

Community of Grace

DAILY WALK WEEK OF AUGUST 29, 2022

Faith in Action: Sharing & Service

Written by Trudy Hanson

Monday, August 29, 2022

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching

him closely, Luke 14:1 I read this verse over and over again and decided early on I was going to skip it. But I kept going back to it trying to put it into what it would mean in my everyday life. But all I could think about was, why would Jesus accept an invitation from a group of people that didn't approve of him? People that the only reason for inviting him was to find fault and humiliate him? Then it started coming to me in respect to our day to day life. We gain prospective from what people say, and how they say it. We gain prospective from people by what they do and what they say they do. We gain prospective from people that are kind and humble in every way and we learn from it. Jesus was looking for a different perspective in order to teach. He wanted to see and hear firsthand these Pharisees that invited him. He knew they weren't a fan of his but still he wanted to show them he was humble and what that was like. He was showing them a different prospective so he could teach them and others in a way they can see and understand. He is inviting us to look at life through his eyes and ears and imitate him. Prayer: Gracious God, help us to look at your life and see and hear your words so we may imitate you in our daily lives. Amen

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. Luke 14:13-14

Through him, then let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Hebrews:13:15-16 Reading these verses and thinking back on our military life I see lots of correlation between the 2. In our verses today God is telling us to share what we have, do not neglect to do good, to invite everyone and praise God. We moved A LOT while in the military. The moves within the states weren't quite as bad as we knew the basics of how to get around, we had maps we had phones to get everything set up. We were able to converse and gather information with our neighbors and felt comfortable maneuvering through our new location. But moving overseas was a whole new world. Language was the big one, you couldn't just ask for directions you had to figure out HOW to ask for directions and hope you got there. One adventure I and 2 other friends had was driving around the Sicilian country side looking for a restaurant that a local on base had recommended. We had the name of the restaurant, Due Palma, and we had directions but with minimal road signs it made it impossible to follow. We spent the day stopping every person we saw asking, dove Due Palma. Most of the time they looked at us in confusion, but as we got closer they pointed in a general direction until finally a little gentleman on a vespa led the way. When we got there it was closed but an older women came out and he told her something in Italian and left. With a big smile she welcomed us in, we were served the best meal ever and as we ate she sat and listened to us chat and laugh about our adventure and she began to laugh with us as we attempted our very minimal Italian. She took us through her home and showed us her family pictures, her kitchen and even show us where she prayed. As we were leaving she drew us a map, she hugged

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us tightly and begged us to come back. This was exactly what our verses today is talking about. Inviting strangers in, treating them as family, showing them who you are and what you believe and expecting nothing in return. That is what we experienced that day when 3 strangers came to Due Palma. We were invited in and felt God's love through a stranger. Prayer: Heavenly Father, remind us to invite others in, share what we have and show our love not only for them but the love we have for you. Amen

Faith in Action: Commitment to Discipleship

Written by Wanda Mulkey

Wednesday, August 31, 2022

Read: Isaiah 57:14-21 When Allison was born, six years after Derek's birth, David and I decided that I would become a stay-at-home mom. After a decade of working, I decided not only would I be a housewife but I also would devote some of my time volunteering for causes that I believed in. I taught Sunday School and Bible School, was program director for my women's group, was involved for a short time in campaigning for a friend that was running for State Representative, was once a PTA treasurer and many other endeavors. But most of my time centered around Girl Scouts. I started out by becoming a troop co-leader for my closest friend's daughter. Margie (my friend) called and needed someone to help with the Daisy troop (Kindergarteners) and since I would be assisting another leader, I thought "Why not?" After that troop disbanded, I became Allison's Daisy leader. Even though I was worn out, I decided that it was my duty to make my daughter's troop as wonderful as I could and I had a ton of experience. Three years later, I was in charge of the Service Unit (which consisted of establishing and maintaining troops for all ages in several school areas in our community.) It was during this period that I oversaw monthly meetings with adult leaders. I always started the first meeting with what is called an Investiture Ceremony, where I would welcome each new Girl Scout (even though they were all

adults) and then pin their Girl Scout pin on them while they recited the Girl Scout Promise. I had even put together my own ceremony. I would put out six candles across a table and then stand behind the table while someone would dim the lights. Next, I would recite the words of God Bless America while lighting each candle. Each year I became a little more dramatic while I read these words. And that is my downfall. My drama. Every time I got the big head (as my mama would say) God had a way of showing me the way back to being humble. This is the story. My last year of being a Service Unit Director, I laid out a white tablecloth over the table and set out the candles before anyone arrived. That's when I noticed that I had not written out the words on a sheet of paper like I had done for the two previous years. But that was okay. I had never needed to write out the words. I knew them by heart. Everyone knew God Bless America. And besides, I would look so much better in the candlelight looking out at all the troop leaders and just saying the words from my soul. I could not wait. Finally, after everyone was pinned, I began, "God Bless America, land that I love." I lit the first candle. "Stand beside her and guide her through the night with the light from above." I lit the second candle. Then "-----" Nothing. My brain went into overdrive. The more I struggled with the lost words, the more I couldn't remember. Time was ticking and all I could think was why didn't I write out everything I was going to say? Sweat beads popped up on my face. I stood there shining in the light of the two candles and I'm sure it wasn't a pretty sight. Seconds were flying by and nothing came. I frantically started lighting the next four candles. I ended the ceremony by looking up in the candlelight and repeating "God bless America, God bless America." And that is why, anytime I have to read or talk to a crowd, I always pray first. I pray that God will keep me humble. That my words will be for God's glory, not mine. (And I pray that God will remind me to tuck away a little cheat sheet.) Prayer: Dear Heaven-

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ly Father, Please be with us in our everyday lives. Remind us that we must be humble in all that we do. Then others will see your glory within us. In your Son's name we pray. Amen.

Thursday, September 1, 2022

Read: Psalm 1 It is going to rain today. I can feel it in my bones. I don't have to watch the weather channel or read about it. I don't even have to look outside to see the clouds. All I have to do is wake up with an aching hurt in my humerus bone (that was broken in the spring of this year) to know that we are going to have bad storms. After the break, my arm has the ability to forecast weather better than a weatherperson. And this has been one of the worst summers for storms. Of course, you have to put this in perspective. If you need to know if the Braves are going to have a rain delay, call me. If you want to know if your vacation plans will be ruined, call me. With all of that said, I personally have not enjoyed this summer as much as I would have liked. One symptom of these storms - My dog, Abbie, is petrified of thunder. She will not let us have a moment of sleep. She shakes, her heart races and she cannot stay still. I finally bought her a "Thunder Vest" which wraps tight around her to give her a sense of security. And that has seemed to help. But she still goes through all of the symptoms at the beginning. She begs us, with whining, not to leave her. It is a real struggle for her. And being a dog lover, I cannot help but suffer with her. Another symptom of these storms - I tend to stay at home during rain storms. I hate to drive in bad weather. The darkness of the clouds gives me a sense of doom. It makes me want to go to bed and sleep the day away. Whereas the sunshine makes me smile. It gives me a reason to go out. Do something. Go somewhere. But it wasn't always that way. I remember when I was a child, I loved the rain. It gave me more time to read books, to daydream. You see, my mom saw to it that we were out in the sun, playing, unless it was raining. We ventured outside in the morning and came back in before dark. (Like most kids during that time frame.)

But when it rained, I was more myself. I would sit cross-legged behind the screen door and watch the raindrops fall on the cement stoop in front of our house. They looked like busy people going somewhere important, hurriedly. And the splash made it look like they were carrying little umbrellas. I made up stories in my head about them. And I could do this for hours. Some days, if there was no lighting or thunder, mom would let us play in the rain. Judy and I would throw on our bathing suits (with no worry about how we looked) and we would run outside, splash in the puddles, get mud between our toes, throw back our heads and taste the rain on our tongues. It makes me smile to think about it. After David and I were married, we discovered that we both loved thunder storms. When we finally owned a home with a covered patio, we would sit outside and watch the lightening in the distance, listen to the thunder and, every now and then, feel the rain as it would sneak into our enclosure. We would finally run into the house, out of the rain, grateful for our time together. When I was a child and as I grew into a young, married woman, I had such a different perspective than now. Weren't all my rainstorms created by God? How could I have become so unseeing? I remember clearly praying for a rainy day and then when it came, thanking my Lord for the experience. You know what? I think I will spend the rest of the day outside watching the rain, the lightening and listening to the thunder. Maybe I can show God just how glorious his creations are. And it will be a good time to catch up on my prayers. How great is a rain-storm! Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, You have created such a wonderful world for us. We praise you for your love, your grace and your forgiveness when we forget how grateful we are for that world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Friday, September 2, 2022

Read: Colossians 4:4-17 Words. They can be loving, hateful, funny, damaging, informative, destructive. They can show strength, weakness, smartness, idiocy, kindness, spitefulness.

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Words heal and hurt. To be a parent, it is our job to show our children the difference in being a person of good words or bad words. I wanted to be a mother from practically the moment I was born. I grew up knowing that God would one day grant my wish and I would have a houseful of girls. I only knew girls. I only had sisters. And the thought of dealing with boys was never in my plans. But you know the old saying, "We make plans and God laughs." Fast forward to the recovery room after the birth of our first child. It was during that long ago time of putting women to sleep as soon as they started contractions. So, there I was being awoken to nurses telling me it was all over and I had a beautiful baby. David walked into the room, all sweaty with tears in his eyes. He kissed me and asked if the nurses told me the sex of the baby. To be perfectly honest, I had not asked. I already knew. Remember the plan? Then he said, "We have a boy." Raising Derek was sometimes not the easiest of responsibilities. Over the years, he tried my patience. But I knew my son. I knew his good side and his bad. I knew just by looking at him as he talked, if he was telling the truth or not. And sometimes I went to bat for him because I knew his truth. Now I am not a woman of few words, so I could be extremely strong when it came to defending Derek. With other parents or with the school. By the time I talked, they listened. But remember, words strongly said sometimes are heard by young ears. By the time those words get to the young brain, they can be misinterpreted. One day afterschool, Derek came to me and told me that his A on a paper in the Coach's class was going to be a zero because the Coach thought Derek marked on the side of the paper. The class had been told not to mark on the sheet. Derek was almost in tears. I looked at him. "Were there marks on the paper?" I asked. "Yes, but I don't know where they came from" was the reply. He was telling the truth. Then he said, "You have to call the Coach tomorrow to get this straightened out. I told him that once you got a hold of

him, I would get my A back. You wouldn't stand for it!" WHAT??? Is this the way my son saw me? A crazy lunatic, roaming the streets, screaming and cursing at the top of my lungs. He had never even been with me when I defended him to others. I needed to think about how to get this straight with Derek as I was thinking about what to say to an extremely angry Coach in the morning. At 7:30 the next day, I was awoken by a ringing telephone. It was the Coach. I let him talk first while I tried to wake up. He was mad. He told the class not to mark up the sheet. Derek, being Derek, had disobeyed. His zero would remain. Then I used my words. "I totally understand your position, Coach. If Derek deliberately marked on the paper, he should get a zero. Where exactly were the marks?" Were they on the right of the answer boxes?" Yes, was the reply. "I'm not sure this will help but I have a habit when I am reading a question. I lightly put my pencil down next to the answer box to keep my place. If Derek is like me, he could have put his pencil there to keep his place. That does not excuse his mistake. So, if he must get a zero, so be it. It will be a great lesson for the future. Can you tell me if the marks look like they could have been made that way?" The Coach replied with, "You know, Mrs. Mulkey, they could have. They sure could have. You are the sweetest lady I have ever talked to. I going to give Derek his A." That afternoon when Derek got home, he was mad. "What did you say to the Coach? He told me that I had the nicest mother. He wished all mothers were as kind as you. I thought you would be strong with him. You would let him have it! Now I'm embarrassed." "Did he give you an A, Derek? You see, I don't talk to people the way you think I do. I give them words to think about. That's all. And I try to respect them the way I want to be respected. God did not give us a mouth to use in hate. God gave us the ability to communicate by mouth in love and respect." I sure hope this is the way he remembers my words. Prayer: Dear heavenly Fa-

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ther, We know that words have the ability to cause harm or care. Please help us to speak as you would. We are all your children in love.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Saturday, September 3, 2022

Read: Deuteronomy 29:2-20 Today I am packing for a much-needed vacation. And it's not just any vacation. It is an all-adult, stay in a condo in North Myrtle Beach with great friends for 6 days' vacation Most of the time, our trips consist of staying in a camper with at least one grandchild. Those times are fun but extremely tiring. To the point of having to sleep for 24 hours the first day I arrive home just to get back to my previous condition. But this trip will be with our friends, Margie and Dean, who we have been traveling with for about thirty years. We know each other so well that it's like putting on well-used slippers, we feel so comfortable together. With that said, there is one undertaking that I dread while getting ready to travel – the aforementioned packing. Now I pack like my mama. She made sure that we had more than enough clothes. (Just in case we spilled food or drink on ourselves and had to change.) Also, all the underwear we could stuff in our bags because of the dreaded, "What if you were in a car accident and didn't have on clean underwear?" And shoes. Flip flops for the beach, tennis shoes for walking, nicer shoes for going out to a nice restaurant. (Which incidentally never happened. Most of the time my mother cooked, even on vacation. And when she didn't, we usually ended up at Steak n' Shake in our flip flops.) But the rules are ingrained in me. So, if we are to be there for six days, I need at least three swimsuits, of which I only wear two because the third one is stretched out but is kept "just in case." I need 10 pair of shorts, of which I don't have, so this gives me something to worry about. Casual tops, dressy tops, dressy pants, etc. And shoes, don't forget shoes. As many as I can carry in one bag. So, you can see that I am stressed beyond belief because of my childhood. Now God did not intend for us to have

these types of burdens that we put on ourselves. Hopefully, it was funny about my dilemma. But it really is not a stressor. It is trivial in today's world. It is shallow. Many people do not have the clothes, shoes or even food that I have. Many women are watching their children die. I am complaining about the tiredness of having grandchildren for a week at a "country club" of camping in a trailer that has a fireplace. Not one person that I know sleeps on the street with a cardboard blanket. I have a queen size bed in my camper. I am going on vacation in a car. There are women walking for miles just to obtain water for their family. These are the real burdens of our world. These are the ones that we must pray about. Stress about. Think about. Do something about. Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, please be with the people of the world that need your help, your goodness and love. Be with us as we go about our lives but remind us that it is our responsibility to represent you here on earth. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Sunday, September 4, 2022

Read: Luke 14: 25-33 Recently I needed to purchase a new car. My old one was giving us so many problems (and expenses) that I was determined to look for a good deal. I really didn't want to spend the money but it was needed. Also, I didn't want a new car, maybe one about three to five years old. So, David and I began to explore the possibilities. We found something online and traveled out past the Mall of Georgia to look at it. Then I saw it. The one I thought I wanted. The one I would spend the money for and it was a good deal. Looking back, I did not really pay attention to the outside of the car. The dealership was enlarging their lot and all the cars were covered in dust. But the inside was perfect. It looked like a brand-new car. I test drove it and fell in love. Immediately we began the dreaded negotiations. After, what seemed like hours, we signed the papers. But before I could take it home, the windshield had to be replaced and the car cleaned up. No problem. I could wait the few days to order the

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windshield. The next Monday, we drove back up past the Mall of Georgia to retrieve our “new” car. There it was, parked in the lot, looking good and all shiny like a new penny. We went in, got the key and shook hands. Then we left the building to drive home. When we were outside, I focused closely at the hood and saw tiny spots that looked like someone had tried to cover over little imperfections in the paint. Oh! No! It was too late. I was so angry with the dealership and with us for not looking closer that I drove home angry. I knew that if we had gone back inside, I might not have said the right words and they could have said, “sorry”, end of story. After a sleepless night, I called the dealership. I did not demand that they repaint the car. David made that easier by saying we would have it repainted. Which I refused to do but I felt better knowing we could, if push came to shove. I explained about all the dust covering the damage. I said that because the inside looked so great, I assumed that the whole car was in the same shape. I reminded them that my daughter and her wife had bought a car from them a few years ago. We came back to that dealership because of their good reputation. I was calling to let them know, so they could clean off the dust from the rest of their inventory before someone else came to buy a car. After I stopped talking, they offered to paint the hood and the back of the car. They were extremely cooperative. And I do love that car. Now you see, God was with me during this mistake. After I said a silent prayer, he stopped me from going nuts about the car. He knew that if I took some time to think about what I would be trying to convey, it would turn out more in my favor. He made me think about what I really wanted. After talking to God, I then thought that I should have had the car cleaned before signing the papers. What I hoped for was for them to pay half of the new paint job. I even suggested it, but they refused. They took the responsibility. Sometimes, we think that during prayer, it is not appropriate to

ask God to help us with our everyday trials. But I know God wants us to pray, no matter about the contents of the prayer. When I was a child, I prayed continuously. A prayer would pop into my head at moment’s notice. Jesus was my friend, with me always. Therefore, I talked to him. After I became an adult, I had designated times to pray. Only if it was an emergency, would I come off of the schedule. I’m doing better, now that I am older and acting more like my child-self. Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for listening to us as we communicate with you during prayer. We know that you are there whenever we need you. You help us, if only we ask. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.