

Monday, 11 February 2019 1 Peter 4:12-14

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

I keep thinking of the apostles in Acts 5:41-42 *Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.*

Am I willing to suffer for His namesake? Do I recognize the blessing when I am reviled for my faith? Often the answer is "Maybe" Lord, forgive me for those instances when I am guilty of refusing the blessing.

Tuesday, 12 February 2019 2 Peter 1:19-21

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

What a comforting passage. To know that I must be able to identify the work of the Holy Spirit in a prophecy and that the proof of the pudding lies in the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 *But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. 'And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?'—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not to be afraid of him.*

There have been several times in my life when someone has announced that they have a word of prophecy concerning me. I cannot recall a single instance where the "word" came to pass.

Wednesday, 13 February 2019

1 John 3:23-24

And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

Another one of those passages that present the Holy Spirit as the heavenly guarantor of my salvation. I know that my salvation is complete and assured by the presence of the Holy Spirit working through me and gently nudging me into a Godly life.

Thursday, 14 February 2019 1 John 4:1-6

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Now here's the way to start the conversation when someone comes knocking at my door and offers to discuss their faith with me. "Do you confess that Jesus Christ is the Incarnate Son of the living God?" If the answer is no, but I would like to discuss that with you, my suggestion is to wish them a good day. Offering to pray for their salvation should be a conversation stopper.

Friday, 15 February 2019 1 John 4:11-13

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

It is that overwhelming awareness of love that passes between two saints that identifies the indwelling of the LORD, God, the Almighty in the person of God, the Holy Spirit. And it does not depend upon a face to face meeting. In this day and age of virtual communications, that awareness of the indwelling Presence comes through virtual acquaintances. It is rich and grows.

Saturday, 16 February 2019 1 John 5:6-8

This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

John reported in John 19:34-35 that a soldier pierced Jesus' side and blood and water poured out. Here he ties it all together as evidence of my salvation. How about yours?

"Now this water and blood are comprehensive of all that is necessary and effectual to our salvation. By the water, our souls are washed and purified for heaven and the region of saints in light. By the blood God is glorified, his law is honoured, and his vindictive excellences are illustrated and displayed." Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible

Lord's Day, 17 February 2019 Psalm 119:66

Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments.

This has to be a foundational verse for me today. There will be many challenges to my judgment and knowledge today, may each be met by the judgment and knowledge that can only come from You. Be my docent of life today and every day.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



February 11-17, 2019

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

LORD, as we meditate on this precious prayer from the Apostle Paul for his flocks and reflect on our callings, we find similar concerns for our [congregation] and our missions.

We pray that we may increase in love for each other. We pray that in spite of the constraints of family and work, that we may find suitable means to employ the technology to bring us into a closer relationship; that we will become as *cara anum*. (soul friends, like Jonathan and David, see 1 Sam. 18:1-3)

We pray that we will be holy and blameless on that Day when You come to carry Your chosen ones home; to enter into Your presence and assume our callings as Your stewards of Your creation. *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; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. All Scripture is from the ESV unless otherwise noted. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc.

PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to prior@ailbe.org

The Fellowship of Ailbe, (www.ailbe.org)

Realizing the presence, promise and power
of the Kingdom of God.