

# Community of Grace

## Daily Walk for the week of October 5, 2020

### Celebration of Grace... Planting Community Written by Kerri Lawton

#### Monday, October 5, 2020

Philippians 3:7-9 "Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as lost because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith." Paul is describing himself as a confident member of the people of Israel and "as to righteousness, under the law, blameless. "And yet since knowing Christ as his Lord, all he had gained was considered less valuable. In fact, known as "rubbish, "after having found righteousness of value through faith in Christ. These are harsh words but he knew that a personal relationship with Christ was his salvation. Paul planted the seeds of hope and inspiration for Christians to pursue their own relationship with Christ, enjoying the fruits of their own labor and commitments. As a community we are committed to its service; a labor of love to help restore what has been lost and instill hope for the future. Prayer: Dear Lord, we continue striving for a relationship with you. Paul had seen what was missing from his previous life; the love and acceptance you have for us. We turn our lives to you with a gracious heart. Amen

#### Tuesday, October 6, 2020

Philippians 3:12-14 "Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own, but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on

toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." I love how Paul puts things to words. His own goals are those of Christ, to receive "the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." He presses daily to obtain his prize, for he knows what lies ahead is rich in glory and spiritual healing. He says he forgets "what lies behind" (honestly we cannot always forget but learn from the past, I feel). What's important is "straining forward to what lies ahead" and staying focused. These are rich words for us as we face changes in our future. We are called to celebrate what God has planted, but also be reminded that God expects righteousness and justice. We must strive for the same, living in Christ through love, grace and mercy for us and our neighbors. This I know, for "Christ Jesus has made me his own." Prayer: God of mercy and might, we give you thanks and praise for planting the Vineyard of life. We set our goals ahead and offer mercy and understanding for all. We strive to improve how we harvest our own good works through you, in Christ name. Amen

### Celebration of Grace... Rejoicing in Salvation Written by Vernon Mukhlall

#### Wed Oct 7

#### God Speaks Truth Through Caiaphas

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man does many miracles. If we let him alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, You know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spoke he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only,

but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” John 11:47 – 52. God in his amazing way uses non-believers to speak truth to the people. The Jewish religious leaders who opposed Jesus every step of His way in bringing Salvation to the world, called in session the Sanhedrin, the religious council, to figure out how they could destroy Jesus Christ. Under Roman authority, The Sanhedrin controlled all Jewish internal affairs. It is the judiciary, legislative, and executive body of the Jews (Verse 50). Caiaphas the high priest said “it is better for you that one man died for the people than that the whole nation perish (Verse 50). In those words, Caiaphas spoke more truth than he ever knew. God was actually speaking truth through Caiaphas, though God and Caiaphas intended different meaning through the same words. Both Caiaphas and God wanted Jesus to die as a substitute and a sacrifice. Caiaphas wanted Jesus to die to remove political trouble with the Romans. God wanted Jesus to give his life as a ransom to take away the sins of the world. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus has given us the gift of Salvation of which we need to be joyful about. Prayer: Saving God, you send Jesus to redeem the world through His death and resurrection. Fill my heart with faith and wisdom to follow in the footsteps of our crucified and risen Lord. Amen.

**Thu Oct 8**

#### **Finding Renewal And Restoration In Christ**

“He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.” Psalm 23: 3 As children, we all must have learned the 23rd Psalm in Sunday School. Even as adults, we must have recited this Psalm to have comfort in certain times when we need God's protection, guidance, and provision. No matter how many times we must have recited this same, we probably have missed the full impact of the message that it conveys. That is, God “restores my soul” (Verse 3). The result of selfish desires and

attempts to meet our own needs on our own wisdom and strength, we may have slowly slipped away from the path that God wants us. In this broken world where the world's influence on our lives is very great, we will be tempted in so many subtle ways. Even though we may slip away far from Him, He still remains our Good Shepherd. He gladly receives us back and willingly pardons us and renews our fellowship with Him. In renewing and restoring us, our God is more than our pardoning Shepherd. He is also our providing Shepherd meeting our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Prayer: Our gracious Good Shepherd, You lovingly guide me to green pastures and still waters. Watch over me in good and bad times, and comfort me with your presence. Bless me abundantly so that my cup overflows with your goodness and mercy. Amen.

#### **Fri Oct 9 God Favors The Humble**

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4: 10. Some people see pride as a virtue [greatness] and humility as a vice [weakness]. How do you see humility? Would you strive to be a humble person? John Ruskin says, “The first test of a truly great person is his humility”. The Apostle Peter says, “Humble yourselves before God, and he will lift you up (1 Peter 5:6) . Looking at humility from God's perspective, it is a virtuous quality which God wants believers to acquire. “ God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5) . As believers, we need to be humble in our disposition so as to experience the full benefit of God's grace. We live our lives knowing that God watches over us and He is in control of our lives. Being humble people, God will elevate us to new spiritual heights. Humility helps us to develop the attitude of not only looking out for our own interests but for the interests of others. This brings us to the second greatest commandment that God wants us to obey, “love your neighbors as yourself”. Humility can help us greatly to obey this commandment.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have called me to reject the powers of this world that rebel against you. Teach me to be humble and faithful. Forgive me when I fall short and grant me your grace. Amen.

**Sat Oct 10 Rooted And Established In Christ**

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3: 17 – 19. There are times when we see powerful winds, such as in any storm, blowing against those big trees that are in our front yard, or backyard, or in our neighbors’ yard. The branches will move to and fro but the trunk hardly moves because it is held firmly by its strong root system. We may want to apply this imagery to our lives. When life is like a forceful wind raging against us, our fears may get exceedingly great. We feel as if we have only “branches” and we fail to recognize that we have a “trunk” too. Paul is praying for the “young” Ephesian believers that as they grow in their faith, Jesus Christ will make His home in their hearts, and their “roots” will grow down into God's love. They will be rooted and established in Christ’s love which is beyond their understanding. On our own it is easy to be fearful which can make us insecure and fragile, but as we grow in our faith in Jesus Christ, we will come to the point where we can experience deep peace with God, enjoying the abundance of gifts that flow from Him. Prayer: Merciful God, you are my shelter in the storms that may rage against my life. Help me to be rooted and established in your love so that I may experience your deep peace which is beyond my understanding. Amen.

**Sun Oct 11 Rejoice In Our Salvation**

“On this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of rich things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of

wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD has spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” Isaiah 25: 6 – 9. Do you often recognize and acknowledge God's grace which He renews every day? Do you praise Him often for the work that He is doing in your life? Isaiah praises the Lord for doing “wonderful things” in His “perfect faithfulness” (Verse 1). Isaiah also gives a description of God's great messianic banquet which is remarkable. It promises that God will “swallow up death forever” not only for His chosen people, Israel, but all peoples. This points to the saving work of Christ on the cross who gives the gift of forgiveness and Salvation to all who come to Him in repentance and faith. At this time, when we are preparing to celebrate the anniversary of our church, we need to, “rejoice and be glad in our Salvation” that we are given through our Savior, Jesus Christ. We also need to give praise to our God for His grace (goodness) in our community of believers, the growth that has taken place over the years, the leadership that we have, and the caring membership that is very supportive of all the activities that God is leading us to do. We truly need to rejoice in our Salvation. Prayer: Lord, Jesus, You bled for me on the cross to take away my sinful nature and give me the gift of Salvation. You have placed me in a community of faithful and caring believers. Help me to truly rejoice in our Salvation. May you continue to grant your goodness to Community of grace. Amen.