew 28:6 “He is not here; for he is risen as he said, come see the place where the Lord lay.”

After the Sabbath Day had past and very early in the morning of the first day of the week, (Matthew 28:1 & Mark 16:1-2) Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome had brought sweet spices to anoint the body of Jesus and to see the sepulcher where Jesus was buried. There was an earthquake and the angel of the Lord had rolled back the rock or stone from the door. (Matt. 27:66) When the women had arrived at the sepulcher, they were amazed that the rock had been removed. When they looked inside, they saw a young man or an angel that had a young man's appearance. (Mk 16:15) He was clothed in a long white garment, and they were frightened. He said unto them be not afraid for I know that you seek or come to see Jesus which was crucified. He is not here because he is resurrected but come and see the place where the Lord laid. Go and tell his disciples and Peter that he goes before them into Galilee, and he would see them there. Upon hearing this Peter and John ran to the sepulcher and entering in they saw the linen clothes wrapped together in a place by itself and the napkin that was about his face or head by itself. (John 20:1-8)

Discussion question: Why was it important for witnesses to see the empty tomb?

August 26, 2023

Romans 7:23 "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

The apostle tells us in verse 21 that there is a law within us that when we would do good or that which is right, evil is present with us. The Christian finds delight in the Law of God in his mind after the inner man. This law in our members or body that controls the fleshly desires war against the Law of God in our mind and brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. Law is the condition existing when obedience to such rules is general. Paul said we see one law of our being is approval of righteousness: another is the desire of the flesh to do evil. This law works against the law of the mind, the conscience and the will and brings it into captivity. Paul speaks of man in captivity to sin as a wretched man and he raises the question, who shall deliver me from this death? We learn in Romans 6:33, the wages of sin is death or spiritual death, and a complete and final separation from God. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) He answers this question in verse 25, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Discussion question: To see the war going on between flesh and spirit requires honesty. Can you think of ways we may be dishonest with ourselves when it comes to seeing this battle accurately?

Word Studies

(adapted from material by Paul Rockwell)

Daily devotions for August 27 – September 2, 2023

Study guide for Sunday, September 3, 2023 Bible class

Scripture: Used in the Bible, refers to the sacred writings, Old and New Testament

August 27, 2023

Mark 12:10-11 “Have ye not read this scripture, the stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?”

Jesus had taught them the parable of a man who planted a vineyard and set a hedge about it. At the time or the season when the vines should produce its' fruit, he sent a servant that he may receive of the fruit of the vineyard, and they caught him and beat him and sent him away without any of the fruit. The Lord sent another servant and they cast stones at him, wounded him in the head, sent him away shamefully treated again. He sent another; he was killed. He sent his only beloved son, thinking they will reverence him. They said among themselves this is the heir, let us kill him and the inheritance will be ours. So, they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. So, what shall the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandman and will give the vineyard to others. Jesus is teaching the Jews that Israel was that vineyard. When the time had come for it to produce fruits of righteousness, by accepting Jesus Christ and his government, they killed the prophet that foretold of this event, and when Jesus came, they killed him and cast him out. Jesus calls their attention to an Old Testament scripture showing the stone, which was Jesus, and the builder, which was Israel, rejected is to become the chief comer stone in the building or Church. (Psalm 118:22-23, Ephesians 2:20)

Discussion question: What does the question imply in Mark 12:10-11?

August 28, 2023

Mark 15:28 “And the scripture was fulfilled which sayeth and he was numbered with the transgressors.”

When Jesus was crucified, he was crucified with two others, who were common criminals or transgressors. The prophet Isaiah foretold this would happen 700 years before it did. In Isaiah 53:12 it says, “therefore will I divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong because he hath poured out his soul, unto death and he was numbered with transgressors, and he bore the sins of many and made intercessions for the transgressors.” This identifies Jesus as the Christ that was to come.

Discussion question: Why is it important to examine the prophetic Scriptures concerning Jesus?

August 29, 2023

Luke 4:21 “And he began to say unto them. This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

When Jesus returned to Nazareth where he was brought up, he went into the synagogue and stood up to read as was his custom. When they gave to him the scroll, he opened it and read the sixty first chapter of Isaiah and the first two verses, saying "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recover the sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Those that heard bare witness that he was reading the passage right, but they did not understand what he was saying in their ears. They were amazed and wondered at the graceful way he spoke and his dignified and graceful manner of speaking but did not understand his meaning. They responded by saying, "Is not this Joseph's son?" and become very angry at him.

Discussion question: In the scene described in Luke 4, why would they become angry at Jesus reading Scripture?

August 30, 2023

John 2:22 “When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture and word which Jesus had said.”

Jesus is speaking to the Jews when he went to Jerusalem to attend the Passover Supper. He went into the temple and found them selling oxen and sheep and doves and the money changers sitting there. He made a rope and drove the animals out, poured out the money and overturned their tables and told them to get out and make not his father's house a house of merchandise. The Jews answered what sign or right do you do these things? They asked for a sign to an event that was to come to show his authority. He gave them the sign saying, destroy this temple and he would in three days raise it up. They replied, forty-six years this building was erected, and will you rear it up in three days? Jesus was speaking of his body. The disciples did not understand this until after his resurrection from the dead. Then they understood and believed the scripture that spoke of this sign. Psalm 16:10, states that God would not leave his soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine, Holy One to see corruption. (Acts 2:25-26, Luke 24:46)

Discussion question: It is interesting that John makes a reference to the resurrection in this early portion of his history of Jesus. Though it may have taken longer at times than it should, what key reaction to the Scriptures ultimately came to some of His disciples?

August 31, 2023

John 7:38 “He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

Jesus had said in verse 37, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. This is not to satisfy the thirst of the body but the thirst for righteousness and a right relation with his God. Jesus said, if he will believe on me, put his trust and confidence in Jesus as the scripture hath said, (Isaiah 58: 11) from this relationship, of master and discipleship, out of his belly or from him shall flow river of living water. Christ is and has the living water that gives spiritual life. (John 4:14) Jesus said whosoever drinks of the water that I give shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Christ is the living water, he who believes upon Christ has Christ in him and hence must become a fountain to dispense the living water wherever he goes. He becomes a light to the world, a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. (Matthew 5:14) He becomes the salt that gives good flavor to the earth. (Matthew 5:13) He is an epistle known and is read of all men. (2 Corinthians 3:2) The apostle Paul states it is not I that liveth but Christ liveth in me. (Galatians 2:20, Romans 12:2 & 1 Peter 1:14-16)

Discussion question: Once experiencing the living waters that flow from the Scriptures, what should the disciple desire to do?

September 1, 2023

John 19:36 “For these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken.”

When Jesus was crucified, it was a slow death as a rule, so that the victims might linger on into the night and even up till the following day before dying. It was not lawful to permit them to remain there, nor could they take them down while alive. Therefore, it was a rule to hasten death before night or before the Sabbath began, by breaking the legs with clubs. The shock on top of what they had already endured being the final cause of death. When the soldiers came to Jesus, they found he had already died, therefore there was no need to break his legs. Their refusing from doing so fulfilled another prediction proving he was the Christ the Son of God. In Psalm 34:20, we read, he keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken. Nails were driven in his hands and in his feet, His side was opened by a spear yet not one of his bones were broken.

Discussion question: Why was it important for Jesus to fulfill all prophecies concerning Him in Scripture?

September 2, 2023

John 5:39-40 “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

Jesus had gone up to Jerusalem to observe a feast. He saw a man who had been lame for thirty-eight years, laying at a pool close to the sheep market. (John 5:5) Jesus said unto him rise take up thy bed and walk. Immediately the man rose and walked. This was done on the Sabbath Day. The Jews, who saw him carry his bed said it was not lawful for him to carry his bed. He told them what Jesus said and did. Therefore, the Jews sought to kill Jesus because he had done these things on the Sabbath, but Jesus told them he was doing the work his father sent him to do. (John 5:17) The Jews sought to kill with a greater diligence because he claimed God as his father, making himself equal with God. (John 5:18) Jesus said I can of myself do nothing as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just. Because I seek not mine own will but the will of the father which hath sent me. (John 5:30) He said John the Baptist bear witness that I was the Son of God. (John 1:32-34) Moses wrote in the scriptures of me, but if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words? He told them to search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me.

Discussion question: If Jesus is the center of the message of Scripture, He is also then the source of what?

Word Studies

(adapted from material by Paul Rockwell)

Daily devotions for September 3 – September 9, 2023

Study guide for Sunday, September 10, 2023 Bible class

Sake- Because of- in order that- on account of- by reason of

September 3, 2023

Genesis 8:21 “And the lord smelled a sweet savor; and the lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living as I have done.”

After the flood, Noah and his sons came from the ark as it rested on Mt. Ararat. Noah built an altar unto the Lord and took a clean animal and a clean fowl and offered a burnt offering unto the Lord. Then the Lord smelled a pleasing smell and he said to himself, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake or because of man. The desire of man's heart is sinful from his youth (childhood, young people) It does not say a baby just born. He said I will not again smite living things as I have done. As long as the earth remains seed time and harvest, winter and summer and day and night shall not cease.

Discussion question: What confidence can we have in the promise made in this text?

September 4, 2023

Psalms 23:3 “He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the path of righteousness for his name's sake.”

The Psalmist claims Jesus or Lord as his shepherd. It is the duty of a shepherd to see that proper nourishment is provided for his flock. He restores the sheep's wants. The spiritual shepherd provides spiritual food for the souls of his sheep fold. This consists of the instructions found in the Word of God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17) He leads his sheep in the paths or ways of righteousness. (Proverbs 2:8) He keeps the path of judgment and preserves the way of his saints. Then shall they understand righteousness and judgment and equity in every good path. He does this for or because of his name. God is to be free from all evil. He wouldn't stain such a good name by leading his flock in unrighteousness.

Discussion question: Why are we lead in paths of righteousness?

September 5, 2023

Matthew 5:10 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of God.”

The term persecuted means to cause to flee, pursue after, to pursue with malignity, to afflict, to cause injury or distress. Many people are persecuted for various reasons. Some because of politics, others because they are disliked, because of character flaws. These are not blessed or happy, but Jesus states blessed or happy are those who are pursued and afflicted for righteousness’ sake or because they practice what is right as they strive to do God’s will in their life. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:12, yea and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. We should not think it a strange thing when we are afflicted for living righteously and godly among men. They persecuted Jesus and those of the world will persecute us, but we should use the occasion as a means of rejoicing for the Lord.

Discussion question: In what ways can we be persecuted for the sake of righteousness?

September 6, 2023

Matthew 16:25 “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

Jesus was teaching his disciples characteristics of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. In verse 24, Jesus said, if any man will come after me or be my disciple let him deny himself or forget about himself and take up his cross or carry his own burden and follow me. For whosoever wants to save the life practices of present time will eventually lose it, but whosoever will lose his life or evil practices of the world for my sake or because of following me shall find true life.

Discussion question: Life is often filled with sacrifices. The most important sacrifices we make should be for the sake of whom? How do we do that?

September 7, 2023

Matthew 14:3 “For Herod had laid hold on John and bound him and put him in prison for Herodias sake, his brother's Phillip’s wife.”

Herod had put John in prison in order to please the daughter of Herodias. She had danced before those who attended Herod's birthday party. This pleased Herod and he promised to give her whatsoever she would ask. He bound this promise with an oath. She had been instructed by her mother, Herodias, before hand to ask for the head of John the Baptist in a basket. Herodias hated John because John told Herod it was not lawful for them to be married because she was his brother Philips wife. Herod, although he was sorry, he made such a promise, but because of his oath as a king he sent and had John beheaded and his head was brought to them in a basket. John's disciples came and took up the body of John and buried it and went and told Jesus what had happened.

Discussion question: How important is it for us to be cautious about whose sake we are making choices? Why?

September 8, 2023

Matthew 18:12 “For there are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it.”

In this text Jesus uses an extreme case to illustrate His point. Some men were born eunuchs, others were made such to be controlled as servants. Others were choosing to be such that they could dedicate themselves to serving the Kingdom of Heaven. This was never given as a requirement in Scripture but rather a choice some were making. This extreme example challenges us to consider to what extent I am willing to make sacrifices on behalf of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Discussion question: How important should the Kingdom of Heaven be to each of us?

September 9, 2023

Mark 10:29 “And Jesus answered and said verily I say unto you, there is no man that left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for my sake and the Gospels but he shall receive and hundred fold now in this time, houses and brother and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and in the world to come eternal life.”

Jesus is speaking to his disciples or those who had been chosen to be his apostles. Those who were to carry the Gospel message into all the world. (Mark 10:23) Peter said unto him. Lo we have left all and have followed thee. Jesus assures them there is no man that left house, brothers, sisters, father or mother, or wife, children, lands for my sake or in order to accomplish the cause of Christ among men, by preaching the Gospel of Christ, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, with persecutions and in the world to come eternal life. Jesus assures them they shall receive even more than family relations in this time. Not only shall they have a family relation but a spiritual family that enriches their life and an additional blessing of eternal life. (1 Corinthians 9:5) This principle applies to everyone who obeys the Gospel. If we are called upon you make great sacrifices of severing family relations to truly follow Christ, we shall receive rewards here and, in the world, to come eternal life. (Matthew 10:35-42)

Discussion question: What benefits come from making sacrifices for the Gospel's sake?

Word Studies

(adapted from material by Paul Rockwell)

Daily devotions for September 10 – September 16, 2023

Study guide for Sunday, September 17, 2023 Bible class

One - Being single minded - characterized by unity- single in kind - the same

September 10, 2023

1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus.”

The apostle states our savior will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (v4) for in view of the fact there is one God or one God Head that is characterized by unity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (1 John 5: 7) The one God Head works to save all who will receive the truth. Jesus said in I John 5:45, "it is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me. For there is one God and one mediator, and single mediator that stands between God and man." This mediator is God the Son who made himself known in a fleshly body. He brought to man, by the Holy Spirit, the system of truth whereby we must and can be saved. Jesus told the apostles that when the Holy Spirit, who he would send, is come he will guide you unto all truth. (John 16:13) Jesus said you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free, and if you continue in my word then are you my disciples indeed. (John 8:31-32) The apostle Peter said, seeing you have purified your souls by obeying the truth through the spirit into unfeigned love of the brethren see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently. (1 Peter 1:22-23, I Corinthians 15:1-2 & Hebrews 5:8-9)

Discussion question: In what way is understanding that there is only one God and one mediator important?

September 11, 2023

John 17:21 “That they all may be one; as thou Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou has sent me.”

Jesus is praying for those who believe in him and would be his disciple, that they all be one. He illustrates this oneness or unity among his disciples as the unity that exists between himself and

his father. They were to be united in purpose and work. Not only must the believers be united in their work and purpose but Jesus further states that they should be one in us. If the whole religious world should become a perfect unit in its practices, it would not avail anything unless its people were in Christ and God. Jesus' prayer was that they may be sanctified through the truth, thy word is truth. That which separates one to be a disciple is obedience to the truth or Word of God. (1 Peter 1:22-23) Jesus' prayer is that his disciples may be unified as he and the father. That they speak the same things, practice the same things as they are directed by the Word of God. (Romans 8:14, Colossians 3:17 Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 4:11, Hebrews 11:6, Romans 10:17 & 2 Corinthians 5:7)

Discussion question: To know how to be one as believers we must understand how God and His Son are one? In what ways are God the Father and the Son one?

September 12, 2023

Matthew 5:18 “For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled.”

Jesus is speaking to his disciples and told them not to think that he had come to destroy the Law or the teachings of the prophets. He did not come to destroy or tear down and demolish but to fulfill or to carry out that which was promised and bring it to its conclusion. As long as the heavens and earth shall last not one jot or tittle or not one small mark of a word will pass away from the Law of Moses until it has all be done. The commandment of the Mosaic Law will not be in force in the Kingdom of Christ. The man who would break the least of these commandments while they are in force shows a wrong attitude toward the divine law. Such a person who would do so and teach others to do would not rank very high in the Kingdom of God and Christ after it would be established.

Discussion question: Why was it vital that not one aspect of the law go unfulfilled?

September 13, 2023

Matthew 6:27 “Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?”

Jesus is showing how God takes care and provides life's necessities for the fowls of the air, animals of the field and how the lilies of the field grow. They do not toil nor spin: He then raises the question if God takes care of these, will he not take care of his children? Which one of us can add one cubit to his height? Therefore, the servants of God should have full confidence in God's ability and willingness to supply all the needs of man that he cannot obtain for himself. (Ephesians 4:28) Undue worry or anxiety will not add the slightest amount to one's size, therefore it is useless to be overly concerned about the necessities of life to the extent of foolish worry. Jesus is teaching his disciples to look at the providence of God in the care of life's creatures and put their full trust in God to care for them in their journey of life as a disciple of Christ. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his standard of righteousness and have ¹ confidence that God will supply all our needs.

Discussion question: In what ways do we often let that “one” thing hinder our trust in Jehovah?

September 14, 2023

Matthew 10:42 “And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward.”

Thayer states little here means in rank or influence. Disciples of Christ who are young in their relationship to Jesus who have not acquired much growth in rank and influence. The apostle Paul admonishes not to be children tossed to and fro but grow up into him in all things which is the head even Christ. (Ephesians 4:14-15) Kindness of ever so little in character shown to them is the same as doing so to Jesus and will be rewarded in due time. Every kind act if done because he is a disciple, a believer and learner of the teaching of Jesus or out of regard for Christ shall never lose its reward. We learn in Ecclesiastes 12:13 for God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or bad. Jesus tells us at the judgment some will say Lord when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? Or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? And the king answered and said verily I say unto you in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me. Acts of kindness will not go unnoticed by our Lord.

Discussion question: What are some things that often hinder us from doing acts of kindness to others?

September 15, 2023

Matthew 18:6 “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the sea.”

Jesus makes it known that unless one be converted or changed and become in character as a little child he cannot become a disciple and have the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven. Those that humble themselves in obedience as a child is great in the kingdom, but who so offends or causes one of these humble disciples to stumble or go astray, it would be better or more desirable that a millstone be hanged about his neck and be drowned in the sea, Better a person to lose their life in such a terrible way than to be the cause of others destroying their souls, Physical death by drowning would be a mild fate in comparison with that a waiting one who has caused a humble disciple of Christ to stumble and fall.

Discussion question: Are there any exemptions noted in the text? What kind of rationalization do we sometimes use to excuse a lack of consideration for others?

September 16, 2023

Genesis 11:6 “And the Lord said behold the people is one and they have all one language and this they begin to do and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.”

At this time in history the whole earth was of one language and one speech. They were the descendants of Ham and Shem and Japheth. They were dwelling in the land called Shinar. They decided to make bricks and burn them thoroughly and they had slime for mortar. They decided to build a tower that would reach into the heaven or sky. The purpose for this was to make a name for themselves lest they be scattered upon the face of the whole earth. (Genesis 11:4) God saw their intentions and said they were united in this effort which was contrary with his desire for mankind.

Discussion question: Why was this kind of oneness a problem? Why did God determine to divide man through language?

Word Studies

(adapted from material by Paul Rockwell)

Daily devotions for September 17 – September 23, 2023

Study guide for Sunday, September 24, 2023 Bible class

Rejoice - To be glad or happy- to make glad - delight

September 17, 2023

Proverbs 2:14 “Who rejoice to do evil and delight in the forwardness of the wicked.”

The writer speaks of the benefit of wisdom when wisdom enters the heart, discretion or good thinking will watch over you. Happy is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gets understanding. You will be kept from the sinful and from the man who causes much trouble, by what he says. You will be kept from the man who leaves the right way to walk in the ways of darkness and from the one who rejoices or is happy doing wrong and who finds joy in the way of sin. The man who walks in the pride of his heart and in independence of God, this way of life seems very attractive to the young, appealing to their natural mind. To follow this is to leave the straight paths of righteousness and to walk in the ways of darkness, but when one receives the truth of God and allows it to control his life, he will not rejoice to do evil, and he will be delivered from the perverse paths of the evil man.

Discussion question: Should we pursue joy at all cost? In what ways has man done just that?

September 18, 2023

Proverbs 23:15 “My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice even mine, yea my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.”

The writer instructs parents not to withhold punishing the child if he needs it. If you punish him for wrong behavior he will not die, but the correction will save his soul. He instructs his child if his heart is motivated by wisdom or the proper use of knowledge it will cause the father to rejoice or be glad of heart. The father would rejoice not only when the young child has wisdom of heart but also if he used wisdom in his speech. We also, as God's children, bring joy to the heart of our

Heavenly Father when we exercise wisdom and walk in truth. It is our precious and holy privilege to bring joy to his heart by loving wisdom and speaking right things. We read in 3 John vs 3-4, "for I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee. Even as thou walk in truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. (Matthew 7:17-20 & Proverb 23:24-26)

Discussion question: Proverb 23:15 teaches us that we should rejoice when one speaks what?

September 19, 2023

Proverbs 24: 17 "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth, lest the lord see it and it displeases him and he turn away his wrath from him."

A child of God is not to be full of joy when the one who hates you falls or trips, lest the Lord sees this kind of attitude be in you and God is not pleased. We learn in Proverbs 25:21, if thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty give him water to drink. In Romans 12:19, we are instructed, avenge not ourselves, give place to wrath vengeance belongs to God. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good. In verse 28 it reads, if it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Love does not gloat over the sorrows of others even though their adversities may be greatly deserved. We must remember we are ourselves subjects of the grace of God. The humble and contrite spirit walks softly, having pity for the afflictions of his enemies.

Discussion question: In what should we never find joy or an occasion to rejoice?

September 20, 2023

Ecclesiastes 3:22 "So I have seen that nothing is better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?"

Solomon has shown in verses 19-21 that man will die just as beast will die. The beast in his entirety will go back to the dust from whence he came, but man's body, like the animal of field, will decay and go back to dust but man is a spiritual being and at death his spirit goes upward to the God who created it. Therefore, he saw that there is nothing better in this life but for a man to do God's will and for him to enjoy the fruit of his labors. He should experience the rejoicing that comes from

realizing all good bodily blessings are from the Lord. As James tells us in James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." The righteous use of these things must be enjoyed in this life if at all because man shall not see what shall be after him. If God has prospered the work of our hands, let us rejoice in it and not make it a burden. (Ecclesiastes 2:24, 2:22-23, 6:12, 2:18-19, Galatians 6:10, 1 Timothy 6:17-19, 7-8)

Discussion question: What must we recognize concerning our blessings in order to rejoice in them properly? In what ways should we rejoice with contentment?

September 21, 2023

Psalms 5:11 "But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defends them; let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee, for thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield."

The Psalmist makes a plea unto God that he hold men who are guilty of sweet sounding words, that are not true and their mouths are like an open grave full of decay and corruption to let them fall by their own plans and schemes of unrighteousness. His plea is that God would lead him in what is right and good and he would have people rejoice because of their trust in God. Let the people who trust in God and worship and give him the honor and glory that is rightfully his, as our God and creator. Let them that love his name or what God is in character and majesty be joyful in their relationship with him, for the Lord will bless the righteous and bestow his favor upon them and will compass them about with protection from their enemies. (1 Corinthians 10:13 & 2 Peter 2:9)

Discussion question: What should those who trust the Lord be doing? Why?

September 22, 2023

Acts 5:41 "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

The apostles, at Jerusalem, were healing the sick and casting out unclean spirits. The High Priest and those of the Sadducees rose up and had them put into the common prison. An angel by night

opened the prison doors and brought them forth. He told them to go into the temple and speak to the people all the words of the Christian life. They obeyed and went into the temple and preached the Gospel of Christ. There was one who heard and went and told them that the men they had put in prison were in the temple preaching to the people. They brought the apostles before the council and they asked them, did we not command you not to teach in name of Jesus? You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. Then Peter and the apostles answered by saying, we ought to obey God rather than men. God raised up Jesus who you slew and has exalted him to his right hand to be a prince and a savior, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. After much discussion they decided to beat them and command that they do not preach in his name. They departed rejoicing that they be counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

Discussion question: Name some practical ways that we need to be prepared to find joy in our adversities for the cause of Christ?

September 23, 2023

Acts 8:39 “And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the Eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”

The Eunuch had gone up to Jerusalem to worship God after the Mosaic Law System. He was on his way back to Ethiopia, riding in a chariot and as he was riding along he was reading from the book of Isaiah chapter fifty-three. Philip was in Samaria, preaching the Gospel to the Samaritans. An Angel spoke to him and told him to go down toward the south unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza which was a deserted way. Philip obeyed and he went down and found the Eunuch riding along in the chariot and heard him reading. He asks him if he understood what he was reading and he replied how can I except some man should guide me. He invited Philip to come up in the chariot and ride with him. Philip did and began at the same scripture and preached Jesus unto him. As they were riding along, they came to a place of water. The Eunuch said, see here is water what hinders me from being baptized? Philip said if you believe with all your heart, you may. The Eunuch said I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They stopped the chariot, and both the Eunuch and Philip went down into the water and Philip baptized him. The Spirit caught Philip away and the Eunuch went on his way rejoicing in his new relation to the Lord.

Discussion question: What should bring the greatest personal joy to anyone? What is the greatest thing we should all rejoice in when we see it?