

1 December 2007

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

I am so glad you have decided to be in God's Word this month. Keep Jesus at the center of everything You do this month and everything will go better.

I am going to take a little time at the beginning of the devotions this month and tell you about my trip to Africa. I hope what I have to share will bless you.

God bless you as you study His Word this month.

Gladly in His Service,

Dr. Jason B. Brittain

Saturday December 1

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 45-46

2 Peter 3

Praise the Lord! Well, as I write this devotion, I am on a mission trip in Africa. I am going to use these opening comments to tell you a little bit about the trip as I go along. First of all, I want to thank every one of you who prayed for my trip and sent finances. I know God is going to use both your prayers and money to help people here in Africa. I will write you more tomorrow.

Look at what Peter wrote in 2 Peter 3:3-4, **First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' He promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."**

Now, I know these verses have some "end times applications" but I also know they need to be applied in our lives right now. Here's what I am talking about. There have been times when we all have been standing in faith waiting for God to come and help us and sometimes it seems like we have to wait a long time. In those situations, people sometimes talk against us and our faith. They say, "God will never come and help" but we need to stand in faith and know that He will do what He has promised us. He is always faithful to His Word and we can trust Him.

Prayer: Lord, I so thankful that You love me and I am thankful that You will never leave me nor forsake me. Help me to remember that Your timing is not always my timing AND help me to remember that Your timing is always right. I also ask You to bless Church tomorrow. I know that is Your will and I get in line with You and Your will. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday December 2

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 47-48

1 John 1

Praise the Lord! When I left Denver for this trip, it was on a Sunday night at 8 PM. I had been up about 13 hours. I then had a 9-hour flight to London, a 9-hour layover in London and then a 10-hour flight to South Africa. When I arrived there, it was about 11AM and I had a full day ahead of me. Here's my point, we need to keep our attitude right no matter what. Everything (and I mean everything) will go better when we think on good things like God tells us to do.

1 John 1:3 says, **We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.** Here's a quick point on this. John knew Jesus and they knew Jesus. When they shared about Jesus, they could have real fellowship. Real Scriptural fellowship is something only Christians can enjoy and it is only enjoyed when we let Jesus be a part of what we are doing. So, don't miss any opportunities to enjoy real fellowship.

Now, look at the next verse, **We write this to make our joy complete.** Real fellowship between Christians will help us to have more JOY! God's JOY is such a blessing and we should never take it lightly.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for all the blessings You bring into my life. Please help me to keep my attitude right no matter what I have to face. I know that thinking on good things, like You tell me to do, is always right and I know it will always help me. I also want to fellowship with believers today, so help me to have the joy that You have for me as I do that. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday December 3

Scripture Reading: Daniel 1-2

1 John 2

Praise the Lord! We need to know the love of God and we need to let it shine through us. As you know, I am in Africa as I write this and I want God's love to shine through my life here, but I don't want you to think you have to wait until you go to Africa for this to happen for you. You need to love people with the love of God right where you are today and know that God is using you.

1 John 2:27 says, **As for you, the anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit - just as it has taught you, remain in Him.**

We have God's Holy Spirit in us and He can lead us and guide us in the way He wants us to live. This is such a blessing and it goes right along with what I started off with for today. When we really listen to what the Spirit is telling us and live like He wants, we will be a good witness for God and others will be drawn to Him. Our part is to take the love of God and let it be lived out wherever we are today. I happen to be in Africa, but you are also surrounded by people who need to see the love of God demonstrated today and they need to see those things through you and your life.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for Your love and I know that You want to show that same love to others through me. Please help me to live like You want and help me to let Your love reach others through me. I know that You want to do this in Africa AND I know that You want to do this right where I am today. Please help me to represent You well today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday December 4

Scripture Reading: Daniel 3-4

1 John 3

Praise the Lord! On our first night in South Africa, we met with some wonderful believers here in a home meeting. There were about twelve of us there and it was a very sweet meeting. As I was there, I was reminded that people are the same everywhere. They are learning God's ways and trying to put them into practice in their lives just like we are doing. Praise the Lord for the fact that He helps us as we live for Him!

1 John 3:1 says, **How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.** Thank God for His great love! He has lavished it on us. Many of the times we know He has lavished His love on us when we deserve it the least. As an example of that, think about the prodigal son. He willingly left the father and yet the father was ready and willing to lavish his love on him when he returned.

Verse 2 says, **Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.** NOW we are children of God! It is not that we are going to be children of God some day. NOW we are children of God because He loves us and He has lavished His love on us even though we didn't deserve it.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for Your love. Thank You for lavishing it on me even though I have never deserved it. I am also amazed that You have chosen me to be Your child and I want to grasp more of what that means. Also, help me to live like Your child should and help me to represent You well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday December 5

Scripture Reading: Daniel 5-6

1 John 4

Praise the Lord! In yesterday's devotion, I wrote to you about a home meeting we went to and I want to share something someone said and my reaction to it. One lady noticed that we had some jet lag and she said, "I have heard that is a good thing and that the feeling a person has is really their body building new cells and things like that." I had never heard that before but here is how I reacted to it. I decided I would believe that my jet lag was indeed a good thing and that good things were happening in my body because of it! Why not believe for good things?

1 John 4:4 says, **You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.** There are some verses that I wish people would just read, understand what they say and then really believe them. This is one of those verses.

Look closely at the last part of this verse, **the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.** We have Jesus in our lives and He is greater than anyone else. So, what do we have to worry about? Just to make sure you know the answer to that question, let me give you the answer! We have nothing to worry about because **the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world!**

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You are in my life. Please help me to comprehend more of what that really means. I know that You are always the greater One and I want that to affect my life more. I also know that this truth should affect my attitude more when I am facing something that is hard. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday December 6

Scripture Reading: Daniel 7-8

1 John 5

I will get back to sharing about my mission trip tomorrow but today I want to talk to you about the Christmas Season. I really don't care if Christmas Day is actually the day of Jesus' birth or not. I know we should celebrate His coming into our lives every day. Keep Jesus at the center of all your activities this month and you will do much better. Don't let the devil or the busyness of this season rob you of your peace or joy!

1 John 5:1 says, **Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves His child as well.** When we accept Jesus into our lives, God adopts us into His family. When that happens, we have a much closer relationship with God. He becomes our Father, and as we learn more and more about His love we become more confident in that relationship.

All that is good but it is not all that God is doing. We are also part of a new family. God, as our Father, places us in His family and we are brothers and sisters with each other. When we love God, we also need to love His children. This verse puts it this way, **everyone who loves the Father loves His child as well.** This is talking about us loving Jesus AND it is talking about us loving each other. 1 John 4:20 says, **If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen!**

Prayer: Lord, I want to seek You first and I want to keep you at the center of all my activities today and this whole Christmas Season. I also want to love You AND all Your children more. Please help me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday December 7

Scripture Reading: Daniel 9-10

2 John

Praise the Lord! One of the orphanages we always visit in Malawi is Open Arms Orphanage. They have a web site and you can learn more about them by searching there. They take care of babies who are orphans and they always need formula to feed the babies. On this trip we had sent about \$600 ahead to buy them formula. When we went to visit them, we found that the people who delivered it only brought them formula #2, which is for older babies. This was good, but they needed a balance of #1 & #2. So, rather than getting upset about this, we went out and bought them \$500 worth of formula #1. Now they have food for about 4 month! Praise God!

2 John 1:4 says, **It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us.** It is always wonderful to come here and see how people are growing in the Lord AND it is always wonderful for me to hear how you are growing in the Lord! So, keep growing. Give me and the others who are helping you along to have even more joy.

2 John 1:12 says, **I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.** Believe me, every good minister of the Word always has more to say than we have time and I guess we are in good company. John felt that way too.

Prayer: Lord, when I face things that don't turn out just like I think they should have, help me to look for opportunities to do more rather than being distracted. I also want to keep growing in You and I want to help others more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday December 8

Scripture Reading: Daniel 11-12

3 John

Praise the Lord! I hope you like hearing about some of the things we did in Africa. When we travel south later on this trip, many Pastors will come over the border from Mozambique to be with us. They are very poor and their Churches always leak during the rainy season. So, we bought 200 yards of very heavy plastic. They will put this plastic on their roofs before they put on the thatch and this will keep them dry for several years. It only cost us \$70 and this will be a great blessing to many Churches. God is blessing our lives so we can be a blessing to others!

Look at 3 John 1:2, **Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.** When our souls do well, we will do well in every other area of our lives.

Romans 12:2 says, **Do not conform any longer 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.** When we renew our minds to the Word of God, we will find God's will for our lives.

You see, your soul is your mind, your will and your emotions. When we do well in those areas, everything else will go better for us.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You are blessing my life. Help me to remember that You are blessing me so I can be a blessing to others. Help me to renew my mind to Your Word more and I ask You to bless Church tomorrow. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday December 9

Scripture Reading: Hosea 1-4

Jude 1

Praise the Lord! Genesis 12:1-2 say, **The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."** Abraham was blessed to be a blessing. Galatians 3:3:14 says that the blessings of Abraham are for us. I am in Africa as I write this and we are blessing a lot of people. Many of you sent your prayers and your money with me and so you are being a blessing here too.

Jude verse 20 says, **But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.** Keep yourself built up in the Holy Spirit because we need to be strong.

The next verse says, **Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.** Keep yourself in God's love! That is sure a good thing to do.

The next verse says, **Be merciful to those who doubt.** You see, people who are doubtful probably don't need to be put down for their doubt. They probably already know they have problems. They need someone to be merciful to them.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for all the blessings You have brought to me and I want to remember that You want me to use them to bless others. Please help me to stay strong in You and Your love. I also want to be a person who shows mercy to others because I know that I will receive mercy when I need it. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday December 10

Scripture Reading: Hosea 5-8  
Revelation 1

Praise the Lord! Well, when we arrived in Malawi getting through the airport and customs was quite a deal. We are used to having everything orderly and this certainly wasn't that. Nothing there is computerized so they look at each passport and write down their information by hand. Galatians 5:22 says that one of the fruits of the Spirit is patience and we were able to show it. It really wasn't too bad and we are glad to be here. I will share more tomorrow.

The first five words of Revelation say, **The revelation of Jesus Christ.** When we read the book of Revelation, we need to look for Jesus! When we do that, we will find Him and we will be blessed.

Verse 3 says, **Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.** The greatest blessing of all is to see Jesus more and that is what I want you to expect as we go through Revelations. There are other things we will see and talk about, but nothing is as important as Jesus.

You will also see that Jesus wins every time. We have given our lives to Him and we will always be taken care of by Him.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am thankful that You are working in my life. Please help me to have the fruit of the Spirit all the time. I also ask You to show me Jesus as we go through the book of Revelation and help me to keep You at the center of everything I do this month and every month. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday December 11

Scripture Reading: Hosea 9-11

Revelation 2

Praise the Lord! As I write this devotion, the electricity is going off and on. Since I am relying on the batteries with my computer it isn't causing me any problems. We went to an orphanage that we have not been to before. They meet in a very run down building and about half of the kids going to school in the same building. They are very poor and all the staff are volunteers. We talked about helping fix up the building they are in, but they said the person who owns it would raise the rent if it was in better shape. We will buy them books, pencils, pens and things like that before we leave.

In Revelation chapters 2 & 3, God had a message to several Churches. In each of the messages, He spoke about the things they were facing and encouraged them to keep living for Him.

Isn't it good to know that Jesus knows all about our Churches? It is also good to know that He knows how to fix any problems that might be there. Our part is to keep listening to Him and then we need to do whatever He instructs us to do. When do obey Him, we can know that His advice will bring the solution that is needed. So, let's keep praying for our Churches and trust God to do His part.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. I am also thankful that You are the Lord of the Church. Help me to pray for my Church and those who are in leadership there and then help me to trust You to have Your will. I also want to ask You to bless the orphans in Malawi. I know that You love them and I ask You to take care of them. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 12

Scripture Reading: Hosea 12-14

Revelation 3

Praise the Lord! We also bought blankets for some of the orphans in Malawi. Each blanket cost us about \$3 and they represent a bed to them. You see, the orphans would not have anything to sleep on unless we bought the blankets for them. After we did this, we received reports that the orphans slept very well on their new blankets. It is amazing that we are so blessed and I am thankful to have been able to use our blessings to bless the orphans with blankets. Praise God!

When Jesus spoke to His Churches, He ended each section by giving them a promise. As an example, look at Revelation 3:5, **He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and His angels.**

God wanted them to be overcomers. So, He was going to help them overcome and He promised them that they would be blessed when they did. He also promised them something that only He could do in their lives. You see, God wants us to live for Him and He wants to do things in our lives that are way beyond what we could do in the natural. Praise God! He is a super-natural God and He wants to do a super-natural work in our lives. We need to listen to what He speaks to us, believe what He says and obey Him in all things.

Prayer: Lord, I want to be an overcomer! I want all of Your blessings in my life and I know that I need to stay submitted to You. Please help me to know if there are areas of my life where I need to yield to You more and empower me to give in to You. I know that Your ways are right and I willingly submit to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday December 13

Scripture Reading: Joel  
Revelation 4

Praise the Lord! When we gave the 200 blankets to the orphans, we also had an idea to give blankets to the local chiefs. So, we bought 16 really nice blankets and invited the chiefs to a meeting. They all came and accepted our gift. They said that no one had ever given them a gift before and that we were all in covenant together! Praise God! Tomorrow I will share with you how this is going to help the orphans in the future.

In the book of Revelation, we get glimpses into Heaven. When we see into Heaven, we always see great Praise and Worship going on. Look at Revelation 4:10-11, **The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and worship Him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being."**

God is worthy of Praise and Worship for all eternity and that includes today! Take some time and Praise Him right now. When we learn to Praise God more of the time, we will do better in life. Doing that will also make it much easier to Praise Him when we get together at Church. So, Praise God, right now.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for all that You are doing in my life. Please help me to Praise You more. I know that You deserve my Praise and I willingly give it to You right now. I also ask You to bless everyone else who is doing these devotions today. Help us all to grow in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday December 14

Scripture Reading: Amos 1-3

Revelation 5

Praise the Lord! Yesterday, I told you about giving blankets to the chiefs. They said that we are now in covenant with them. Another thing we are doing is helping the people to know how to grow crops more effectively. I will let you know what I mean tomorrow, but for today let me tie this into the covenant we made with the chiefs. The people we stayed with in Malawi are going to ask the chiefs for a small piece of land close to each orphanage so they can raise food for the children. Because we are in covenant with the chiefs and because the chiefs also love the orphans, some of them have already agreed to give the land. Praise God!

Let me give you a Scripture from Revelation that might stretch you a little bit. Look at Revelation 5:9-10, **And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a Kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the Earth."** .

This is talking about saved people. Notice where it says they will reign. They (we) are going to reign on the Earth. Look at what Jesus said in Matthew 5:5, **Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the Earth.**

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I love Your Word. Please continue to speak to me from It and help me to believe everything You show me. I also want to live my life for You today in a way that will open up doors for me in the future. Help me to know that hearing from You and obeying You is how to do that. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday December 15

Scripture Reading: Amos 4-6  
Revelation 6

Praise the Lord! The people in Malawi grow mostly corn. When they harvest the corn, they burn all the stalks. We are trying to teach them to use the stalks on the ground around the new plantings. They become mulch and they provide a ground cover so the moisture they do get will stay in the ground longer. It is very hard for them to understand things like this because they have always done it the other way. So, we are helping them to see the difference. When people do these simple things, they are getting two to three times as much harvest! Praise God. If we can show them this in each village with the Orphans' gardens, then more people can see and learn.

My commentary on the book of Revelation is only two words long: Jesus Wins! My expanded commentary is this: Jesus Wins and we win too because we are on His side. Keeping these things in mind will help you to have victory as we study through Revelation.

In our reading for today, God's wrath is being poured out and the people of the Earth wish they could die. You see, they were serving the devil and when they realized they were losing just like the devil was losing, they had no reason to keep on living. We also have reasons to live because Jesus is our Lord and Savior. He came to give us life and life in abundance and His life is for all eternity!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. Thank You for giving me life and life in abundance. I want to live like a child of Yours should. I also ask You to bless my Church tomorrow. Help us all to be there ready and willing to worship You like You deserve. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday December 16

Scripture Reading: Amos 7-9  
Revelation 7

Praise the Lord! I hope you don't mind hearing about the mission trip that I am on as I write these devotions. People in the past have said this was a blessing and I hope it is for you too. Malawi is a very poor country and it has been devastated by AIDS. That is why there are so many orphans there. Creative Ministries has supported one of the orphanages for years. For \$150 a month we feed 200 orphans and some widows two meals every day. God has blessed us so we can bless them.

When we started the book of Revelation, I told you it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. As we go through it, we should be focusing on Him and His sovereignty rather than anything the devil does.

In our reading for today God puts His mark on His people. Verse 3 says, **Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.** Later on, the devil is going to put his mark on his people and it has always amazed me that people focus on that much more than they do on this. You see, the devil only counterfeits what God has already done here. I hope you can see that God is the One who is in control and the devil is only trying to keep up and he doesn't even do a very good job of that!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to thank You for blessing my Church today. I know that it is Your will to meet with us and I thank You for doing that today. I am also thankful for the reminder that You are always in control and that the devil always loses. Please help me to remember this and help me to have all the confidence that it should bring into my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday December 17

Scripture Reading: Obadiah  
Revelation 8

Praise the Lord! Let me tell you another wonderful thing about the orphanage we support. They are way out in the country and when I drive there it is way beyond any real road. Here's the good part, last year we had a well put in and it is such a blessing. It is supplying all the water they need and it is supplying water for six villages in the area. Praise the Lord! Water means life in that part of the world and we are supplying them water!

Revelation 8:1 says, **When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in Heaven for about half an hour.** God was the One who was in control of everything here. Now with that in mind, I want to remind you to keep Jesus at the center of everything you do this month. The world would like to squeeze Jesus right out of Christmas and we can't let that happen. If anyone should be rejoicing at this time of year, it should be us Christians!

Verse 6 says, **Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.** No one is holding God back and no one is hurrying Him. He is well able to accomplish His will in His time. Our part is to stay close to Him and trust Him. Don't ever worry or fret when you think things are out of control. They are never out of His control and trusting Him is the best way to live.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for every good thing in my life. I know that everything that is good is a gift from You and I want to be more thankful. Help me to keep You at the center of everything I do this month and all the time. I am so thankful that You came into the world to seek and to save sinners like me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday December 18

Scripture Reading: Jonah  
Revelation 9

Praise the Lord! We have the food delivered to the orphanage weekly. It is corn that needs to be ground every day for it to be cooked. So, there is a young man here who carried the corn on his bicycle to be prepared every day. We drove the trip he makes and I would guess it to be about 3 miles each way. Well, his bike needed a lot of help so we bought him new tires, new tubes, pedals and several other things. All that cost us 5,000 Kwacha. That is about \$35. Next year we will probably buy him a new bike.

There are several ways to look at the battles going on in the book of Revelation. One interesting thing to consider is that it is a battle over the subject of worship. Actually, it is a battle to see who people are going to worship. Those who worship God are on the right side and those who don't are on the wrong side.

Look at Revelation 9:20-21 and key in on the subject of worship, **The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood - idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.** Who we worship determines who we serve and live for. So, let's worship God!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to worship You more. I know that You are worthy and I don't ever want to bow my knee to anyone other than You. I also ask You to continue to speak to me from the Word. I really do want to learn Your ways and I want to be quick to put them into action in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday December 19

Scripture Reading: Micah 1-3  
Revelation 10

Praise the Lord! Well, let me tell you about something else we did while in Malawi. We bought 300 Bibles to give to Pastors who didn't own a Bible. We were able to send the money over ahead of time and have the Bibles ready for us when we got there and that was sure a blessing. Anyway, every time we told the Pastors that we had Bibles for them, they got so excited. They want to know the Word so much and it was a blessing to be able to give it to them. By the way, we do make sure to give them to Pastors who can read because we want the Bibles to be used.

Look at Revelation 10:7, **But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as He announced to His servants the prophets.**

You won't be surprised that I make the point that God is the One in control and that His will is being accomplished here but I also saw something else here. This verse says that God's will is being done **JUST AS HE ANNOUNCED TO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS**. God is not only in control and winning, He even knew how it was all going to happen ahead of time and He revealed it to His people. I guess this shouldn't have surprised me because we are reading about it ahead of time.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for the Word. Help me to value it more and help me to remember that there are others who don't have access to it as freely as I do. I also am thankful that You can reveal Your ways to me from the Bible. Please continue to teach me and train me in Your ways. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday December 20

Scripture Reading: Micah 4-5

Revelation 11

Praise the Lord! Are you keeping Jesus at the center of all your activities? I just realized that I am writing you so many things about Malawi that my comments on my trip to Uganda might extend out into the devotions for January of next year! While I was driving in the country here a little boy ran right out in front of me and it was very close. I am sure glad God helped us! All of the driving there is difficult and yet I love doing it.

In Revelation 11, we read about two witnesses that God has. There has been a lot of speculation about who they will be and I am not going to add to that. I just want to say that we are all called to be witnesses for God!

There is great power in your personal testimony. God has worked in your life, and telling others about what He has done is part of what He wants you to be doing. Don't be concerned about other people's testimony. They might have been more sinful than you, or less, but your testimony is your testimony.

When I gave my life to Jesus, it was because I heard some other people, that I could relate to, telling about how Jesus was in their lives and how He was helping them. I knew I needed help and I turned my life over to God because of their personal testimonies. So, share yours more.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I really am thankful for all the things You are doing in my life. Please continue to work in my life and help me to be willing to share about You more. I know people need to hear about You and I know that You want to use me so help me to have more boldness. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday December 21

Scripture Reading: Micah 6-7  
Revelation 12

Praise the Lord! On a previous trip to Malawi, we put a Pastor named Timothy into business. Actually, he built a little shop that is attached to his house. He sells things like sugar and cooking oil to people in the village. The shop is doing well so we gave him some more money so he can buy bigger bags of sugar and other things. Then he divides them up and makes more profit. Timothy travels most of the time in Malawi and Mozambique and this little shop provides for his family while he is gone. Praise God!

Look at how the devil is described in Revelation 12:10, **Then I heard a loud voice in Heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.**

He is the accuser of the brethren but God has enabled us to overcome him. The next verse says, **They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.** When we seek first the Kingdom and when God is more important to us than life itself, we will be able to overcome the devil and his deceptions. That is how Jesus defeated him and that is how we will defeat him too.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want You to be at the center of everything I do. Please help me to seek You and Your Kingdom first and then I know You will help me with every other area of my life. I want to rely on You and Your Word more and I want to defeat the devil every time in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday December 22

Scripture Reading: Nahum  
Revelation 13

Praise the Lord! When we were way South in Malawi and getting ready to head back, I looked at the front tires of the vehicle we were driving and the tires were terrible. We were driving on the steel belts and you probably know that isn't very safe. I prayed and felt like it would be alright to head back so we did. I didn't tell the people we were with because they might have worried. When we got back we had two new tires put on and we had the car aligned. Praise God for His protection.

Do you remember a couple of days ago when I said that the issue of worship was an important subject in the book of Revelation? Look at verse 8 from our reading for today, **All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the beast - all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.**

Everyone who did not serve God, ended up worshiping the beast. Praise the Lord that we are not in that group! You see, they ended up serving the one they worshipped. Now that is the bad side of the story. The good side is this: we worship God and we will end up living for Him more and more. Look at Matthew 4:10, **Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"** Only worship God and serve Him! You see, we do serve the One we worship.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I can see that worshiping You is very important. Please bless Church tomorrow and help us to worship You like You deserve. I also want to ask You to bless my Pastor. Help him to know that we love him and support him. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday December 23

Scripture Reading: Habakkuk  
Revelation 14

Praise the Lord! We held a conference on the Kingdom of God at Healing Hope Ministries in Malawi and it went very well. When I ministered the first night, I prayed for a lot of people to be healed, and as far as we can tell every one of them was healed. Praise God. Psalms 103:3 says that God forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases and we are seeing that happen here.

Revelation 14:1 says, **Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads.** God has always been well able to take care of His own people. We can trust Him to take care of us no matter what we face in life.

Verse 12 says, **This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.** Praise God! Let's ask Him for PATIENT ENDURANCE. Doesn't that sound like a good thing to have? This verse implies that PATIENT ENDURANCE comes to those who obey God's commands and who remain faithful to Jesus. So, let's take care of our part and trust God to take care of His part. Believe me, He is always faithful to His Word and He is faithful to us because He loves us.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You have always taken care of me. Please help me to obey You and help me to stay faithful to Jesus. I know that doing these things is right and that they will help me to have patient endurance in every area of my life. I also want You to stay at the center of all my Christmas activities. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday December 24

Scripture Reading: Zephaniah  
Revelation 15

Praise the Lord! We went to an orphanage that we had never been to. Some people owned land with a house and the father died, then the mother died, and everyone else died there. The remaining daughter, who lived in town, would not go there because she was afraid of witchcraft. She said anyone who wanted to use the place could. So, some people started an orphanage there. They have 100 kids. 50 are orphans and 50 are very poor. We prayed to break any curses over the place and gave them some money for food. Praise the Lord!

Revelation 15:1 says, **I saw in Heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues – last, because with them God's wrath is completed.**

When John was allowed to look into Heaven, he saw a great and marvelous sign. You see, Heaven is a place of great and marvelous signs and Earth should be too.

Mark 16:15-17 say, **He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues. . .** Signs of God's power should be following us now.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I have given my life to You. I know that You are a supernatural God and I want more of the super-natural in my life. Help me to be a person who believes like You and help me to go share the Good News like You want. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday December 25

Scripture Reading: Haggai  
Revelation 16

Praise the Lord! I want to wish you a Merry Christmas. We are celebrating the coming of Jesus into the world and I hope you don't miss the real meaning because of all the other things we do. Spend time with you family, give and get presents, but don't ever forget the greatest gift. 2 Corinthians 9:10 says, **Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!** That is talking about Jesus!

In the book of Revelation, judgment is being poured out on those who have rejected God and His ways. You would think they would all repent and turn to God but they don't. They actually keep turning from Him.

Verse 9 says, **They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify Him.** And verses 10 & 11 say, **The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.**

It is as if they had set a course for their lives and they could not change the way they were going. We need to make sure we love God and trust Him. When we do that, we will be setting a good course for our lives and it will carry us through hard things.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You came into the world to provide a way of Salvation. Please help me to keep You at the center of everything I do today and every day. I thank You that I am going to be around people I love today. Help me to share Your love with them. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday December 26

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 1-3  
Revelation 17

Praise the Lord! I want to finish up my comments on the trip to Malawi this month. One day we were in Blantyre at lunchtime and a church there has a service every day from 12 – 1 and so I preached. It is always interesting preaching to people you have never met but it went very well. I told them that we need to ask God for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation according to Ephesians 1:17.

Look at Revelation 17:8, **The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the Earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.**

Did you see the reference to people who had their names written in the book of life from the creation of the world? That is a pretty important book and our names are in it! Every Christian is written in that book. Praise God!

Ephesians 1:3-5 say, **Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.**

Prayer: Lord, I don't know why you chose me to be Yours but I am so thankful that You did. Please help me to live my life in a way that is worthy of Your calling and help me to tell others about You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday December 27

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 4-6  
Revelation 18

Praise the Lord! At the end of our trip to Malawi, we went to Lake Malawi and spent a day resting. It is amazing how much can be done in a few days and we were all pretty tired and it is good just to relax. For me the relaxation is just an interlude because I go to South Africa for one day where I have two services and then head to Uganda for another mission trip. I know you probably already know this but I love going on missions trips. It might not be for everyone but it is for me.

Revelation 18:1 says, **After this I saw another angel coming down from Heaven. He had great authority, and the Earth was illuminated by his splendor.** That must have been some angel!

The next verse says, **With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird."** Babylon here stands for all the manmade authority on the Earth. They had rebelled against God and His authority. So, they were going to face judgment for their decisions. Rebellious people had set up elaborate systems to try to rule the Earth with the devil's help, and all God had to do was speak and they all fell apart! I guess we know Who was really in control.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so glad that I have given my life to You. Please help me to continue to keep You in the center of all my activities even though Christmas is over. I want You to rule and reign in every area of my life and I want to live for You even more next year. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday December 28

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 7-9  
Revelation 19

Praise the Lord! If you have been doing your Scripture Readings every day, you are about to finish the whole Bible this year! Praise the Lord and keep reading. You can do it again next year. Right before we left Malawi, the woman who ran the orphanage, that is also a school, came by and gave us the first fruits from her garden. It is really humbling to receive gifts from people who are so poor, but it is important for them to give. I prayed that God would open the windows of Heaven over her garden, life, orphanage and that whole area!

Look at Revelation 19:16, **On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.** Now, I know we all know this is talking about Jesus, but my question is: Who are the kings and lords that He is King and Lord over?

Well, we are. I gave you Revelation 5:9-10 quite a while ago but I want to write them out for you again. They say, **And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the Earth."** We are going to rule on the Earth. I guess that makes us kings and lords.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am often amazed at the promises You make me in the Word. I don't ever want to argue with Your Word or say that it isn't true. So, I accept it and I am going to renew my mind to what it says. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday December 29

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 10-12  
Revelation 20

Praise the Lord! Let me tell you a little more about the lady who runs the orphanage that is a school. Ten years ago, her husband died and she had to move in with her mother. Shortly after that, she started the orphanage we visited. Everyone there, including her, are volunteers but they love the children so much and they just had to do something to help them. I am going to make sure and send them some money from time to time to bless them. I guess we might be an answer to the prayer I prayed for an open Heaven.

Look at Revelation 20:4, **I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the Word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

At the resurrection, they came to life and they reigned with Christ. I guess you could say they were kings and lords huh?

After this, the Word tells us that the devil is judged and thrown into hell for all of eternity. I am so glad I am on God's side!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am glad that You are my Lord and Savior. I want You to rule and reign in my life the rest of this year and I want You to rule and reign in my life even more next year. I know that living for You is the best life there is and I want to keep growing in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday December 30

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 13-14  
Revelation 21

Praise the Lord! We are almost to the end of 2007. Isn't that amazing? One of the men in Malawi came by and gave us Genesis 28:15. It says, **I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.** That is sure a good promise for us, but I was as excited about the fact that he had been in the Word and that God had spoken to him through it. Praise God! We all need the Word.

In Revelation 21, we see all things being made new. I am sure the new Heaven and the new Earth are part of what we will end up ruling over. Verse 1 says, **Then I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth, for the first Heaven and the first Earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.**

When I look at all the beauty of this Earth, I am amazed and I know that the new Earth will be even better. I am sure it will be like the Garden of Eden. You see, God is in the process of restoring all that Adam and Eve lost in the garden. We are being brought back into perfect relationship with God like they had. We are regaining the Kingdom of God like they had and now I think we can see that even the Earth will be changed back to how it was when it was in its perfect state.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful all You have done in my life in 2007 and I am committed to living for You in 2008. Please help me to know that Your work in my life is going to go on forever. I also ask You to continue to speak to me from Your Word and help me to be a doer of all that You show me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday December 31

Scripture Reading: Malachi  
Revelation 22

Praise the Lord! I hope you enjoyed hearing about my trip to Malawi this month. Next month, I will tell you about my trip to South Africa and Uganda. I know many of you prayed for me on my trip and some of you even sent money with me. I want to thank you all and I want you to know that you are a blessing to me.

Yesterday, I wrote to you about God restoring everything that was lost in the Garden of Eden. Look at the first two verses of Revelation 22, **Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.** The tree of life that was lost in the Garden of Eden will be restored.

Look at verse 5, **There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.** Mankind ends up reigning just like they were created to do in Genesis 1:26, **Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the Earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."** Praise God!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so glad that I have given my life to You. I want to live for You forever. I commit my life to You right now and I look forward to 2008. In Jesus' Name, Amen.