

1 October 2007

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Praise the Lord! God is so good to us and we are blessed to be able to study His Word. As you do these devotions this month, I will be heading to Africa on a Mission trip and I would really appreciate it if you would pray for me. I leave on October 14th but don't wait till then to start praying.

God bless you as you study His Word this month.

Gladly in His Service,

Dr. Jason B. Brittain

Monday October 1

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 22-23

Ephesians 3

Praise the Lord! Last month we started working our way through Psalm 1. The first 3 verses talk about how we should live. They say, **Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.** Live like God wants and enjoy His blessings!

Look at what Ephesians 3:20-21 say and notice how they tie right into those verses from Psalms 1, **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.**

God is able to do more than you could ever ask Him for or imagine Him doing! Isn't that an amazing statement? Our part is to study His Word, believe what it says and hold on because good things are ahead. Let me give you an example of these things. Later this month, I leave on a mission trip to Africa. That is an example of God doing more in my life than I ever expected.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I really do want to live like You want. Please help me to meditate on Your Word more and help me to DO what You teach me. I don't want to miss out on anything You have for me and my life. I also ask You to bless Pastor Jason's trip coming up. I ask for Your Kingdom to come and Your will to be done. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday October 2

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 24-26

Ephesians 4

Praise the Lord! Psalms 1:4 says, **Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.** The first 3 verses talked about how blessed we are when we live like God wants and now verse 4 says the wicked are going to totally miss out. This sure makes me want to know the Word, meditate on it and DO what it says.

The first three chapters of Ephesians are all about what God has done for us and the last three chapters talk about how we should respond to His love and grace. Ephesians 4:1 says, **As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.**

Paul had pointed out many of the wonderful things God has provided for us and now he tells us that we should live our lives in a way that is worthy of God's calling on our lives.

We will probably talk about some of the specific things Paul said we should do later, but first I want to talk about God's calling on your life. You are called to be a child of God and that is a high calling! Verse 2 says, **Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.** We are called to be God's children and yet we should be humble because it is all about Jesus and His work.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I really do want to live for You. Please help me to meditate on Your Word more and help me to live like You want. When You speak to me from the Word, help me to be quick to yield to Your ways and help me to continue in your ways forever. I know that Your ways are right and I want to submit to them more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 3

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 27-28

Ephesians 5

Praise the Lord! Psalms 1:5 says, **Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.** This is not saying that wicked people won't be judged. It is saying they won't be in the position to help others know how to live. They also won't be able to stand in the assembly of the righteous because they aren't righteous.

Ephesians 5:1 says, **Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children.** Isn't that an amazing statement? Paul tells us to imitate God! One of the keys to this is the fact that Paul also says we are His children. You see, children imitate their parents and hopefully it is how they learn to live right.

Look at the next verse, **and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.** We imitate God when we live lives of love. You see, God is love and He always loves people. So, we can imitate God by loving people like He does. Now, I know we might not be as good at it as He is, but we can learn as we imitate Him. You have surely seen some child imitating their parent. They probably weren't exactly like the parent but they were learning, and that is what God is telling us to do here. So, imitate God by loving people and He will help you along the way.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You have made me righteous. Please help me to live my life in a way that is worthy of Your high calling on my life. Help me to renew my mind to the fact that I am Your child and that I should live like it. Help me to imitate You as I love others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday October 4

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 29-30

Ephesians 6

Praise the Lord! Psalms 1:6 says, **For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.** Aren't you glad that God is watching over your ways? It is good to know that He is looking out for us and we need to be more thankful for His care and protection. It really is there even when you don't see it.

Look at what Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:10, **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.** Verses like this sometimes get skipped right over, but there is something I don't want you to miss here today.

If God's Word tells us to be strong in God's mighty power, His mighty power must be available to us! We live in this world and we have God's power available to help us. Isn't this great news?

Look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, **For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.** These verses tell us that we have God's help again. One of the weapons we have is the Word. When Jesus defeated the devil He used the Word as an offensive weapon and He defeated the devil every time.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful that You are watching over my ways and I want to live just like You want me to live. Please teach me more about the power and authority that You have given me. I want to live in victory and I want to be able to bring more victory to others and I know that I need Your help to do these things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday October 5

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 31-33

Philippians 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:1 says, **Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?** This is evidently talking about nations and people plotting against God and His ways. We see that their conspiracies and plotting are all in vain because God is in control and no one is going to overthrow Him!

Look at what Paul said in Philippians 1:3, **I thank my God every time I remember you.** Paul said that he prayed for them whenever he thought about them. This is a wonderful way to increase your prayer life. When you think of someone, pray for them. If more of us would do this, I really believe, God would direct our thoughts to people who need prayer and we would be more effective.

Look at the next couple of verses, **In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.** Paul was filled with joy because they were growing in the Lord. He considered them partners in the work, and Paul knew they were going to make it because Jesus was working in their lives. I know you are going to make it too because Jesus is going to get His work done in your life!

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I have given my life to You. I know that You are in control and I know that trusting You is always the right thing to do. Please help me to know that You are working in my life and help me to have confidence that You are going to finish Your work in me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday October 6

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 34-36
Philippians 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:2 says, **The kings of the Earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against His Anointed One.** This sound pretty impressive, but let me ask you a question. Who do you think is going to win this battle? They were joining forces against the Lord Almighty and God always wins! Remembering that will help you to have confidence when you see people opposing Him and His work.

As Paul wrote to the believers in Philippi, he spoke to them about things they needed to do. Look at what he wrote in Philippians 2:12-13, **Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed - not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence - continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.**

These verses show that we have a part and that God has a part. Our part is to put what we learn from God into action in our lives. His part is to make sure it all works. We can't do it without Him, He won't do it without us, and it is all according to His good purpose for our lives. The fact that Paul said we should do all this with "fear and trembling" shows how important it is.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful that You are in control and it is great to be on Your side. Help me to know that You will never be defeated and that means I can always be confident in life. I also ask You to keep speaking to me from the Word and help me to be quick to put what You show me into action. I am so thankful for all the good things You are doing in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday October 7

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 37-38
Philippians 3

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:3 says, **"Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."** Now, this is a group of wicked nations raving against God's influence in their lives. They think God only brings bondage to them, and they are trying to get out from under God's rulership but won't be able to do it because He is the One who is in control.

Philippians 3:3 says, **For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.**

Now, I want to talk about the last part of this verse that says we shouldn't put any confidence in the flesh. You see, I tell you often to keep your confidence in God and this goes right along with that. We need to keep our trust and confidence in Him and not in ourselves!

Verses 20-21 say, **But our citizenship is in Heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.** He is the One who is going to change us!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so glad that I have given my life to You. Help me to know how You want me to live and then empower me to do it. I also want to keep all my trust and confidence in You and You alone. I know that Your work in my life is a good work and I submit to You completely. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday October 8

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 39-40
Philippians 4

Praise the Lord! We have been reading about some people who were rising up in rebellion against God. In yesterday's verse they said they were going to break free from Him. The next verse says, **The One enthroned in Heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.** God laughs because He knows that He is all powerful and He really knows that He is ultimately in control of all things, including them.

Philippians 4:4 says, **Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!** That is pretty plain. We should always be rejoicing and then we should rejoice some more. We have Jesus in our lives and so we always have lots of reasons to rejoice.

Philippians 4:8 says, **Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.**

Do you see how these two verses tie together? When you are thinking right, it will make it much easier to rejoice all the time. So, think right and then let your right thinking affect your rejoicing. Some people think everything has to be going right before they should rejoice. We should always be able to find something good and rejoice over it. That will help those other things change.

Prayer: Lord, I know that You are in control and I sometimes laugh at people who think they can resist You. Please help me to remember that I am called to love those people and I want to reach out to them. I also ask You to help me to think right and help me to rejoice more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday October 9

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 41-42

Colossians 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:5 says, **Then He rebukes them in His anger and terrifies them in His wrath, saying.** People sometimes have all kinds of things to say, but when God speaks it is time to listen! Remember that these people who were rebuked had been resisting God and they had been trying to go their own way.

Paul wrote letters to people when he couldn't make trips to see them. In these letters, he often told them about the blessings that Jesus had provided.

Colossians 1:13 says, **For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the Kingdom of the Son He loves.** This is a huge blessing God has provided for us. We used be in the devil's kingdom, but Jesus has RESCUED us and He has now placed us in His Kingdom!

The next verse says, **in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.** Our sins used to separate us from God, but now we have been forgiven and we have been adopted into God's family.

We are so blessed! As you read the Word and see wonderful things, know that they are blessings God has provided for you because He loves you.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that Your anger and wrath toward me has been dealt with by Jesus. Thank You for paying a debt I could have never paid. I am so thankful that I am now in Your Kingdom and I want to live like You want. I also ask You to bless all my brothers and sisters who are doing these devotions today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 10

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 43-44

Colossians 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:6 says, **I have installed My King on Zion, My holy hill.** This is God speaking and His Word was what really mattered. The wicked people had been raving and ranting, but when God spoke the whole matter was settled!

Colossians 2:6 says, **So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him.** We are supposed to live in Christ just like we received Him. How did we receive Him? By faith! We responded to Him and His love by accepting the free gift of salvation and we knew it was all about Him. Now we need to live that same way. We need to keep our faith in Him, we need to respond to His love and we need to remember it is all about Him.

The next verse says, **rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.** We need to keep growing in faith and we need to be thankful. In fact, this verse says we need to overflow with thankfulness. A couple of days ago, I wrote to you about thinking on good things and I told you that doing that would help you to rejoice more. This ties right in with that. When we think on good things we will also be more thankful, and that is a good thing. If anyone should be thankful, it should be us.

Prayer: Lord, I want Your Word to be the final matter in my life. I know that Your Word will never pass away and I want to base my life on it. Thank You for saving me and help me to really live for You. I know it is all about You and I want to remember that more. Help me to keep You in first place in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday October 11

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 45-47
Colossians 3

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:7 says, **I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are My Son; today I have become your Father."** The first application of this verse is all about Jesus but it also applies to us. God has made us His children and He is now our Father. Our response should be to proclaim Him and His ways!

Look at Colossians 3:15, **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.** When the Word tells us to LET something happen, it must mean that it is up to us. We have God's peace because we have Jesus, and His peace evidently wants to rule in our hearts. Now, we need to LET it happen.

The next verse says, **Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.** Let's see. We have God's Word available and it is a good thing for it to dwell in us richly. Now, we need to LET it happen.

God has provided everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We need to LET Him have His way in our lives.

Prayer: Lord, I want to know Your ways and I want to proclaim them to others. Please teach me Your ways and help me to never hide the light of the Gospel under a bushel. I also want to LET Your Peace rule in my life and I want to LET the Word dwell in my heart richly. I know that Your ways are always the best for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday October 12

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 48-49

Colossians 4

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:8 says, **Ask of Me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the Earth your possession.** This is an amazing promise. We should ask God for nations and He will give them to us. I know this takes faith but hey, we are called to live by faith! As I write this I am about to leave on a trip to Malawi and Uganda and I am asking God to impact them during my trip.

Colossians 4:2 says, **Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.** The word translated “devote” here has several meanings and one of them is to persevere. So, pray and don’t ever quit. It would be a tragedy if you prayed for something and then quit right before the answer was going to appear.

Now, look at what Paul asked them to pray for in the next couple of verses, **And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.**

Paul’s prayer request was that the Gospel would go forth. He didn’t ask for anything personal. He wanted to see God’s work done and His will accomplished. I wish more people would pray for things like this.

Prayer: Lord, You tell me to ask for the nations as an inheritance and I want to do that in faith. Please help me to know what nation or nations You want me to be praying for consistently and help me to do it. I also ask for Your will to be done in those nations and I ask for Your Kingdom to come to them. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Saturday October 13

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 50-52

1 Thessalonians 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:9 talks about God's rule over all the Earth. It says, **You will rule them with an iron scepter; You will dash them to pieces like pottery.** God is in control and we can trust Him to take care of literally everything and that includes every area of our lives.

Let's start off today looking at 1 Thessalonians 1:2, **We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.** I have written to you many times about being thankful. Here is something you can be thankful for: Thank God for others who are doing well!

The next verse says, **We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Look at the things Paul mentioned about them in this one verse. He said they were working and that their work was produced by faith. He mentioned their labor prompted by love. And he said they had endurance inspired by hope.

That is quite a list. So, work, love and endure. Do these things by faith, by love and by hope.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You are in control of all things and I want to trust You more. I know You are in control of the big things. So, help me to trust You with the little things. I also want to be more thankful. Help me to actively be more thankful for others when they are doing well. I want to start by thanking You for those You have brought into my life to teach me the Word. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday October 14

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 53-55

1 Thessalonians 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:10 says, **Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the Earth.** Isn't it interesting that God told them to be wise and then He told them to be warned. You see, it is a wise thing to listen to God when He warns us about something. Actually, it is a wise thing to listen to everything He says.

In our reading for today, Paul said something was his hope, his joy, his crown and his glory. Did you notice him saying that? If you didn't, you might be surprised by what he said.

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 say, **For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.**

Paul said these people were his hope, joy, crown and glory. You see, people are what the ministry is all about. Wouldn't you have been a little disappointed if Paul had said his hope was the economy? Or if he had said his glory was his chariot or something like that? Those things sound ridiculous, but people sometimes try to get their hope, joy, crown and glory in all kinds of strange places. We need to care about people like Paul did.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to listen to You all the time. I don't ever want to miss anything You are saying because I know that Your Words are always Words of life and freedom. Thank You for reminding me today that people are what really matter in life and help me not to get distracted by things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday October 15

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 56-58

1 Thessalonians 3

Praise the Lord! (Really, I mean it. Praise Him right now!) Psalms 2:11 says, **Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.** These things might seem like a strange mix, but remember God was speaking to wicked nations who had rejected him and He was telling them how to come back.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 say, **May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones.**

Don't you just love Jesus? Look at all the things Paul said He can do for us. He can help our love to increase and overflow and He can strengthen our hearts so we will be blameless and holy when He returns.

What is our part? We need to stay close to Him and let Him rule and reign in our lives. Look at Matthew 6:9-10, **"This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven."** When we let His will be done in our lives, we are letting His Kingdom come!

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. I am also glad that I can live for You every day. Please teach me Your ways and help me to really put them into practice in my life. I also want to keep growing in You and I know that I need Your help for that to happen. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday October 16

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 59-61

1 Thessalonians 4

Praise the Lord! Psalms 2:12 says, **Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.** I don't think I have ever seen this before. Way back in the Old Testament, God was revealing the fact that the Son was going to come and He was the one who would provide salvation!

1 Thessalonians 4:1 says, **Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.** Are you living to please the Lord? Well then, do it MORE AND MORE! That was good advice for them and it is good advice for us today.

Verses 9-10 say, **Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.** These verses are telling us to love people and we are again told to do that MORE AND MORE!

I guess I could tell you to keep doing what you know to do and then do it all MORE AND MORE!

Prayer: Jesus, I am so thankful that You came to be my Lord and Savior. I love seeing that Your coming was even talked about in the Old Testament. Please help me to really know how You want me to live and help me to do it and then help me to do it MORE AND MORE! I know Your ways are always right. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 17

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 62-64

1 Thessalonians 5

Praise the Lord! I want to spend one more day on Psalms 2:12, **Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.** I looked up the meaning for the word blessed and it said; "happiness, how happy!" So, we have happiness and we are so happy when we take our refuge in God!

Look at what Romans 12:2 says about the will of God, **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.** This verse is saying that when we renew our minds to the Word we will find God's will for our lives. So, the more we know the Word, the more we will know His will.

Now, look at 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, **Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.** Praise the Lord! God has spoken His will to you from the Word today. Isn't that good news?

Once we know God's will, our part is to DO what it says. James 1:22 says, **Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.**

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am so thankful that You are my Lord and Savior. I want to keep all my trust and confidence in You and You alone. I also ask You to help me to be a DOER of Your Word and not a HEARER only. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday October 18

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 65-66
2 Thessalonians 1

Praise the Lord! We are working our way through Psalms, one verse at a time and Psalms 3:1 says, **O LORD, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me!** David realized he had enemies and he didn't deny it, but you will also see that he continually turned to God for help. Praise the Lord that He is always with us to help us.

If someone wrote to you and said that they had been boasting about you, what do you think they would have been boasting about?

Look at what 2 Thessalonians 1:4 says, **Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.**

Paul had been boasting about them and he boasted about their FAITH and their PERSEVERANCE right in the middle of the persecutions and trials they were facing! Isn't this humbling?

Verse 12 says, **We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.** This reminds us that it is all about Jesus and all the glory goes to Him!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to keep my eyes on You no matter what I face. If people come against me, I want to know that You are for me. That is what is most important for me. I also ask You to help me to be a person of FAITH and PERSEVERANCE. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday October 19

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 1-2
2 Thessalonians 2

Praise the Lord! Palms 3:2 says, **"God will not deliver him."** **Selah.** Have people ever spoken against you like this? Well, it doesn't matter what they say. It only matters what God says and He says that He will deliver you! The word 'Selah' means, stop and think about what you just read and it is always a good thing to do.

Do you remember when you were a kid and you had to choose sides for some game or something and there was always one kid who seemed to be the last one chosen?

Well, in life, you have been chosen by God! Look at 2 Thessalonians 2:13, **But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.**

Isn't that an amazing verse? God chose you! The next verse tells us some of what He chose us for, **He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.** If the first verse didn't stretch you, this one sure does. He chose us so that we might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! Take some time and think about these things today and you surely won't feel insignificant.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You that You love me and I thank You that You always rescue me when I am in trouble. I want to keep my trust and confidence in You. Thank You for choosing me to be Your child. Help me to have the confidence that I should have as Your child. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday October 20

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 3-4
2 Thessalonians 3

Praise the Lord! Psalms 3:3 says, **But You are a shield around me, O LORD; You bestow glory on me and lift up my head.** In the verse before, David pointed out that some people didn't think God was going to help him but now we hear the truth! God was going to rescue him (and us). He even lifted up his head (and ours). Praise the Lord!

Look at how 2 Thessalonians 3:5 ties right in with the verse from Psalms, **May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.** This verse doesn't use the same words as the one in Psalms but it does talk about the fact that God is working in our lives, and His work is surely a good thing.

Verse 16 says, **Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.** Praise God for His peace. We have it AT ALL TIMES AND IN EVERY WAY.

When I preach on PEACE, I usually point out that the first part of Ephesians 2:14 says, **For He Himself is our peace.** Jesus is our PEACE and since we always have Him, we have PEACE AT ALL TIMES AND IN EVERY WAY. If you have a hard time accepting that, meditate on this truth and renew your mind to it.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You that You are always my shield and protection. Help me to remember that more and help me to be more thankful. Help me to know that I always have Jesus and so I always have peace, and please bless Church tomorrow. Help us to be there with an attitude of thanksgiving and praise. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday October 21

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 5-6

1 Timothy 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 3:4 says, **To the LORD I cry aloud, and He answers me from His holy hill. Selah.** David knew Who to cry out to and it worked. God heard him and He helped! The word 'Selah' is here again. Read this verse slowly and then stop and think about what you just read.

Look at what Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:12, **I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service.**

Look at the things this verse says about God and what it says about Paul. First look at God's part. He was the One who had given Paul strength and He was the One who had appointed him to the work Paul was doing.

Paul's part was being faithful. When we are faithful (our part) God will always do His part. In Matthew 25, there is a parable about faithfulness. Look at what verse 21 says, **His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!** He had been faithful and so God came and promoted him. It could be said that he was appointed unto more service like we saw happening to Paul. I am telling you this because you can be faithful too.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You hear me when I cry out to You for help. Please help me to turn to You first. I am also thankful for the strength that You give me. I could not live without it and I want to be more faithful to do the things You want me to be doing. Please make Your will clear to me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday October 22

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 7-8

1 Timothy 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 3:5 is a wonderful verse, **I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.** God sustains us all the time. He sustains us when we are awake and He sustains us when we sleep. If you ever have a hard time sleeping, this would be a good verse to mediate on. I know that someone reading this needs to do that and it will help you.

When the Word gives us instructions, we need to be quick to obey them. Look at verse 1 from our reading for today, **I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.** We should be praying for everyone.

The next verse goes on and says, **for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.** We are also supposed to be praying for those who are in authority.

The next couple of verses tell us why, **This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.** We should pray for people because it is good, it pleases God and because God wants everyone to be saved. Your prayers do make a difference. So, pray more.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I thank You for blessing my sleep. I also ask You to help me to pray for others more. I know I should and yet I need Your help. Please bless everyone who is doing these devotions. Help us all to grow in our knowledge of Your ways and help us to represent You well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday October 23

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 9-10

1 Timothy 3

Praise the Lord! Psalms 3:6 says, **I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.** I WILL NOT FEAR! This is a wonderful declaration. Let's go ahead and make that declaration right now. Say it out loud, "I WILL NOT FEAR!" You might want to repeat that several times today and remember that you can make that statement because God will always help you.

1 Timothy 3:1 says, **Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.** This verse is talking about someone who desires to be in leadership in the local Church and Paul said that was a noble task. We need to remember that those who are called to leadership are called to be servants. So, this person wanted to serve more and that is why Paul said it was a noble task.

Verses 14-15 say, **Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.** Paul wanted them to keep growing whether he was there or not. You see, growing in the Lord is what it is all about. We need to grow all the time, and when we are growing we are heading in the right direction.

Prayer: Lord, I want to be like David and say, "I WILL NOT FEAR!" I know that is only possible as I keep my trust and confidence in You. Please help me to know that You lead me by faith and not by fear. I also ask You to help me to see the many opportunities I have to serve others and help me to take them and to serve more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 24

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 11-13

1 Timothy 4

Praise the Lord! In yesterday's verse, David said that he would not fear. Look at what he said next in Psalms 3:7, **Arise, O LORD! Deliver me, O my God! Strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked.** He was not afraid because he was trusting in God. He also knew that his deliverance came only from the Lord. You see, we need to trust God rather than trying to fight our own battles. Believe me, God will do a much better job at protecting us.

We need to stay strong in the Lord for ourselves and for those we are influencing. Look at what 1 Timothy 4:15-16 say, **Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.**

Did you see that part where Paul said others should see your progress? God wants you to keep growing in Him because it is good for you and because it is good for others to see how a Christian really lives. Sometimes others will learn from your example more than they will learn from your words.

When we do these things, Paul said we will be saved and those who learn from us will be saved too.

Prayer: Lord, I want to rely on You more to fight my battles. I know that You are always better at this than I am. I also ask You to help me to really live for You because doing that is good for me and for those who are watching my life. I really do want to be a good witness for You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday October 25

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 14-16

1 Timothy 5

Praise the Lord! Psalms 3:8 says, **From the LORD comes deliverance. May Your blessing be on Your people. Selah.** Always remember that your deliverance comes from the Lord and it will help you to look to Him first for help. Also, read this verse again and then stop and think about what it really says. That is putting “Selah” into practice.

Paul consistently wrote to people about how to live as Christians. You see, he had let the Lordship of Jesus affect every area of his life and he knew it should be the same way with everyone else.

Look at what Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 5:7, **Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame.** Paul was instructing Timothy how to live and now Paul tells Timothy to do the same thing for others. This was Paul doing God’s will and him instructing Timothy to do God’s will too.

Look at the next verse, **If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

Paul could have said, “You claim to be a Christian, now live like one and take care of your family.”

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so glad that I have given my life to You. I am also thankful for all the things You have taught me from the Word. Help me to really put all those things into action in my life. I want You to rule and reign over every area of my life and I want to help others to live the same way, In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Friday October 26

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 17-19

1 Timothy 6

Praise the Lord! Psalms 4:1 says, **Answer me when I call to You, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.** This is David crying out to God and asking Him for help. Praise the Lord for the fact that God hears us when we call and He helps us. We should be like David and cry out for help quicker and more often.

As you read this, I am on the way to Africa on a mission trip. On part of the trip, I will be going to Malawi and it is a very poor country. The average life expectancy there is only 36 years. Their average yearly income is less than \$100. Yes, I said yearly income. Now, I have shared these facts with you because I have a point to make. Compared to the people in many parts of the world, we are all rich.

Now, look at 1 Timothy 6:17-19 and know that God's Word is speaking to you, **Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.** God does not mind that you are rich, but He wants you to trust in Him and He wants you to use what you have for His purposes.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I thank You for all the blessings You have brought into my life. Help me to keep my trust in You and help me to use what You have given me like You want. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday October 27

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 20-22

2 Timothy 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 4:2 says, **How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods? Selah.** David wondered how long people could go after false gods back then and we are still wondering about it today. As long as people reject the real God, they will go after false gods because that is the only thing left.

Look at what Paul wrote at the very beginning of 2 Timothy, **Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.** Paul knew he was an Apostle because it was God's will for him to be an Apostle. I am not going to spend much time on this, but be what God wants you to be. That is much better than trying to be something He doesn't want you to be.

Next, notice that Paul referred to the promise of life that is in Jesus. John 10:10 says, **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.** The thief comes to take life but Jesus came to give life. This is why we need to keep our lives closed to the devil and open to Jesus.

The next verse 2 Timothy says, **To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.** Words are important and Paul was speaking grace, mercy and peace here.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that I am serving You. Help me to know how to help others who are chasing after false gods who are not gods at all. I also want all the life and life to the full that You have for me. Help me to speak words of life to others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday October 28

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 23-24

2 Timothy 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 4:3 says, **Know that the LORD has set apart the godly for Himself; the LORD will hear when I call to Him.** God has set us apart for Himself and He hears us when we call to Him. Praise the Lord! We are so blessed. Remembering these things will help you to know that you have a purpose in life and they will give you confidence.

God has always wanted to use His people in the work of the ministry. In order for this to carry on, we need to learn from others and then we need to be willing to train those we reach out to.

Look at what Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:1-2, **You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.**

Paul was training Timothy and he was telling Timothy to train others. That is the process every one of us should be involved in. We should have people who are training us and, if you do, thank God for them. Then we need to help others and thank God for them as well. They are both opportunities for us grow. So, don't miss out.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You have set me apart for You and Your work. I don't know why You chose me but I am so glad that You did. Help me to receive from others and help me to be more willing to share what I know to help people. I can see that both of these things are blessings and I don't want to miss out. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday October 29

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 25-26

2 Timothy 3

Praise the Lord! Psalms 4:4 says, **In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. Selah.** When you lay on your bed thinking, think about the things of God. As for anger, I am sure most of us have lost our temper and sinned before. This verse is telling us to stop doing that. Be patient with people, situations and even yourself. (Did you need that reminder today?)

2 Timothy 3:16 says, **All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.** We need ALL of the Word and that is why I have given you Scripture Readings every day from both the Old Testament and the New. Let God speak to you as you read. Sometimes He might teach you. Other times He might rebuke or correct you, but He will be training you all the time.

The next verse tells us to stay in the Word, **so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.** God is always training us through the Word and that means He is equipping us for the work He wants us to do. You might not even realize you are being equipped, but He will be doing His good work in your life. We need to keep studying His Word and trust that He is working in our lives.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am glad that I have given my life to You. Please help me to show more patience in my life. I want to be a good representative for You and I know that losing control in anger doesn't help that process. I am also thankful for the training that I am getting through the Word. Help me to be consistent in my studies and help me to really DO the things You teach me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday October 30

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 27-28

2 Timothy 4

Praise the Lord! Psalms 4:5 says, **Offer right sacrifices and trust in the LORD.** That is pretty simple! What are right sacrifices for us? Well, Romans 12:1 tells us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices and Hebrews 13:15 tells us to continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God. So, do those things, and this verse also tells us to TRUST IN THE LORD and we should do that all the time.

2 Timothy 4:1-2 say, **In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His Kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction.**

If you ever get a chance to share a teaching, PREACH THE WORD! There are many reasons for this. Let me give you some of them. 1. It is what the Word says you should do. 2. You won't lead anyone astray if you point them to the Word. 3. God will back His Word (and you) up. 4. The Word is what people really need. 5. The Word is always better than your opinion or the best of poetry.

That's enough for now and I wanted to point out one more thing. These verses also tell us to be ready all the time. You never know when you will have an opportunity to share.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to present myself to You as a living sacrifice and I want to continually offer a sacrifice of praise to You. You are so wonderful and I love You so much. Help me to stay full of the Word for myself and others. Help me to share the Word when I have opportunities. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday October 31

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 29-30

Titus 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:24 says, **This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.** I know this isn't the next verse in Psalms but this is a good day to remember that the Lord made this day and we should REJOICE and be GLAD in it. You see, some people think this day belongs to the devil but they are wrong!

Look at what Titus 1:15 says, **To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.** We are pure because God has made us pure. Because of that everything (and every day) is pure for us. Others are not pure (because they haven't turned their lives over to Jesus) and because of that nothing is pure.

Look at the next verse, **They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny Him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.**

Some people claim to know God, but if they are not letting Him rule and reign in their lives they don't really know Him. Because they don't know Him, they will keep heading in the wrong direction. This verse tells us that their very minds and consciences have been corrupted. Praise the Lord for the fact that we have been delivered from all that.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so glad that You have made me pure. Because of that, today is pure to me and I choose to REJOICE and to be GLAD today and every day. Help me to know how to let the light of the Gospel shine through my life today. I really do want to represent You well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.