

Sunday, March 27, 2022

GREAT IS GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

READ: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

OPENING PRAYER: Help me to stay faithful to your word and watch over me forever. Amen.

MEDITATION: God is faithful. In this brief opening section, Paul has described the glory of God's grace to us in Christ. In short, it is Christ who does all the work and we receive all the benefits. Paul has described his own personal gratitude that God has done this for the Christians in Corinth, people whom Paul knew well from the time he spent with them.

Paul has written that God has sanctified the Corinthians in Christ and made them rich in spiritual gifts. God will hold them blameless on the day of the Lord, but he closes with a big understatement: God is faithful. The rest of the letter will reveal deep and ugly problems about the Church of Corinth. None of these things will keep God from being faithful, by grace, to any person who has come to him through faith in Jesus.

All Christians are called into fellowship with Jesus Christ. He does not mean to save us and then have us keep our distance until we arrive in eternity. Jesus wants us to be in deep fellowship with him, our Savior, and with each other.

CLOSING THOUGHT: I am looking forward to eternity – are you?

Jean Rich

Monday, March 28, 2022

CALMING THE STORM

READ: Mark 4:35-41

OPENING PRAYER: Thank you, Lord, for this beautiful day. Thank you for loving me, forgiving me, and for my salvation. I need nothing more, for you are with me. Amen.

MEDITATION: A powerful teaching of a life-changing event was experienced without complete faith in Jesus. Mark 4:39-40: "Then he arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But he said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?'"

There have been events in my life so challenging and overwhelming that I began to drown. It was as if I had forgotten how to swim. But then I remembered that I was wearing the best life jacket in the world, Jesus Christ.

I have learned to always go to prayer in faith to Jesus. One of my favorite hymns is, "His Banner Over Me Is Love." He is always with us. How wonderful that your love for us is so great. You know what we need before we ask. Always guided with faith, it will be given, if it be God's will.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the living word. My faith grows every day. I pray for a long life with many days allowing my faith to grow and grow. May I be pleasing to you this very day. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

David Byrd

Tuesday, March 29, 2022

MY HELP COMES FROM THE LORD

READ: Psalm 121

OPENING PRAYER: Thank you Lord for always being here with us and watching over us. We are all sojourners on this planet and will only pass through once. Give us discernment in our everyday lives to better follow you and do your will. Amen.

MEDITATION: As Vinnie Barbarino (ref: “Welcome Back Kotter”) used to say, “I’m so confused”. Nothing in our world seems to make sense anymore. We’re living in a world of alternative realities. Our eyes and common sense tell us one thing, while our political leaders, media, and educators tell us something totally different. New vocabulary has cropped up such as “memes”, “reimagine”, “reframe”. What’s going on? HELP!

Where do we go for understanding and help? Psalm 121 tells us to “lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.” (NIV)

We live in a world saturated with social media, Google and non-stop cable news. Is this where we form our opinions and try to sort out what’s real and what isn’t? Look to God; look to the mountains for peace and understanding. We need to put our faith in the Lord, who watches over us day and night, going and coming.

As Pastor James teaches us, read, study, and consume the Word every day. Read it “as it is”, not as we would like it to be. Put God first and trust him to help you find truth in these confusing times. He is in control.

CLOSING THOUGHT: It’s so easy to follow society’s lead in forming our thoughts and opinions when we are bombarded daily with the latest trends, etc. Therefore, it is important that we begin our days with God’s Word and prayer.

Jim and Laura Pledger

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

THE LORD IS STRONG BUT GENTLE

READ: Isaiah 40:10-11

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, thank you for being the constant strength among the constant turmoil of this world. I pray that I will continue to seek you first when I need your strength and your comfort. Amen.

MEDITATION: This passage reminds us of the ways in which God is constant in his love, through his strength, and through his mercy. We can be reassured that what is completely overwhelming to us cannot stand up to the strength of God. And when we are overwhelmed and broken, God is there to heal, protect, and to love us.

I know I have been reminded many times this last year that my strength alone is not enough. But, like the sheep knowing that the shepherd is watching, I find peace knowing my hope is not in my strength alone, but in the strength of the Lord.

CLOSING PRAYER: Heavenly Father, I am grateful for your strength and for your mercy. Lord, please help me to remember that the troubles of this world are not a surprise to you and that your sovereignty overcomes all. Amen.

Ryan Reid

Thursday, March 31, 2022

A DEAD GIRL AND A SICK WOMAN

READ: Mark 5: 21-43

OPENING PRAYER: God, I pray that my faith in you grows stronger every day. Thank you for your grace and for your blessings. Amen.

MEDITATION: Mark tells us the story of two different people in two very different circumstances that have similar outcomes after encountering Jesus. The first, a woman in the crowd who has been sick for many years. She has lost everything and likely has been cast aside by her community. The other is the daughter of one of the rulers of the synagogue, someone well respected and well positioned in the community.

Just as it was then, we know today that sickness, pain, anxiety, and loss affects everyone, no one is immune. What is also true today just as it was then, is that Jesus is for everyone. Salvation is for everyone through faith. He came to save all sinners and we all need him. Regardless of where we are in our lives and what our needs are, Jesus knows and will meet those needs.

CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, thank you for the grace that you give to me every day. Thank you for your constant presence in my life. I pray that my faith in you continues to deepen and that I remember you have a plan for me. Amen.

Jenny Reid

Friday, April 1, 2022

A LIFE MEASURED BY GOD'S GOODNESS

READ: Psalm 34

OPENING PRAYER: Lord Jesus, we praise you for who you are. We thank you that our joy in life is

based not on our circumstances, but rather upon your goodness. Amen.

MEDITATION: A simple reading of Psalm 34 would make it seem the author had just encountered a time of great joy, happiness, and prosperity in his life. This was far from the situation for David!

Not yet a King, David penned the words to this psalm during a harrowing phase in his life. David wrote this psalm while hiding out in the cave of Adullam after having narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Philistines in Gath. He was also on the run from King Saul, who was jealous of David's success as a warrior and had attempted to take David's life many times.

This was arguably one of the lowest points in David's life. He was probably tired, cold, broke, and hungry: running for his life, and the leader of a ragtag band of desperate men who were also outcasts from society.

Yet he trusted in God. And that trust shines through in his call to extol, glorify, and seek the Lord. David exhorts us to taste and see that God is good. Even when life is not very good, God is. Always.

CLOSING THOUGHT: When we measure our life's journey with experiences of our God, and not our experiences of this world, we find ourselves radiant with his light, his glory, and his goodness. May we taste and see more of Christ this Lent.

Jinshil Yi

Saturday, April 2, 2022

WISDOM

READ: 1 Corinthians 2:1-13

OPENING PRAYER: Good morning God – Gordon here checking in. I’m out of my comfort zone – but I’m used to that because it is in this environment that I find growth. Lord, provide me the words that will encourage those who read this. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION: Look up meditation in the dictionary. (I realize that you already know what it means, but look it up anyway). Wisdom is only attainable from God. No university offers a degree in wisdom. Gods’ wisdom requires a high degree of trust. Trusting God requires that I maintain my faith and take risks. Building my trust was a slow process, but once I took that giant leap a whole new world or way of thinking became available. I see differently now. I hear differently now. I act differently now. Scripture really means something now and I enjoy reveling in the closeness and comfort of my relationship with God. What God has done for me, he can do for you. Do you know what it is like to lay your head down at night, without a single worry?

In summary, it is our responsibility to seek first the Kingdom of God, (Matthew 6:33 NIV) and not wait to be taught, but to learn. Nothing is learned until a question is asked and an answer is found.

CLOSING PRAYER: Thank you, Jesus, for my salvation. Thank you, Lord for your love and patience with us. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for your guiding my thoughts and actions when I take the time to seek your assistance. Amen.

Gordon Neu