

Community of Grace

Daily Walk for the week of August 31, 2020

Psalm 85:10...Harmony Written by Kerri Lawton

Daily devotion for August 31, 2020

Romans 12: 14-18 "Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another, do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought of what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." Continuing with the "marks of a true Christian," these guiding words have so much meaning. I enjoy using my Mother's Bible because so often I come across highlighted lines. Verse 15 is one: "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." I imagine her repeating this as she rejoices over good news or saddened by bad news. She was able to touch others with kind words, taking "thought for what is noble in the sight of all." She cared deeply for others, harmonizing with family and friends in such a way that no one doubted her good intentions. I long for such harmony in my heart, to live peacefully with all. Prayer: God of peace, we give you thanks for setting our paths before us. Help us to see that becoming a true Christian is largely how we treat others. Be noble in God's eyes and seek peace within your heart. Amen

Daily devotion for September 1, 2020

Matthew 16: 21-23 " From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you. "But he turned and said to Peter," Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you are setting your mind not on Divine things but on human things." As

Jesus had been conveying his fate to his disciples, he is securing his own destiny. They had been traveling and teaching; healing and blessing, as crowds grew with interest. Peter sees this and knows of the Lord's power, yet he has not accepted the truth of Jesus' existence. How can death, as he knew it, have any good outcome after the true miracles he has experienced? But Jesus put him in his place after Peter took him aside. He sees Peter's pleas to God as trying to undermine all that Jesus had been trying to prepare them for. Through love and devotion to Jesus, all will be harmoniously saved. His sacrifice is necessary to fulfill the divine order. As Jesus tells Peter, we must also set our minds on Divine things. The power of the Lord gives steadfast love to the people and opens the door of hope and harmony to all. Prayer: Dear Lord, through tears of joy or tears of sorrow, we live our lives. We try to spend our days in orderly fashion, relying on your presence to make each day better than the last. We must harmonize with others, coming together as a whole, in Christ kingdom. Amen

Psalm 85:10...Love Written by Vernon Mukhlall

Wed Sept 2

God Loves To Bless Us

"Blessed is the man that trusts in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall not fear when the heat comes, but its leaf shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Jeremiah 17: 7 – 8. The shrub in the desert (Verse 6) and the trees planted by the water provide a contrast between those who worship idols and those who put their trust in the true and living God. The imagery in Verse 8 is that of a fruitful tree deriving nourishment because it was planted by the waters. This describes the benefit ac-

crued to those who trust in the Lord and who are devoted to His Word. God loves to blessed those of us who are obedient to Him. He is always by our side supplying our every need as we walk with Him in faith and love. This does not mean that we will be free from trials and adversities, but that God will shower us with strength and endurance to go through those difficulties, and coming out stronger and with greater trust in God through Jesus Christ. Prayer: Heavenly Father, sometimes I do trust the empty promises of others. Help me to understand that your Word is true and that you always honor your promises. Through the tree of your cross may my roots find the water of everlasting life and that I may bear healing fruits for others, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thu Sept 3

Love For God's Laws Is More Profitable

"Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of your commandments; for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto your testimonies, and not to covetousness." Psalm 119: 33 – 36. What is your greatest desire in life? Those who are College and University inclined desire academic excellence. Those in the world of work will desire greater financial status. For some, money represents power, success, and influence. For some people money may be their god. It is true that money can buy some amount of comfort and provide security for oneself. We need money to provide the necessities of life for ourselves and our respective families. But there is something far better and more profitable to strive for than money or wealth. The Psalmist is asking God for understanding, not wealth, to know and keep God's laws in his heart and to be obedient in observing them. For us, the love of God's laws is much more profitable than the love of money or wealth. Money is earthly treas-

ure but obedience to God's laws is heavenly treasure. Jesus who says "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also", is encouraging us to live according to his commands so that we may lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19–21). Prayer: Lord, you lead me in ways that I can provide for my family. But more importantly, lead me in ways that I may understand and obey your commandments, for your laws are more profitable to me and my family. Amen.

Fri Sept 4

Recipients Of God's Agape Love

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not knows not God; for God is love." 1 John 4: 7 – 8.

The word "agape" when used in the context of the New Testament, has a very distinct meaning. It is used to describe the love that God has for us. It is not like a brotherly/ sisterly love or love between a husband and wife. It is the highest, most supreme, and most self- sacrificing love that there is. It is the very nature of God for "God is love"(1 John 4:8) . Agape love is not sentimental; it is always shown by what it does. It is a love which is willing to die for another even if that person is unworthy, sinful, undeserving, and is an enemy of the one who died for him/ her. The agape love was clearly displayed by our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the cross." God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2: 4 – 5) . You and I are blessed to be the recipients of God's lavish agape love (1 John 3:1) which has made us children of God. If God so loved us, then we are to love one another. In doing so we will be the reflection of God's agape love in our daily lives. Prayer: Loving God, your agape love for me is beyond my comprehension. Through my life experiences and the renewing of your

grace every morning, I can discern your love for me. Help me to continue live my life in your love. Amen.

Sat Sept 5

Jesus: "Love one another as I have loved you"

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you: continue in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That you love one another, as I have loved you." John 17: 9 – 12. Many of us have heard the children's Sunday School song, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so". The question is: Do we really know the depth, width, and height of Jesus' love for us? The above verses tell us a lot about Jesus' love for us. The love of God the Father towards His only Begotten Son is the highest affection we can conceive (Matthew 3:17, 17:5). This measure of love that the Father gives to the Son is the same that the Son is giving to the disciples, as well as, to all believers, and to us. Jesus says, "this is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you". Jesus calls us to abide in his love which is unconditional, sacrificial, unchanging, strong, tender, and patient. To abide in His love we must obey His commandments. The way that we show obedience is for us to love others with a love that is like Jesus – unconditional, sacrificial, unchanging, strong, tender, and patient. We may not have to die for others, but we can listen to them, give encourage, empathize with them, show compassion to them, and generally be helpful to them. As we read and interact with God's Word in the Bible, more and more we will understand and experience Jesus' love for us and be motivated to share that love effectively with others. Prayer: Lord Jesus, your love to me is unconditional, sacrificial, unchanging, strong, tender, and patient. Help me

to strive to love others with the same love that you have bestowed on me. Amen.

Sun Sept 6

Love My Neighbors As Myself

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another has fulfilled the law. For this, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13: 8 – 10. Whatever station in life we find ourselves, there is the tendency to incur debts. This verse does not prohibit debt. However, Paul says that we must be held accountable, that is, we must honor such debt and have it discharged, that is, it must be paid in full and on time. Paul also says that there is one debt that cannot be discharged - cannot be paid in full. This debt is "love". It is a continuing debt. We have an obligation to love others as we love ourselves. This is not a command to love ourselves, we do love ourselves. It is a command to love others genuinely and sincerely. Jesus says that loving our neighbors as ourselves is the second greatest commandment in the law (Matthew 22: 34 – 40). Love is a debt due to everyone. It is a great debt, lasting debt, pleasant debt, an honorable debt. "Love is the inexhaustible fountain out of which all words and deeds of kindness flow". It enhances our moral and spiritual nature. It shapes us into God-like nature, for God is love. This kind of love does no harm to anyone and it fulfills the law. Prayer: Merciful father, you have given me the second greatest commandment which is to love my neighbor as myself. As you continue to shape my life into that God-like nature, help me to genuinely love my neighbors as you have taught me in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Amen.