

Community of Grace

Daily Walk for the week of July 27, 2020

Life in the Spirit...Always Present

Written by Kerri Lawton

Monday, July 27, 2020

Matthew 13: 31-35. "He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nest in its branches.' He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.' Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world." The use of parables is so easy for Jesus, it seems. He explains in ways for all to associate with and understand. The sowing of the mustard seed and the leavening bread were familiar to all who listened. What I found interesting was the use of parables "was to fulfill what has been spoken through the prophet," Isaiah. Jesus was conscious of this and through the Spirit within him; he speaks only in parables with clarity and meaning. I don't think I could come up with the perfect parables, the perfect words to explain the kingdom of heaven, without some spiritual intervention. I sometimes stumble words when asked how my day has been. Jesus spoke God's messages, through the Spirit, as one, for all to hear clearly. Listen and act when the Spirit moves you. Remember to live in the Spirit for the Spirit is always present. Prayer: Praise you, Father in heaven, for blessings bestowed us. Being present with the Holy Spirit

is a daily reminder of your love. May your love reign for the world to see! Amen

Tuesday, July 28, 2020

Matthew 13:47-50. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but throughout the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." This is the third of the three parables concerning the kingdom of heaven. The first two are uplifting comparing the value of heaven to "treasures hidden in a field" or "a pearl of great value." One would sell all they had to own these treasures. The righteous, that Jesus speaks of, recognize the value of God's kingdom. This third parable is a bit more serious as it describes "the end of the age," and the separation of the evil and the righteous. We are each conscience of right and wrong. God gives us choices and, as he knows the spirit of our souls, He trusts that we act righteously and honorably, when making such choices. Our spirit will soar in righteousness and our love for God will only grow stronger. Prayer: Dear Lord, keep us constant in faith and, through the Spirit, may we grow spiritually in your presence. Amen

Abundance

Written by Vernon Mukhlall

Wed July 29 The Throne Of Grace

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4: 16. A throne is the seat of a sovereign; a throne of grace is designed to represent a sovereign seated to dispense mercy and pardon.

Mercy means that God does not give us what we deserve. Our sinfulness deserves His judgment but because of Jesus Christ, He is compassionate and forgiving towards us (Romans 8: 1). Grace means that God gives us what we do not deserve. We are not worthy of our Lords love, favor, and Salvation, but he has given them freely to us because of his Son, Jesus Christ. From the throne of grace, God is calling us to come into His presence with confidence , not anxiously or in fear. He has given us the privilege of coming before His throne . We are sinful and need mercy, we need pardon, and we need grace every day of our lives. Let us come before His throne so that He may give us grace upon grace. Prayer: Holy God, you freely give your grace to those who come to you with open hearts and heads bowed down. Grant me your grace so that I may continue to serve you and others. Amen.

Thu July 30 You Open Wide Your Hand

“The eyes of all wait upon you; and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.” Psalm 145: 15 – 16. In these difficult times, people are having a hard time putting food on the table. No work and no income present a very dark reality to many low income earners who have limited or no savings as a backup. The Psalmist says that the eyes of all look expectantly to God who opens His hands and give them their food in due season. Jesus says if God provides for the birds which do not sow nor reap, how much more He would not provide for those whom He has created in His image (Matthew 6:26). Part of a King's responsibility in biblical times was to take care of the basic needs of the people. God, as King and Provider, takes care of the needs of all his people. In these troubling times we should not look to God presumptuously for what we need, but expectantly, be-

cause as his children, we put our hope in His grace which is new every morning. God always leads us in a way through which we can receive His help. Likewise He will provide opportunities for us to open wide our hands to help those who are in desperate need. Prayer: Gracious God, you open your hand wide and supply our every need. Tune my heart to the needs of my neighbors. Give me the courage to respond with compassion. Amen.

Fri July 31 Walk By Faith

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11: 1 Children show much excitement and anxiety when their birthdays come around. They certainly are in expectation of having a party and receiving gifts. Even adults may feel the same. Two things are combined in birthdays: assurance and anticipation. These are also present in the gift of faith. Faith is the confidence based on past experiences that God will surely grant us new and fresh surprises. It is the desire of God that we walk by faith and not by sight. Yet we may find areas in our lives where we struggle to trust Him wholeheartedly. Some days we may truly trust Him while other days we take matters into our own hands and leaving God out of it. As believers, our responsibility is to study God's word and learn of God's nature and His promises. In so doing our confidence in God will grow, enabling us to completely put our trust in Him. Prayer: Merciful God, help me to walk by faith and not by sight. Strengthen my faith so that I may fully trust you in all things. Amen.

Sat Aug 1 Abundant Life In God

“The thief comes not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10: 10 People have the yearning to have a better life for themselves and their respective families. They also want

their respective communities and country to be a better place which will eventually contribute to a better life. In contrast to the thief (John 10:10) who comes to destroy life, Jesus comes to give life, not ordinary life but abundant life. Jesus says “ I am come that they (we) might have life, and that they (we) might have it more abundantly”. “I am” , which is the name of God, has come to give His people abundant life, those who love Him, put their trust in Him, and obey his commands. Psalm 23 paints a refreshing portrait of the abundant life that Jesus Christ wants for us. In Him we “lack nothing (V 1), and are refreshed (V3). He leads us in the right path of his perfect will, so that even when we face dark times, we need not be afraid, for he is present to comfort us (V 3-4) . He causes us to triumph in adversity and lavished us with his blessings (V 5). His goodness and love follow us every day, and we have the privilege of his Spirit's presence forever (V 6). The life that God gives right now is abundantly rich and full. It is eternal and yet it begins immediately. Prayer: Jesus, you are the true life, abundant and full. Help me seek my fulfillment only in you. Amen

Sun Aug 2 God Of Abundance

“And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and broke, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.” Matt 14: 19 – 20. Sometimes we are not satisfied with enough, we want more than enough which in our opinion satisfies our security. One example was during the Coronavirus lockdown when shoppers scrambled for more than enough of the items that were considered important such as food-stuffs, toilet tissue, paper- towels, hand sani-

tizers, just to name a few. Such actions resulted in an artificial shortage. Matthew records the story of Jesus feeding more than 5000 people with five loaves and two fish, with twelve baskets remaining. Jesus, unlike some shoppers, was moved with compassion for the crowd. As the Bread of Life, Jesus first fed them lavishly with the bread of his Word, which satisfies their spirit, followed by the physical bread which satisfies their physical body. The fact that they were filled and with twelve baskets remaining, clearly tells us that God is a God of abundance. We see this when God rain down bread from heaven for his people in the wilderness (Exodus 16). Again, through Elijah God fed 100 people with ten hand sized loaves of bread and still had leftovers (2 Kings 4: 42-44). Jesus’ multiplication of the loaves was so powerful, bountiful and overflowing that there were twelve baskets of broken pieces remaining. We should know that daily God opens his hands and satisfies our wants. It is right that we should acknowledge his goodness and give him praise and thanks.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, the Bread of Life, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. As the God of abundance, you have fed so many with so little. Look with compassion on us and open your hands and satisfy our needs. Amen.