



*A word
with God*

A Word with God daily devotional guide contains inspirational short stories that show real people trying to live faithfully in real-life situations.

May 2015



Join us every
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94.3 Faith FM Kitchener

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May 1, 2015

Facing “It”

Over the last year, our church has been working at building a strong and vibrant men's group. We have been blessed with a good number of men who call Evangel home, and it was evident that there was a need for us as a church to provide a path of growth for our guys. So by the time you are reading this, we will have held our first annual men's conference... Bring It On!

As men we do not have a lot of opportunity to get together and talk about the things that we are facing. In fact for many men, they would rather ignore the hard things in front of them and go have a root canal instead. It is common for guys to even question the value of talking about the conflicts in our relationships, workplaces, or other situations. As one friend told me, “if I ignore it (whatever “it” is), maybe she will forget about it and it will just go away”.

Famous last words... but they just don't happen. “It”, whatever it is, will never just go away. Maybe it will go underground. Maybe it will take a place in the background like a computer virus, but “it” will not go away through avoidance. Talking about the challenges of life, going to God's Word for instruction, and then encouraging one another to follow through, is part of what it is to be a mature man of God.

Father, thank You for all that You have done to help us on our journey of knowing You. Thank You for faithful brothers who come by our side and help us on the way. Thank You for those who teach us and train us in Your ways, and for Your faithfulness to keep us on the journey. Amen

Stan Starkey

Romans 14:11

**“As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’”**

Anita Vandermeer, Katrina Fortin-Tangie, Josiah Fuller

May 2, 2015

Rejoice Before an Awesome God

Psalm 97:1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

This is the introductory verse to Psalm 97, which goes on to describe magnificently the return of the LORD Jesus Christ for the Millennial Reign here on earth! The psalmist goes on to describe clouds, darkness, lightnings, and fire. “The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory” (verse 6). Also noted (in verse 4) is the reaction of earth’s ungodly inhabitants – fear! Many of these same things are described in Revelation (1:7 & 6:15-17) and in Luke (21:25-28).

This may seem a strange topic for devotion, but it is good news in these darkening days. We are to take courage in this (as implied by the last three verses) – we are to look forward to the return of the LORD. Even though we may fall into the hands of the wicked, we will be delivered (even if through death), justice will be done, and righteousness will prevail. This Psalm proclaims the LORD God’s absolute sovereignty over both the earth and the heavens. The last phrase – “give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness” – is the crescendo finish; we are to praise the Lord for this attribute – his holiness – for it demands eventual justice, righteousness, an end to sin, and his absolute rule here on earth!

Father, you are worthy of all praise because of your holiness. I thank you for your sovereignty and power, and ask that you would use me in the meantime – show me your will. Amen.

Steve Wiseman

Matthew 14:27

But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

Bev Gooden, Halima Fuller, Tessa Talat

May 3, 2015

God Wills for Man's Salvation

During my teen years I invited a friend from school to go with me and my family to a Nazarene Camp meeting. I don't remember what the preacher preached about but I do remember that God was moving, convicting people of their need of Jesus for salvation.

During the altar call many responded and went to pray and receive Christ. Knowing that my friend had never committed his life to Christ, I told him if he wanted to go and pray for salvation, I would go with him. My friend was under such conviction that he was trembling. I'll never forget the look on his face! God's Spirit was convicting, but he resisted the gift of salvation. To my knowledge my friend never did receive Christ and several years later he was killed in a car accident. It was a very sad funeral.

The Bible says that "God is not willing that any should perish but that all come to repentance" (1 Peter 3:9). If it was not God's will to save my friend, why did God the Holy Spirit convict him? I believe that God in His mercy was drawing and extending an arm of grace to my friend but he refused.

If God's Spirit moves in your heart, don't resist Him, but open your heart and receive Him as your Lord and Saviour.

Ivan Preston

Hebrews 4:7

"Today if you hear God's voice don't harden your heart."

Susan Thomson, Pam Wright, Cheryl Borsi

May 4, 2015

Working Cats

The people at the city animal shelter say you need between \$1500 and \$2000 to properly maintain one cat in a city in Ontario. That was the end of our attempt to look for a cat. In the past, though, we had cats elsewhere...

Life is hard for working cats. Take "Matthew" for instance. He came to us as a kitten so small one of our sons brought him home in the palm of one hand. The cat knew what he was at our house for, though. Before he was two months old, I think, he spotted a rat in our garage and the rat never had a second chance. In one year, I killed 18 rats and mice in or around that house with traps and sticks. We had a dog, but after Matthew came, I never had to deal with another rodent. Even after Matthew lost an eye to some infection or probably an encounter with a spitting cobra, he still kept our house free of vermin and alerted us to snakes more than once. Eventually, unless he went into the fields to hunt, he only had lizards on the walls to chase. For a couple of months Matthew disappeared and we thought all was lost, but one bright morning, I saw him come walking calmly in from the fields, a lot thinner, but alive.

Lord Jesus, we say this world is "not a friend of grace," but then whimper when reverses happen, as if they were some new thing. Your servant Paul, not a stranger to trouble, told Timothy to endure hardship with him like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Clare Fuller

Romans 16:3-4

Greet Priscilla and Aquila my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles

Sherri Nickerson, Susan Ozua, Francis Paloum,

May 5, 2015

Finishing Well

The month of May signals the end of another school year for post secondary students. For me personally, this marks the end of a lengthy journey. Over the past four years at Emmanuel Bible College I have undergone a tremendous amount of growth in my life. I have been stretched in more ways than I can count, and have been challenged each day by what it means to truly live for Christ.

A few weeks ago, I found myself counting the days until the end of my tenure at EBC. Very much aware of the quickly disappearing amount of time in front of me, I asked the Lord what he would have me do in my final days at EBC. What I heard him say to me in that moment was “finish well.” These two words came as a source of both comfort and motivation. On the one hand, I was once again reminded that the end was in sight, providing excitement and motivation to keep going. In addition to this however, I found encouragement to take care of myself (to ensure I made it to the end!) and also strive to do my very best in everything set before me.

With graduation now behind me, I believe this charge still carries real importance. The call to “finish well” should be a source of both motivation and encouragement everyday, in each of our lives. Recognizing that we are only passing through this life on earth, we realize that our days are numbered. With that in mind, we must remember to live each day to the full. As a pastor once told me recently, “it’s not how you start, but how you finish.” Ask God what he would have you do today specifically for him, remembering the finish line is just around the corner!

Lord, thank you for calling us to yourself. Thank you for the privilege of walking with you through this life here on earth. Please help us to live each day the full for you and your kingdom. Please help us all to “finish well.” Amen

Josh Wilhelm

1 Corinthians 9:24

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.

Remy Salvatore, Alice Shantz, Santos Siguenza

May 6, 2015

I Wonder

I've spent a lot of time in my life just wondering! Maybe that's good because I never get bored!

I wonder how God views us as He gazes from above.
Does He wonder what ails us as He watches as we shove?
Shove to get ahead – to have all that wealth affords,
Shove to have our way – no matter what the cost.
I wonder if He wonders if we'll ever stop this race
to take the time to look around and seek His face.
Or will we forever run a race to who knows where
and never meet the One who loves and brings release from care.

Have you ever wondered what God thinks of you? I have! Many times! I also have come to the conclusion that what He thinks matters a whole lot more than what people think. But I'm thinking that if I'm running around like a chicken without a head trying to please everybody else I'm missing God's purpose for my life. I may be involved in doing very good things but are they God's best for me?

I tend to have a reoccurring dream every once in a while where elevators are going round and round a building, not up and down like they should. Sometimes the dream is of a metro line that travels up and down instead of along a rail like it's supposed to. The other day the dream was of a building that was five stories with no elevator and no stairs. You got from one floor to the next shimmying up a rope! I've learned that I tend to have these strange dreams when I'm too busy and have too much clutter in my life and I'm not spending enough time with Jesus!

I've been thinking that God would want us to slow down, and listen to what He has to say. Often there is so much noise in our lives that we can't hear His voice. Lord, help us to stop our running to and fro and listen for Your still small voice.

Donna Preston

Psalm 46:10a

“Be still and know that I am God”.

Livia Stanca, Lori Starkey, Dave Doherty

May 7, 2015

No Matter Where You Go

As I write this, I've just returned from celebrating my nephew's 5th birthday. I remember my sister calling to tell me her water had broke and how fast I was packed and in the car as my mother and I drove as fast as we could from NYC to the GTA. I have learned so much about life through the gifts of my niece and nephews. Love took on a whole new meaning that day as I held my precious nephew moments after he was born.

Today if I said to my niece and nephews, "No matter..." they would respond by saying, "No matter where we go, or what we do, or who we become, Aunt Berly will always love us." I've repeated these words over them time and time again. After a rough night of babysitting which has ended up in no dessert and an early bed time, I sit down next to them and make sure they know that despite the fact that they are being punished, I still love them. I have learned so much about unconditional love from these three precious blessings in my life.

I've often come to a place where I've so needed to hear these words spoken over me by my heavenly Father. There are days when I look back and see mistakes so evident in my life, and I have a choice to make at that moment. I can choose to feel guilt and condemnation, or I can recall that Jesus gave me the greatest gift when I was in my worst condition. I lean upon the truth that God's grace is all I need. I come to a place where I find forgiveness and freedom, not guilt and condemnation. How freeing it is to encounter the love of God and seek to live a life honouring to God, in the midst of His love.

No matter where we have gone, no matter what we have done, and no matter who we have become, we have a heavenly Father's whose arms are opened wide, beckoning us to follow Him and to enter into the freedom of His unending love. Freedom is found from the pain, guilt, and sorrow that has held us down in those moments, and we are free to live.

Kimberly Heint

Psalm 139:8

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

Stan Starkey, Emma Strong, Brendan DePhillippeaux

May 8, 2015

He must increase - I must decrease

Not something I (we) find easy! None of us find it easy to fade into the background and give someone more “visibility” than ourselves. How often do we, when confronted by change in the workplace or church or even at home, maybe because our husband/wife wishes to change something such as, rearrange the furniture, do we drag our feet. “Decreasing” does not come easy. If we strive to love others as ourselves we need to call on the Holy Spirit daily. It is only with Him filling us that we can even begin to love others as ourselves thus allowing God to increase and us to decrease.

What we believe in our heart will be evidenced by our life. Lord help me (us) to seek time with you, so that I (we) can be able to decrease and you to increase, may we hear you saying, “that’s my child, she/he is becoming daily more like me.”

Marlyn Starkey

John 3:30

He must become greater; I must become less

Mike Strong, Linda Summers, Sherry Curry

May 9, 2015

Perhaps I Do Not Know Best

When I was around 8 years old, my parents and I went to the mall to watch a movie. When the movie ended my parents and I began to head to the car, I vividly remember my dad turning to me and saying, “Kimberly, hold on tight to my hand, there are a lot of people here and I do not want you to get lost.” I also vividly remember thinking my father was crazy, and being adamant that I would not get lost but I was old enough now to find my way around.

I let go of my father’s hand. Not only did I let go, but I let go and I stood in place. I did not move at all. Multiple movies had gotten out at the same time, and I stood there as the crowd moved around me. Finally, the crowd cleared and I stood there proud. While the crowd cleared, I knew my parents would be on the other side, and that I would be proven right and they would be wrong. I was wrong. The crowd cleared and there I stood in the midst of an empty mall entrance. I frantically began to look for my parents, realizing that my father had been right. I found a young couple and ran to them crying and explained the whole situation. It was then that my dad came out from behind one of those giant pillars in the mall, and called my name. I ran into his arms, apologizing and telling him I would never do that again. My parents did not need to punish me, nor did they need to explain their reasoning for asking me to stay close, I realized it the moment I noticed they were not where I thought they would be.

My dad is a wise man and has imparted a lot of wisdom to me over the years. Wiser than he though, is my Heavenly Father. There are times that God calls me to do something, and I feel like He is not aware of how advanced I am in my faith, or how independent I am. Time and time again though, I am reminded that even when I think I know best, I usually am making a mistake. Pride has taken root and in the end, I need to admit that I was in the wrong and God knows what He is doing. I clung on to my father’s hand that day tighter than I ever have. I desire that relationship with God as well, I want to hold on to God with all my might, knowing that He is my source of life.

Kimberly Heint

1 Corinthians 1:25

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”

Naomi Strong, Andrew Talat, Carlie Earl

May 10, 2015

Parenthood and Children

For years, I taught that the first reason for marriage (Genesis 2) was mutual companionship of the woman and man. Not all marriages are blessed with children, after all. However, a popular Christian teacher and writer, Bruce Wilkinson, in video series, claimed that God's chief goal for inventing the marriage covenant was "godly offspring". (Malachi 2:15)

Certainly, beginning in Genesis 1, the Bible has more obvious or frequent references to children than companionship. When I became a parent myself, and my life was reoriented by our children, I toyed with the idea that harmonious family life might be God's goal for human life. Living in a West African country for about 20 years, I saw powerful support for at least part of Wilkinson's idea. In traditional society, a man might take another wife if there were no children from the first wife, for example. In another religion, the children are thought of as the crops of the man, which he keeps even if there is the end of the contract, a divorce. Children are usually celebrated, and not looked on as interruptions to the fulfilment of personal development.

We probably don't need to rank the "reasons for marriage", which the old English ceremony listed as making sex holy, producing and raising children, and aiming at "mutual society". A marriage is a covenant, "for richer, for poorer", not a contract (more on that another time). You take what comes, by God's grace.

Dear God in heaven, who compared yourself to mothers who don't forget their children, we see you active in our lives for holiness. May our children also see you active in their lives for their good and for God-likeness. May they know they are loved and wanted by us as well as you, Amen.

Clare Fuller

Proverbs 23:25

May your father and mother be glad; may she who gave you birth rejoice!

Dave Thomson, Josh Wilhelm, John Borsi

May 11, 2015

God Wills for Man's Sanctification and Holiness

Sanctification: what does it mean? Many times the Christian Church uses words that are not understood by those who attend. I believe sanctification is something that we need to understand. There are approximately 140 references to sanctification in Bible, so with that many references, we should have an understanding of what it means.

The Unger Bible Dictionary says: "it is separation, a setting apart, separation from the secular and sinful". EMCC definition is: "Sanctification is the work of God in making men Holy". 1 Thessalonians 4:3 says "this is the will of God even your sanctification". Romans 15:16 tells us that "the Gentiles might becomesanctified by the Holy Spirit".

Now let's look at Holiness. Again the Unger Bible Dictionary says: "Holiness means separation from all that is evil". James MacDonald believes that "Holiness is the soul satisfying saturated presence of God in your life". That happens when we separate ourselves from sin and evil. Holiness should be the goal of every born again Christian for Hebrews 12:14 tells us that 'without holiness no one will see the Lord".

Father, work in us and sanctify us, making us holy, ready for heaven. Amen

Ivan Preston

Hebrews 12:14

"live in peace with all men and be holy".

Earl Gooden, Becca Mundy, Clare Fuller

May 12, 2015

“Behold the Hand” of the CREATOR!

There are important reasons why we should praise the LORD our God! Worship is not just a warm, fuzzy feeling of appreciation, but an acknowledgement of something greater than ourselves that is ‘worthy’ of reverence, adoration, fear, and amazement. God is to be put first in our hearts and lives because of his holiness, sovereignty, power, goodness, and justice. This verse implicates him as sovereign and powerful over his creation. There are 9 passages in the Old Testament which refer to God stretching out the heavens by his hand (e.g. Isaiah 45:12). This verse gives cause for worshipping God because he rides upon the heavens by his name “JAH”. It is also interesting to note that this name is written by the Hebrew letters ‘yodh’ and ‘hey’, which on their own have the meanings “behold” “the hand”!

For a relaxed perspective, we can see the immensity and sheer size of the heavens now, but soon will see him return on these heavens; and we can ‘behold the hand’ that created them! With such an imposing and commanding appreciation of the LORD God Almighty, we must be drawn in worship to him, and at the same time comprehending our insignificance. It is, then, with humbling incredulity that we read the next two verses (please read Psalm 67:5-6).

Father, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and who am I that such a vast God would watch over me. You are worthy of my worship, reverence, and respect. Praise you God – amen!

Steve Wiseman

Psalm 68:4

Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

Steve Wiseman, Victor Pomerleau, Marlyn Starkey, Brad Borsi

May 13, 2015

The Blessing Zone

A while ago our son in law posted a quote that I believe was from his pastor. It is this: "God doesn't want you living in the Poverty Zone or the Greed Zone. He wants you living in the Blessing Zone!"

I've been thinking on this statement. Is it true? I believe it depends on how you look at it. Can God still be blessing us even if we are poor? Of course! We may be in the poverty zone financially and still know God's blessing and Matthew 5:3 states: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven".

Is there a difference between the "poor in spirit" and the "spiritually poor"? I believe so. A great example of this is found in Luke 18:10-14. Two men went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee bragged of his accomplishments, he felt no need to ask God for anything. The tax collector recognized his deep spiritual need and his total dependency on God. Doesn't take much thought to figure out which man was spiritually poor and which was poor in spirit.

Can God bless us if we're living in the Greed Zone? There are lots of verses in the Bible about the Greedy person. 1 Timothy 6:9 is one example: "Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction." Sure doesn't sound much like blessing to me!

So we are to live in the "Blessing Zone". What is the blessing zone? One of the definitions from Webster's dictionary of the word blessing is this: "a divine benefit or gift". I remember learning an old hymn as a child "Count your blessings; name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done". It is a wonderful thing to live daily in the "blessing Zone" and experience God's abundant joy. Yes, I believe it's true that God wants us to live in the Blessing Zone. We can only do that as we surrender daily to Him and bask in His presence.

Donna Preston

Proverbs 28:25

"A greedy man stirs up strife, but the one who trusts in the Lord will be enriched."

Sarah Wiseman, Larry Shantz, Mike Salvatore, Dan Bennett

May 14, 2015

Saying No

One of the things that we looked at during our men's conference, was the life of Solomon. This was a guy who could literally have anything that he wanted, and in the words of Scripture that is exactly what he did. He denied himself nothing, and the evaluation was made that there was nothing that his eye saw that he refused himself.

Just like the kid who enters a candy store and is told that he can have whatever he wants, and as much as he wants—Solomon dove into a lifestyle that denied himself nothing. The problem with that kind of lifestyle is that eventually it will make you sick. In the case of the boy in the candy store—he gets sick and throws up the candy. For Solomon it produced a spiritual sickness that just about cost him his life with God.

There is an old proverb that says, “because one can, does not mean that one should”. Solomon would have done well to have paid heed to those very words. Solomon was the master of leading a distracted life. Those distractions kept drawing his focus away from following God and back to himself. Like the boy in the candy store, he had so much of himself that he eventually became sick.

Father, there are times that I feel like I am following the same path as Solomon. I feel like I am all about me and nothing about You. I don't want it to be like that. I want to be focused on being Your follower... but there are so many distractions, and I'm tired of being distracted. So please come to my rescue. Amen

Stan Starkey

Luke 9:57

As they were walking along the road, a man said to Him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

Rachel Wiseman, Mary Salvatore, Gord Salm, Winni Bankazo

May 15, 2015

The Gospel

Every year at Evangel we look at one of the Gospels. In the church, what Jesus said and did is really at the center of all we do and believe.

Jesus was such a great teacher and used everything at His disposal to help people understand what it was to be His follower. He would use simple stories to illustrate things that could be confusing, but with the pictures that He would paint—these everyday experiences would bring the simple truths of the kingdom into everyday life.

One of my favorite stories is that of the farmer who sowed seed, and the seed fell on a number of different soils, with a number of different outcomes. Of all those situations, only one produced a crop. It was the seed that fell on good soil that produced the desired end, that of a fruitful harvest.

When I was a boy, harvest was my favorite season. I think that it was partially because I saw how much it meant to my grandfather. For the farmer, everything is about the harvest. For God, the ultimate farmer, it is about the harvest... it's about you and I being the fruit of His harvest.

Father, what is good soil? I wonder sometimes if truthfully the soil in my heart is "good". There are so many distractions, weeds and blackbirds who want to steal the seed and leave my life fruitless.

Father, I truly want a fruitful life. Not one of my own making, nor of my own definition, but one that follows You and what You call fruitful. Good soil is hard to come by and is hard to maintain. It is a work in the making that only you can accomplish.

Stan Starkey

Matthew 13:23

But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Ainsley Salvatore, Jesse Wiseman, Bob Puersten, Lois Byers

May 16, 2015

Loving our Enemies

In the year 1569, Anabaptist believer Dirk Willems was imprisoned in his hometown of Asperen (modern Netherlands) for being re-baptized. Seeking to avoid the violent death that awaited him, he managed to escape the building and began to flee away. Unfortunately, a guard was alerted and pursued him vigorously. At one point Willems ran across a pond covered by only a thin layer of ice, amazingly making it to the other side. However, the guard chasing after him was not so fortunate; he crashed through the ice and went tumbling into the frightfully cold water below. Rejecting the human impulse to let his enemy face destruction, Willems ran back onto the pond and pulled his pursuer out of the water, saving him from certain death. A chief magistrate, who had watched this touching event from the safety of land, ordered the guard to haul Willems back to the prison despite his act of selflessness. In May of that year, Willems was executed for his religious beliefs.

In North America we are trained to love revenge. Nothing thrills us like seeing the villain in a movie get his or her just desserts. If we were in Willems' shoes, many of us would delight in seeing the demise of our foe. Yet this attitude does not reflect the biblical teaching about our enemies. We are told to love and pray for them rather than rejoice in their defeat. In fact, we were once enemies of Christ who were shown incomprehensible mercy. How much more, then, should we show mercy to those who oppose us?

As I have reflected on this over the last number of months, I have been forced to face the reality that I often show less grace to a waiter who makes a mistake on my order than Dirk Willems did to the man who lead him to his death. My natural instinct is to hurt rather than heal, to fight rather than forgive. Thankfully, due to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, I have started to learn how to love those whom I have been trained to disdain. As you read this, I suggest you offer up a prayer for the ISIS soldiers, the government officials of North Korea, or the insurgents of Boko Haram in Nigeria. May their lives be changed by the gospel in the same way as yours.

Lord, help our attitudes and actions be transformed by your example of sacrificial love. Teach us to lead a life that displays the depths of your mercy to those who need it. Help us be witnesses like Dirk Willems.

Dave Doherty

Matthew 5:44, 46

**“You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”
But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you... [for if you love
those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the
same?”**

Ben Wiseman, Jack Priolo, Ivan Preston, Ron Byers

May 17, 2015

Why Me God to Why Not God!

I have been trying to work on being bolder in my faith. I'll encounter people who I feel like I should share the Gospel with, or ask them if they want prayer and unfortunately, I often find excuses to not share my faith. I'm trying to work on changing my thought process from, "Why me, God!!" to "Why not, God!" The other week I was on the bus, and this guy behind me was coughing incessantly. It was quite a brutal cough and I kept thinking about asking him if he would like me to pray for his health. After debating the idea for a few minutes, and trying to find a good reason not to, I decided to say, why not, God! I turned around and asked if he was feeling okay. His immediate response was, "I have really bad allergies, and I promise I am not contagious!" I thought this answer was quite humorous, for I was not even contemplating praying for my own health while this young man coughed all over me.

I explained I was not concerned with whether or not he was contagious, but I wanted to know if he would like me to pray for him and to pray for his health. He thanked me for my willingness to pray for him, and said that it was not necessary because it was simply allergies. After talking for a few more minutes, something occurred that I had not taken into consideration... he gave me his phone number and suggested we hang out again. All of the reasons I thought up for not talking to him, the reason that he might think I was hitting on him was not one of them! I was unaware that "can I pray for you?" is currently on the top pick up lines list.

I was quite bummed by the end of the encounter for it had not gone the way I had hoped. While looking back though, I realized it does not matter that the outcome was not what I predicted. While I was hoping the guy and I would pray together and he would be healed and God would receive glory and the whole bus would come to know him that day (Yes, I have a BIG imagination!) I still allowed myself to lean upon God and His Spirit to have the boldness I needed to ask if this young man wanted prayer. It is not always focusing upon getting the marvelous outcomes that we have dreamed up, but more so about being willing to take the steps and trust God, no matter what the outcome might be.

Kimberly Heint

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Donna Preston, Heather Pook, Kerry Petker, Ricardo Moreno

May 18, 2015

God Transcends (even Post-Modern) Culture

Jeremiah was instructed to say this to the “house of Israel” (vs. 1), who were not yet at the end of several waves of Babylonian invasions, which were eventually going to leave the country desolate and barren. This verse divides this section of the chapter; the first part (vs. 1-10) speaks of the futility of idolatry – and not allowing oneself to be dismayed at what and how the nations engage in idolatry – climaxing with an admonition that the LORD is the true, living God and dreaded judge. This section (vs. 12-16) of the chapter ends with a discourse on the LORD being the true sovereign Creator; the idols are a falsehood.

It is very interesting to note that this verse – nestled between the real Judge and the true Creator – is not written in Hebrew, but in Chaldea (the language of the Babylonians). God was speaking not only to his people, but also directly to their Babylonian conquerors (sent to conquer Judea by God himself as a judgement). And *it has come to pass*: the gods of the Babylonians, the worship rituals, and the culture have all perished! The LORD God, Creator and Judge is sovereign over all. We can take comfort in this, that God will not bow to or change to accommodate post-modern culture – he is the God who will never change! Hang on...he is coming, and this earth will become the kingdom of our God! This is our sure hope!

Father, hasten the day when our faith will be made sight, and in the meantime, help me to serve you, waiting in eager anticipation, knowing that you will accomplish what you have said! Amen!

Steve Wiseman

Jeremiah 10:11

Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

Willy Ozua, Naomi Nzisa, Natalia Jackson, Christian Jiminez

May 19, 2015

God wills that we be filled with the Holy Spirit

During the Old Testament period the Holy Spirit was poured out only on prophets, priests, Kings and leaders. The prophet Joel wrote that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit on all people (Joel 2:28-32).

This would happen after Jesus had returned to heaven. Jesus had been teaching and preparing the disciples for ministry. He told them that they were not to leave Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49).

Just before He ascended to heaven He again told them that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit and would receive power and would be great witnesses (Acts 1:5-8). That happened on the day of Pentecost. The book of Acts is the history of the beginning of the church and of men who were empowered by the Holy Spirit to be effective witnesses, performing miracles for God's glory. As a result the church grew and prospered and was effective in winning souls for Christ.

We too need the empowering of the Holy Spirit if we are going to be effective in ministry. The EMCC Statement of faith states that "While the divine work of making men holy begins in repentance and regeneration yet ..the believer is to die to self, purified in heart and be filled with the Holy Spirit".

Acts 8 tells the story of Phillip's ministry in Samaria where many received Christ and were baptized and in verse 14 it says "they sent Peter and John to pray for the Holy Spirit to fall on them". Verse 17 "Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit".

Father, empower us with Your Holy Spirit that we might be effective in witnessing to others, leading them to salvation.

Ivan Preston

Ephesians 5:18

"Be filled with the Spirit".

Sam Nordquist, Sunday Ozua, Steve Nickerson, Olga Culpic

May 20, 2015

Nephelim

One night in our family Bible reading time we decided to tackle an old puzzle: who or what were the beings translated as “giants” in the King James Version of Genesis 6? So we hauled out the Bible helps we had and checked out the comments of past Bible readers. There were the usual suggestions: 1) that “the sons of God” were spirit-beings who married human women, and thus were produced the “nephilim” (Hebrew, used only in two verses in the Bible), which the Greeks thought meant “gigas” –giants. This interpretation fits with animistic beliefs world-wide, but opposes Jesus’ words that angels do not marry. (Matthew 22:30) The other contender was that 2) the “sons of God” were the descendants of Seth, and thus in the line of promise. The “daughters of men” were descendants of Cain, and thus godless. Somehow this mixing was supposed to produce powerful humans.

As we read, we found a third suggestion, based on words people in the ancient Middle East used of their kings: “sons of the gods” or God and of course their children would exercise power as they pleased. The judgment on violence in the chapter is all directed to humans, as would be just. This simple suggestion helped.

In a way, it did not matter what we decided, but that we asked a question and looked for answers. As the old believer Augustine said, we assume the Bible makes sense, and work toward understanding, even if it is long in coming.

Holy Spirit, Spirit of Truth, not only wake our spirits to submit to the truth, but lead us to the truth of the things that puzzle us. You carried along those writers assigned for this holy job so they did not fail. Bring us into the place of understanding, so we may praise your work more. Amen.

Clare Fuller

Genesis 6:3

Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

Samson Alia, Rebecca Nordquist, Tasha McLimont, Natalie Jackson

May 21, 2015

The promise of Spring

We've all heard "April showers bring May flowers". Well, today is April the 8th and we are having the April Showers in the form of freezing rain! Yuk! My mother always said "this is the day that the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it" Psalm 118:24. As I think back I don't ever remember hearing mom complain about the weather! My mom chose to rejoice, no matter what the weather was like! She taught me a very valuable lesson.

I've been thinking – why should we complain about rain in the springtime anyway? Rain brings the promise of spring. Zechariah 10:1 states "Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people and plants of the field to everyone". As I look out the window today I find it a little difficult to find the Promise of Spring, but it there whether I see or feel it or not.

God has promised spring time in my soul as well. After the rain, after the difficult times, God's Spirit will bring spring to my heart, refreshing to my soul.

Isaiah 45:8 "You heavens above, rain down my righteousness; let the clouds shower it down. Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up, let righteousness flourish with it; I the Lord, have created it."

Lord, help me to remember that after the April rain, May flowers are bound to appear. And then the sunshine that brings growth and renewal to my soul. Thankyou Lord for the Promise of Spring.

Donna Preston

Genesis 8: 22

"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."

Nehema Ozua, Jeremiah Nordquist, Seth McLimont, Kyle Vandermeer

May 22, 2015

Pursuing Holiness

My nephew used to have this toy tool set. I remember it had a toy drill in which the bit moved when you pulled the trigger. My nephew loved this toy drill... but not because he liked to pretend he was going to drill something together, oh no... he liked it because he liked pretending it was a gun. One day I was watching him and his sister and his sister did something he did not like, so of course, he picked up his drill, and point it toward his sister and began to pretend shooting her with it.

I was quite upset with this interaction and called him over to talk to me about it. I told him that guns were never toys and you should never pretend to shoot someone. I said to him, guns are not ever meant to be used as a joke and he needs to apologize to his sister. He looked at me and said, "what about water guns? Can I shoot people with water guns?" He was trying to logic his way out of my argument, to find the loop hole, to figure out how he could do what he wanted to do but in a way that it would be deemed acceptable

I to am guilty of trying to logic my way out of things. God has called me to act in certain ways, He has called all of us to be holy for He is holy, and yet I try to figure loop holes in that command. Well God, obviously you are holy for you are God, but I can do a few sinful things because I still live in the flesh. This argument will often show up when we say, "We'll I'm only human! All have sinned and fallen short!" Except, this are simply us trying to figure out ways to live in a way that we want to live, and justify it. God calls us to be holy, plain and simple. Will we master it? No, no we won't. But we sure are not going to passionate pursue God's holiness while we are standing around trying to figure out ways to justify our sinfulness. Let us be transformed, not confirmed to this world, so that we can discern the will of God, and discern how He has called us to live.

Kimberly Heint

Romans 12:2

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Grace Ozua, Haley Nordquist, Mark McLimont, Maritza Moreno

May 23, 2015

God Cares for the Small Things

I enjoy reading through 2 Kings 6 because it reminds me that the great things and the small things matter to God. At the beginning of 2 kings, servants of Elisha were building a log cabin for themselves because their living quarters were a bit too small. When one man was chopping down some wood, his axe head fell off and fell into the water. This concerned the man because he had borrowed the axe. When Elisha heard the story, he threw a piece of wood into the water and the axe head floated. A few verses later a story is told about Elisa exiting his house and the army of Syria is surrounding him and his city. Elisha prays to God and God shows Elisha's servants how great of an army God has surrounding them, and strikes the army of Syria with blindness. God protects Elisha and all Israel. An axe head is such a simple thing, and God still provided it for the servant who lost it. Protection from a massive army is a HUGE thing, and God protected the city and answered Elisha's prayers. There is nothing too small nor too big for our God.

When I was in grade eleven I had a crazy class schedule and it often left no time for me to eat. I would give my friend two dollars every morning and she would buy three cookies and a Snapple for me to drink. During our history class she would bring me the cookies and Snapple and I would eat it, and that would hold me over till I got home. On this particular day my friend had been super busy and was unable to buy me my afternoon snack. I remember I was so hungry that I could not concentrate in class. I prayed, "God, please fill my stomach and satisfy it so I can pay attention in class." A few seconds after saying Amen, a boy in front of me turned around and looked at me. He said, "Kim, you often share your cookies with me, I have a few cookies in my bag, would you like one?" I was shocked! I immediately answered yes and I savored every last bit of that cookie!

God had provided for me through my classmate. He had not heard my silent prayer to God, but God had heard it and used this individual to answer my prayer. I have had big prayers and I have had small prayers answered. I have also had prayers that have gone unanswered, or answered in ways I never would have desired. All in all though, I have learned that God cares about the little things, as much as He cares about the big things. Whatever little thing you might have in your life today, talk to God about it!

Kimberly Heint

Ephesians 3:20,21

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Fiona Ozua, Gabrielle Nordquist, Mateo MacKenzie

May 24, 2015

What a beautiful time of year

God so blesses us with the changing seasons?

Spring is such a delightful time of year as He speaks to us His story. The story that He loved us and gave us new life. New life that is just that brand new, not "made over" but a whole new live created in Christ Jesus?

What a God we serve who loved us enough to give us his very best His Son. I can't comprehend the giving of such a gift?

Lord help us to remember daily the wonderful Gift that you have given us. Help us to be aware every hour, every minute and every second of our position in You.

Lord give us a burden to tell everyone we know that You love them and have made a way for them to be cleansed by Your Blood, washed and made new.

Praise You Father for Your unspeakable gift.....thank you.

Marlyn Starkey

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!

Clarisse MacKenzie, Lea Kusaula, Glenn Keohn

May 25, 2015

Holiness is Christ in Me

On Sunday we were singing one of my favourite songs at church. Lord, I Need You. I first discovered this song during my third year of Bible College. My roommate and I would meet daily after our afternoon class and we would read our Bibles, sing hymns and pray. One of the hymns that we discovered during this time was, Lord, I Need You. I do not know how to read music, therefore when we discovered a hymn that we really loved, and we did not know how to sing it, we would simply read the words. I really valued this time, and the ability to really focus on the words of hymns. We did end up looking up the song online and finding the tune to it.

This song became a powerful song to me throughout the next few years. As I mourned loss, I found myself lying in bed, simply repeating the words over and over again, “Lord I need you, oh I need you, every hour I need you.” When life changed a lot quicker than I was hoping for it to, and dreams had to be laid down, and the unknown became even greater, it was these words I would find myself saying with the last of my strength.

This Sunday as we sang the song, I noticed something totally different. I do not know if this line was not in my original hymnal book, or if I simply never noticed it before, but it struck me. “Yes, where you are Lord, I am free. Holiness is Christ in me.” I kept repeating those words, “Holiness is Christ in me.” I long to be holy for the Lord my God is holy, and called me to be holy. Christ lives in me, it is through His holiness that I find my holiness. That is why I am free where the Lord is, I am free because I have the freedom to live in His holiness, and to not strive for my own. God has done all the work, I can find freedom and rest in knowing that I need Him, and that through Him I find holiness. Today, take some time to rest in His Holiness, to find solitude and comfort in the presence of Our Lord and Saviour and to find the freedom that He offers to us!

Kimberly Heint

Hebrews 12:14

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Abigayle Nordquist, Anna Ozua, Judy MacKenzie, Maria Arteaga Montilla

May 26, 2015

Can we outgive God

Before retiring to Kitchener we were challenged to assist a needy man who urgently required surgery not covered by insurance. This was a difficult time of testing for his family and friends.

We felt led to help with the cost. Ron and I prayed, and asked the Lord to guide us in the amount we should give. Did He really tell us that?

We gave and felt at peace!

Shortly after this experience we had to travel to Ohio for a church anniversary weekend. Again our faith was tested when our car brakes failed enroute. However, God graciously led us to visit friends in Sarnia on the way. Without Mike knowing of our financial testing, he said "no arguing, the Lord told me to give you this cheque" which was the exact amount we had given!

After loaning us their car, we went on our way praising the Lord, and learning again, "No, we cannot outgive God."

Father help us to always be open to the leading of Your Spirit.

Lois Byers

Romans 12: 6,8

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. ...if it is giving, then give generously...

Brian Ozua, John MacKenzie, Levi Kusaula

May 27, 2015

Jesus, What a Wonder You Are

At the prayer meeting this past Thursday morning the thought slipped into my mind: Jesus, what a wonder you are! I sensed a deep awe come upon my spirit and sensed His presence. As I sat there I got to thinking: Jesus, You are Son of man and You are Son of God. You are Holy, You are Righteous, You are Saviour, You are King, You are the great I AM, and You are beautiful, all together Lovely. You are the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star. You are Name above all names, the Alpha and Omega. You are Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. You are all powerful. You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus, You are the Way, the Truth and the Life and You are the Light of the World.

I could go on and on. Actually there are over two thousand titles and names for Jesus Christ! Wow! As I sat there in the prayer meeting I got to thinking: Jesus, not only are You a wonder, highly exalted by God but Your name is above every Name (Philippians 2:9). Verse 10 and 11 of Philippians 2 states: “at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

Jesus, truly You are a Wonder! How I praise You! How I bless Your Holy Name! Blessed is Your Name, Lord most high!

Donna Preston

Acts 4:12

“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Bailie MacKenzie, Cyprien Kusaula, Lynn Johnston

May 28 , 2015

Fatherly Advice:

This is part of David's fatherly advice to his son who was to build the first temple in Jerusalem. Working in (or building) the temple (or 'church' for us) is one thing in and of itself, but that does not define faithfulness. The LORD searches all hearts – and David warns his son to serve the LORD God with a perfect heart. "Perfect" means complete, full, whole, and at peace. God looks for that heart that will be committed, faithful, and loyal. Notice that this must be accompanied by a willing mind, which requires a conscious decision – and God "understands all the imaginations of the thoughts". This is more than we can say for ourselves, and it would be well for us to ask for his help in making us pure in heart and mind. The best news is that if we seek him, he will be found by us. God is not hiding, or playing hard to get. He is readily available to us – all we need do is seek / ask. He does want this relationship with us, but we need to cultivate that "perfect heart" and "willing mind". This is good, fatherly advice, from a man after God's own heart!

Father, draw me close to you, and give me a perfect heart and a willing mind. Help me to seek you throughout this day and put you first in my life – you alone are worthy, and willing – thank you for your mercy and grace. Amen!

Steve Wiseman

1 Chronicles 28:9

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

Ken Johnston, Katharine Jennings, Thorna Jackson

May 29 , 2015

Memories of Past Blessings

Those of us, who have been truly born of God, experiencing forgiveness of sin through Christ's sacrificial death, can remember times when God has blessed us in special ways. As I write today (April 10th) it is not only the birthday of our oldest Grandson Caleb, but also for me, it's the 13th anniversary of a special encounter with God that I had while I was in Mexico. It is something I will never forget.

I had been seeking God for an outpouring of His Spirit over my life and ministry for years. Three days before this encounter of God's presence, I was watching the Billy Graham Homecoming Video honoring those who had ministered by song during his many crusades. I began to weep and pour out my heart to God saying, "Lord, I have done nothing in Your kingdom in comparison to the many you have used in these crusades. In my brokenness I wept and cried for almost half an hour seeking God's touch on my life.

I believe God saw my tears and heard my cry. On April 10, 2002, early Monday morning, I was praying and seeking the Lord in my office when suddenly I was filled with an incredible warmth and joy of God's Spirit. It truly was a special encounter of God's manifest Presence. I basked in His presence which stayed with me for days and was one of the most effective periods of ministry in my life.

As we read the book of acts, we see that the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit on many occasions as they served and ministered. Paul exhorted the Ephesians to be "filled with the Spirit". I am told that the Greek means an ongoing infilling. In other words we are leaky vessels and need regular refilling. As I write, I am asking and seeking God for a fresh infilling of His spirit so that He can be glorified in my life.

Father, would You hear the prayers of those of us who are hungry and thirsty for a fresh infilling of Your Spirit. We wait with anticipation and expectation of what You will do in Evangel in the coming days. Amen

Ivan Preston

Hebrews 11:6

"God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him"

Oral Jackson, John Heo, Lenora Green

May 30 , 2015

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

So many times I have echoed the prayer from the end of the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John (Rev 22:20): “He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

Why pray for Jesus to come? Sometimes I suspect I am feeling world-weariness: “I’m tired. There is no end to this struggle. I want out!” Or perhaps my feeling is despair: “There are no solutions to this world’s problems. Press the STOP button!” Other times I wish Jesus would come and zap the wicked.

Jesus deals with all these feelings and more. The martyred cry, “How long [until there is justice]?” and are told to be patient (Rev 6:11). God has patience that more will repent (2 Peter 3:9). In a parable of Jesus, a nobleman instructs his employees to put his money to work until he comes back. He expected positive results. (Luke 19:13) James (5:7) points out that as farmers work and then wait patiently for a crop, so believers should wait for some good to mature at the time of the Lord’s coming. Those who hope to see Jesus return purify themselves, as he is pure (1 John 3:3). Here’s Paul’s instruction in Ephesians 5:8, 11: “Live as children of light...Have nothing to do with deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”

Dear Jesus, I love my family. I love my wife. There are many projects and explorations of this creation I would love to complete, but I would rather be with you, which is far better. But I pray you find me doing my assigned good task. Come, and welcome!

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Clare Fuller

Mark 13:34

It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Ruth Gore, Robert Goodale, Thomas Fuller

May 31, 2015

Avoidance

I can be an avoider. I really don't like things going wrong, and I don't like to experience any Conflict. That in itself puts me in company with a large group of men. Men who as a whole, tend to avoid conflict and difficult situations.

For many men, there is nothing that they would not do to keep the peace in their relationships and avoid difficult and uncomfortable situations. Their idea of a great life is having breakfast, going to work, coming home, having supper, watching a little television, going to bed... and in so doing they are perfectly happy.

There is also a part of us "avoider type men" that wants to avoid receiving bad news. I know this to be true in many situations that men face about their own health. So many men die needlessly every year, because they refuse to go to a doctor before it was too late.

I was reminded of this the other day as I was playing with Benaiah. I was running my hand along his side and felt it again. There has been this lump on him about halfway along his ribcage. I have been putting off taking him to the vet. I know that we would not be able to spend the money to deal with it, if it were what I fear it to be, and yet if I don't get it looked at... I can put it to the back of my mind and not have to think about it.

It is a foolish thing to do. It may not be what I think it is, and it may be able to be dealt with in a way that is affordable. But the problem is, that it may mean having to do something that I in no way want to face... it may mean that I have to put him down.

Father, there may be times in my own life that I let things go out of fear. I ignore things that may make me face truths about myself that I would rather not face. I avoid problems for fear how they will effect my relationships, and I fear that there may be times that if I am truthful—You may ask me to put down my old nature. I need You to help me to be courageous. I need you to help me to enter into the things I would rather avoid. And I definitely need You to help me to put to death the things that move me away from You. Amen

Stan Starkey

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Mike Gore, Rachel Goodale, Suzanna Fuller

1 year Bible Reading Plan

Adapted From Biblegateway.com

Day 1 Genesis 1-3	Day 16 Genesis 47-50
Day 2 Genesis 4-6	Day 17 Exodus 1-3
Day 3 Genesis 7-9	Day 18 Exodus 4-6
Day 4 Genesis 10-12	Day 19 Exodus 7-9
Day 5 Genesis 13-15	Day 20 Exodus 10-12
Day 6 Genesis 16-18	Day 21 Exodus 13-15
Day 7 Genesis 19-21	Day 22 Exodus 16-18
Day 8 Genesis 22-24	Day 23 Exodus 19-21
Day 9 Genesis 25-27	Day 24 Exodus 22-24
Day 10 Genesis 28-30	Day 25 Exodus 25-27
Day 11 Genesis 31-33	Day 26 Exodus 28-30
Day 12 Genesis 34-36	Day 27 Exodus 31-33
Day 13 Genesis 37-39	Day 28 Exodus 34-36
Day 14 Genesis 40-42	Day 29 Exodus 37-40
Day 15 Genesis 43-46	Day 30 Leviticus 1-3

Ready for the incredible privilege and adventure of reading the Bible through cover to cover? We hope so! It takes only about fifteen minutes a day. Enjoy! As you read, ask the Lord to help you see the redemptive story of the Bible. It's the heartbeat of every book from Genesis to Revelation.

**Take the helmet of salvation
and the sword of the Spirit,
which is the Word of God and
pray in the spirit on all
occasions with all kinds of
prayers and requests. With this
in mind, be alert and always
keep on praying for all the
saints.**

Ephesians 6:17-18



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