

Walking in Christ's Light
Daily Prayer Journal

February 21-26, 2011

*Growing our souls is a partnership with Christ.
To enable your soul's growth, use this material with Christ as your guide.*

Next Week's Sermon

Scripture: Isaiah 49:8-16 and Matthew 6:24-34

(www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=isaiah+49:8-16)

(www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=matthew+6:24-34)

Theme: Asking questions grows faith and faith grows service beyond the church

Sermon: "Tough Questions Grow Adventurous Christ Followers"

Question: How can I help Chilson to grow in the next decade?

MONDAY **2-21-11**

Read: Psalm 62:5-12 (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=psalm+62:5-12)

Prayer: "O Lord, our God, under the shadow of your wings we will rest. Defend us and support us, bear us up when we are little, and we know that even down to our gray hairs, you will carry us. Amen" (Prayer by St. Augustine)

Journal Reflection: God is your solid rock foundation for life. When everyone else cannot be trusted, God is trustworthy. Great is God's faithfulness! Today give thanks to God for being the foundation stone of your life. If your life is built on the sandy soil of someone or something other than God, then commit yourself to doing whatever it takes to be able to trust in God and God alone.

Resolve: Great is God's faithfulness to me every day.

TUESDAY **2-22-11**

Read: Isaiah 49:8-16a (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=isaiah+49:8-16a)

Prayer: "Almighty, forgive my doubt, my anger, my pride. By thy mercy, abase me, by thy strictness raise me up." Amen Prayer by Dag Hammarskjold

Journal Reflection: In this passage of Scripture, God shares support for the people of Israel even though earlier God acknowledged a long list of their abuses. They have taken God for granted. They have ignored God's moral imperatives. They have not given God the appropriate offerings of love and sacrifice. They have also burdened God with their sinful ways. Do you know anyone like the people of Israel? Even though they have failed multiple times, God says that God will not forget them ever!

Resolve: I will thankfully accept God's merciful forgiveness.

WEDNESDAY **2-23-11**

Read: Psalm 131 (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=psalm+131)

Prayer: Powerful and Eternal Holy Spirit, I come to You today giving thanks for Your presence with me when everyone else has turned against me. Thank You for being there for me when even my family members have abused me. Thank You for being with me when even my best friend deserted me. Thank You Lord, for Your sustaining presence every moment of my life. Amen.

Journal Reflection: You will not get through this life without being betrayed by someone you love. Even Jesus was denied and betrayed by his closest friends. Do you expect anything different? Your life question is not will you be hurt, but how will you respond after you are hurt. You can prepare now for the eventual pain through a close, loving relationship with Jesus Christ. He will sustain you in the dark times. He will support you when everyone turns against you. Christ will be there for you in the dark valleys and deep holes of pain and depression. As the Psalmist suggests there are times in life when you rest in God.

Resolve: I will trust Jesus now so that in the times of distress I know His voice.

THURSDAY **2-24-11**

Read: Mark 2:1-12 (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=mark+2:1-12)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, when you encountered the sick and the broken, you reached out and healed them. Help me, Lord. Touch me in my infirmity; embrace me in my pain. I trust You completely to heal me, or not heal me of my bodily sickness. I also am bold to ask for Your healing of the sickness of my soul that causes me to despair. Teach me, Lord Jesus how to learn from my illness. Help me to remember through my pain the essential humble situation of my life. Lord Jesus, touch me and help me to grow towards wholeness and health so that I may serve You all the days of my life. Amen

Journal Reflection: Jesus healed the soul and the body of the man who dropped in to see him at the Capernaum home. Health is a complex reality that includes our minds, emotions, soul, and body. Health is not just the absence of disease. Rather, health is the positive growth of God's spirit within us. Health is a life lived in pursuit of doing God's work. Health is a life lived in love with God. You can have a healthy body, but be a very sick person because your soul is out of touch with the true source of healthy power, Jesus Christ. Reflect today on your health.

Resolve: I will trust in my relationship with Jesus no matter what might happen.

FRIDAY

2-25-11

Read: I Corinthians 4:1-5 (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=i+corinthians+4:1-5)

Prayer: Holy Spirit, fresh every morning are your mercies toward me. Each new day You come to me with words of hope, pardon, and promise of re-creation. Yet, all too often I allow despair to quench my hope and resignation to blind me to the future you envision for me. Holy Spirit, open my eyes so that I can see the signs of the new things you are bringing into my life. Lift my spirit so that I might glimpse Your transforming work in my life. I am open to You, teach me, Holy Spirit. Amen.

Journal Reflection: God's wisdom is greater than anything we can ever imagine. God's directions are clearer than anything we can give. God will judge us all; therefore, we are charged by Holy Scripture to not judge ourselves or judge others. When we are judged by God in the last day all will be revealed. Our inner motivations will be revealed. At that time only God and God alone will judge each one of us. Until then, "...do not pronounce judgment..." on yourself or anyone else.

Resolve: I will trust in God and God alone!

SATURDAY

2-26-11

Read: Matthew 6:24-34 (www.biblegateway.com/bible?passage=matthew+6:24-34)

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, I hear Your promise to be with me even to the end of the world. Help me, Jesus, to actually trust You rather than just talk about You. Amen

Journal Reflection: Jesus' loyalty challenge is for each one of us. Jesus says we must choose whom we will serve. Thankfully, Jesus is with us to help us choose each day. Jesus is willing to guide, support, challenge, and teach each one of us. The real question is: "Are you open to being in relationship with Jesus?" Take some time today and evaluate your openness to Jesus' presence in your life.

Resolve: I will accept Jesus' presence in my life each and every day.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

For Sunday, February 20, 2011's Sermon

Foundational Scripture: Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18

(<http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm>)

Featured Scripture Reflection: "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord." – v. 18 (NRSV)

Opening Icebreaker: Recount a risk you took that had great results. Now, recount a risk you took that had a poor return.

Scripture Questions

What is the scripture saying?

- What is the focus of these commands?
- What is the purpose of the command stated in verses 9 and 10?
- In verse 17 it says that one should "reprove" their neighbor (NRSV) instead of "hating someone in their heart," what does that look like?
- Who do these laws protect? Who are the most vulnerable people in our culture today?
- Many of these laws are negative ("you shall not..."), what laws are positive in their approach ("you shall...")?

How is your life touched?

- Are there enough laws to protect those who are most vulnerable in our society?
- Look at verse 9 and 10 again. Do we have any laws today that are like this command? Should we have more laws like this command?
- Many of these laws are focused on creating a fair, just and honest society? What would make our society more fair, just and honest?
- What is a positive command counterpart (you shall...) to each negative command (you shall not...)? (Example: Leave some for those who are poorest among you)
- What does it mean to be holy? (v. 2)

What is God's invitation to you?

- Take an inventory of your life. What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to leave behind? What do you need to start doing? Do you see how the stopping and starting go hand in hand?

What can you pray for?

God, give me the courage to stop doing things I have loved but are in the way making progress. Give me the strength to start walking the difficult path of holiness.