

MONDAY 2.20.23 – Matthew 5:33-37

J. Vernon McGee writes, “When a man says to me, ‘I’d swear on a stack of Bibles a mile high’, that is the fellow I do not believe because I think the lie he’s telling is a mile high”. I swear on the Bible... to God... on my life... on my mother’s grave. All common expressions when we are trying to prove to someone we are trustworthy or telling the truth. If we are always honest, giving others no reason to question our integrity, then why do we feel the need to provide proof to anyone? Our scripture today tells us if we live our life the way God commands us, then our word is our oath. No ‘I swear by/on’ necessary. If we feel the need to swear by something to prove our trustworthiness... then there is evil afoot. Some would say the truth hurts. The Bible tells us the truth will set us free (John 8:32)!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 2.21.23 – Hebrews 11:1

This word “conviction” carries weight. It implies firmly held beliefs about things. In the law, conviction means the jury believed the evidence against a defendant. Interestingly, the KJV uses a different word than ‘conviction’ in this verse; it uses the word ‘evidence’. Evidence is some proof of the existence of something, and sufficient evidence in court satisfies a jury to convict. What we have by the presence of the Holy Spirit living in us, is faith to believe and trust our One and True God about anything. This faith is proof, evidence, conviction to us of the existence of all God’s promises. And we do not conjure this faith up by ourselves, it is a gift of God. Ephesians 2:8-9 explains that Faith is a gift from God given to us so that our eyes may be opened, and we may seek God and find Him. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. His belief was his evidence, his conviction. And praise God, so is ours.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY – 2.22.23 – Acts 25:1-12

“That’s not fair!” Have you ever made that exclamation as a child? We call attention to injustice because we want wrongs to be made right. However, life many times—but not always—is unfair. Such was the experience of the Apostle Paul. Falsely accused by the Jews, Paul was transferred from Jerusalem to Caesarea to stand trial. Phase one of Paul’s trial was before Felix, the Roman governor. Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus. So, phase two of Paul’s trial was before Festus. Ultimately, Paul appealed to Caesar, and he would be taken to Rome to stand before Emperor Nero.

When you are wrongly accused and slandered, remember that God—the Judge of Heaven—will hold men accountable. Keep on loving those who mistreat you, as Jesus commanded (Matt.5:43). Rather than becoming bitter and giving up hope, entrust yourself to God, as Jesus did (1 Peter 2:23).

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 2.23.23 – Proverbs 25:21-25

Where, today, can we find such a demonstration of love! Our age is filled with vengeance and retribution for even the slightest of perceived offenses! We are faced daily with stories of those who feel they must meet or, more often, exceed the offense done to them in punishing the offender.

Into this atmosphere, God’s Word injects a *radical* response to our enemies! Kindness! In the use of the words “bread” and “water”, this admonition addresses **all** of our enemies needs for life.

Isn’t this a bit overboard? Christian, consider what your Savior has done for YOU! While we were sinners, enemies of God, Christ died for us! When you heard of the love of Jesus, what God did for YOU, did that not “heaps coals upon your head” to bring you to repentance? Has He not rewarded you?

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY 2.24.23 - Psalm 43

¹Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation. Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. ²You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? ³Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. ⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. ⁵Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Has anyone ever said something about you that was untrue and hurtful? What did you do with the pain it caused? In our Scripture for today we see that David was experiencing this kind of pain, and as we read David’s response to his pain, we can gain insight into how we should handle similar situations.

1. Rather than keeping his pain to himself David admitted his pain to God and talked openly and honestly with God about his pain.
2. He asked God to help him deal with the pain and to be brought back into God’s presence.
3. He realized that in God he would find joy and delight.
4. He put his hope in God and offered up praise.

Struggling with feelings of being hurt by someone. Rather than letting the pain come between you and God, try the four steps mentioned above. It worked for David.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

SUNDAY MORNINGS – 9:40am

- Kids** CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)
LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service
NURSERY (through Age 3)
LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** SPRING QUARTER BEGINS MARCH 5TH
LOCATION: B8-10 with Lane Kemler
Explore the Bible - *John, chapters 12-21*
LOCATION: B11 with David Hamilton
Masterwork - *Unfailing Love in Uncertain Times, a study of 1 John by J. Ryan Wicker*
LOCATION: B1-2 with Barry Wills
God Owns it All - *A 6-week study of financial principles that are affirmed by the authority of scripture and tested by the marketplace by author, Ron Blue*
LOCATION: Rm 2 (next to office) with Irene Hess
Share Your Story - *This 4-week study for ladies will help you share your faith by recognizing God's presence in your life, identifying, and sharing your story and living out your faith*

SUNDAY EVENINGS – 6:00pm

- Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)
LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
5th–8th Grade meet downstairs
9th–12th Grade meet upstairs
- Adults** DIVE DEEPER WITH DOUG
LOCATION: Worship Center

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS – 6:00pm

Meal followed by the study Ephesians by J.D. Greear
LOCATION: FAC and lower-level classrooms

WOMEN'S STUDIES

- Tuesdays** LOCATION: B8-10 6:00 – 7:30pm through 2/28
Amos by Jennifer Rothschild
Soup & study - Childcare provided
- Thursdays** LOCATION: YAC 9:00am – 11am through 3/2
Amos by Jennifer Rothschild
- Mondays** LOCATION: *more information coming soon*
Decluttering by Faith by D. Madsen & D. Kokku

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY GROUPS OR CLASSES, PLEASE USE THE CONNECT CARD IN YOUR BULLETIN. THANK YOU!

Acts 23:23-24:27
The Peril of Procrastination

In Acts 23, the Apostle Paul is arrested in Jerusalem. A plot is hatched by the Jews to kill him. So, Paul is taken from Jerusalem to Caesarea under the protection of 470 Roman soldiers. In Caesarea, Paul will stand trial before Marcus Antonius Felix who is the Governor of Judea.

Trial #1—_____ before _____

- The Prosecution (24:1-9)
- The Defense (24:10-21)
- The Verdict (24:22-23)

Trial #2—_____ before _____

- The Prosecution (24:24)

Three spiritual realities:

- Yesterday's _____
- Today's _____
- Tomorrow's _____

- The Defense (24:25)
- The Verdict (24:26-27)

Do not procrastinate. Do not put off doing what you need to do. The Bible says, "Today, if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart." "Today is the day of salvation."

The best time to trust in Jesus for sins forgiven and eternal life is now!

The best time to tell others about the Good News is now!



February 20th – February 24th

INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

OVERVIEW:

Monday's and Tuesday's readings will be a follow up on Sunday's message "The Peril of Procrastination" from Senior Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on 2.26.23, "That's Not Fair!" from Senior Pastor Doug Lyon.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE: "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:32