

MONDAY 7.31.23 - Matthew 5:10-12

Most Americans have not known much, if any, persecution in their lifetime, certainly not religious persecution. Stories are written about other places in the world where it is common. But nothing remains unchanged except change. The ‘times, they are a-changin.’ As we grow into more experienced mature believers, there may come occasions when we face persecution for our faithful stance on one or more of the culture issues of our day. It will be important for us to be sure our position is founded and grounded in Biblical truth. If it is, then God will fight for us, and our reward will be great in heaven. Meanwhile, we are told to rejoice and be glad, that others have so recognized our faith and Christian testimony that they have turned against us.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 8.1.23 - Titus 2:6-8

Driving the speed limit on Route 80 seems quite the ‘oddity’, doesn’t it? Too many times, though, do you find your doors “blown off” by a car with a Christian “fish” symbol on the bumper? How often do you see uncontrolled anger, even rage, on TV by people wearing crosses? Have your little ones ever unknowingly exposed hypocrisy in you by saying something quite innocently?

I once read a definition of ‘integrity’ that I have never forgotten – Integrity is saying what you do and doing what you say. Paul exhorts young Titus to teach others by example; by showing integrity. He encourages us, too, to help others by “walking the talk”, showing what is good. Those around us are watching – your children and grandchildren; fellow believers; our neighbors; even strangers. Let us help one another and those around us by living with integrity!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY - 8.2.23 - Galatians 4:21-31

“Get rid of the slave woman and her son!”

An allegory is a story that has a hidden meaning. Paul uses the story of Abraham’s two sons, Isaac and Ishmael (Genesis 16 and 21), to show that the New Testament of grace has replaced the Old Testament of law. God commanded Abraham to remove Ishmael and Hagar (representing the Old Testament law). However, the false teachers in Galatia wanted to invite them back into the family again! The danger Paul saw in Galatia is still with us today. The sinful part of our nature (the “flesh”) feels gratified when it can keep some religious laws. While there is nothing wrong with church traditions that are tied to Scripture and glorify Jesus, we must beware of inviting Ishmael and Hagar back into the family. There can be no mixture of law and grace. May God help us hold on to His marvelous grace.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 8.3.23 - Proverbs 19:17

When we are generous to those in need, the Bible says that it is like lending to God. God is faithful to repay. He is more generous than we could ever be. We can’t out-give God. God rewards those who are generous to His children who are in need. He uses our hands and feet to help the poor and needy. We are His instruments. We don’t need to charge the poor interest or chase them down for repayment. God Himself says to us, “Charge the debt to me. I’m good for it.”

Our focus today is giving to others. Offering our money, time, or talents to help those in need. If there is someone in need, remember that in giving to that person, you are actually lending to God. He will repay you for your generosity. Being repaid by God is something we should sign up for!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY- 8.4.23 - Psalm 41:1-3

- ¹ Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the LORD delivers them in times of trouble.
- ² The LORD protects and preserves them— they are counted among the blessed in the land— he does not give them over to the desire of their foes.
- ³ The LORD sustains them on their sickbed and restores them from their bed of illness.

If you know me, you know that I truly enjoy visiting people who are shut in for one reason or another, or who are struggling and just need someone to talk to. You also know that I do this with no expectation of getting something back for the time invested. Still, it is nice to think about our verse for today and realize that God sees these visits and is pleased. It is also pleasing to think that when the day comes that I can no longer be up and about that God will prompt my brothers and sisters in Christ to provide encouragement, comfort, and care for me. Are there people in your life who could use a person to talk to, a person to pray with, someone to make them feel like they are cared for and not forgotten? Reach out to that person. It will be a blessing for both them and you today and an investment into your future.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:40am

Kids CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service

NURSERY (through Age 3)
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service

Youth YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)

Adults SUMMER QUARTER BEGINS *JUNE 4th*
LOCATION: B8-10 with Scott Naus
Explore the Bible - *Jeremiah and Lamentations*

LOCATION: B11 with Barry Wills & Shawn Devlin
Masterwork
6/4 - Good Life by Dr. Derwin L. Gray
7/23 - Gideon

LOCATION: B1-2 with Joel Day & Vince DiLoretto
6/4 - Everything You Need - by David Jeremiah
7/23 - In the Steps of the Savior - by Max Lucado

SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

Kids MESSIAH KIDS (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)
Break for summer. **RESUMES AUGUST 6th.**

LOCATION: Camp Shiloh 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

E2 SUMMER SMALL GROUP - Began 7/26 at 6:30pm

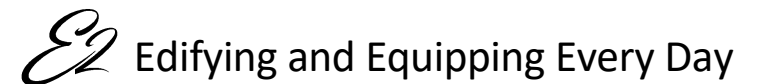
LOCATION: B8-10 with Barry Wills
The Awe of God, by John Bevere

Do you long for an intimate relationship with your Creator, but He seems elusive? Perhaps it is because something utterly essential is missing—holy fear. Don't let this frighten you. Fearing God is very different than being afraid of God. It's the key to everything.

In The Awe of God, John Bevere invites you to take a fresh look at what it means to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. This healthy, holy, and largely forgotten virtue is the uncommon path to a more fulfilled and fruitful life.

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

Nehemiah 4:20
Progress in Spite of Opposition



TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



July 31st - August 4th

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, "*Progress in Spite of Opposition*" with Ken Lewis. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on 8.6, "*A Helping Hand*" with Pastor Doug Lyon.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Galatians 1:3-4