

**Monday, 6 August 2018** Mark 13:9-11

*“But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.*

I've never been beaten or called to stand before councils, governors, or kings for the Lord's sake. But there have been many times where I have been called upon to take a stand for my faith. Might be neighbors, or family, or friends, or strangers, or co-workers, or bosses, or ... an endless list. Have I often been filled with anxiety about the supposed consequences of my response? Yes! Have I remembered to call upon the Holy Spirit for guidance as I prepared and/or as I responded? Sometimes! Has this been a better outcome? Always! These are times of peace as I am led to witness to the great gift of salvation by faith. Now if I will learn that lesson!

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**Tuesday, 7 August 2018** Luke 1:13-16

*But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God,*

As I ponder this passage, I am filled with awe. A prophecy about to be fulfilled less than nine months later. We know nothing about the early life of the Baptist, or even about the details of his ministry. But what we do know is sufficient. HE WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. He was, I believe, the first descendant of Adam and Eve to enter life from birth guided by the Holy Spirit. Jesus began His earthly life as the Son of God become the Son of Man.

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**Wednesday, 8 August 2018** Luke 1:39-42

*In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!*

Prophecy fulfilled. And a demonstration that the Spirit brings recognition between His people. I'm sure that Mary and Elizabeth recognized each other and had met before, but something new and precious had been added to their relationship. I've had that happen, sometimes acknowledging the ties and profiting thereby, but sometimes not. This unwillingness is often usually to my regret that I did not enter into the gift offered.

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**Thursday, 9 August 2018** Luke 2:25-27

*Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and **this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,*

Which came first? Simeon's life of righteousness and devotion or the presence of the Holy Spirit upon him?

I am convinced that the Holy Spirit began to work on my transformation from the very moment that I committed my life to the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior and Master. There was no way I was going to become righteous and devout in my strength. A well-proven statement. That transformation, no matter how slight, is proof-positive that the Holy Spirit is at work.

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**Friday, 10 August 2018** Luke 2:25-27

*Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. **And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.** And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,*

What an incredible revelation. A statement of fact. Simeon would not see death until he had met the LORD's Christ.

On the other hand, I believe that the Lord will return for His own in my lifetime. I wish I could state that as a revelation, but that would be incredibly presumptuous. More accurately, I should say that I hope that the Lord will return in my lifetime and I will seek to live out my life as if that were a revelation by the Holy

Spirit. That needs to be accompanied by a willingness to repent when I fail.

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**Saturday, 11 August 2018** Luke 4:17-19

*And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

Matthew 28:18-19a *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.*

The passage in Luke summarizes the span of Jesus' ministry. The passage in Matthew assigns that ministry to us, His disciples. We are to roll up our shirtsleeves and get to the task of bringing the Good News to the lost, the least, and the lonely. Every part of our assignment must have the goal of opening the Gospel to all.

It is a beautiful thing to operate a soup kitchen and feed the starving, or go on a short-term medical mission to Upper Slabbovoia, or teach adult Sunday School. However, if the tasks do not reveal the transforming power of the Cross, they will be burned as wood, hay, and stubble as we stand before the Throne of the LORD, God, the Almighty.

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**Lord's Day, 12 August 2018** Psalm 119:76

*Let Your steadfast love comfort me according to Your promise to Your servant.*

Lord, how often do I turn away from Your love, ignoring that it is every with me and ever at my side for comfort and solace? So as I walk through this season of turmoil and pressure, I need to be continuously coming to You to be reminded that You are always at my side. I need to be reminded to remember! Sometimes, it is not a lack of remembering but a deliberate turning from You to resolving to address the problem in my strength. How can I expect Your comfort if I refuse Your leading?

# VOICES TOGETHER

*Daily Meditations from the Scriptures*



*August 6-12, 2018*

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Philemon 25**

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

Once again, we find Paul praying for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with the recipient of his letter. I think, without checking, that it is always used as his closing prayer for individuals and congregation that he loved very intensely.

Shouldn't that be our closing prayer when we correspond among ourselves, whether by email or s-mail or by phone or when we speak face to face? Shouldn't that also be true of all our communication with all other saints? Amen

***To fear or not to fear, that is the question.***

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

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