

Monday, 1 August 2016 Matthew 19:13-15

Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." And he laid his hands on them and went away.

Lord, reveal to me any attitude, any self-centeredness, any lack of love and compassion that is a rebuke of any who would come to me seeking You. Open my eyes to see the the needs, the hurts, the loneliness, the pains that are crying out for Your healing love.

Tuesday, 2 August 2016 Matthew 19:20-26

The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

What is it, Lord, that makes me regard myself as rich? What possession, characteristic, pride of position and status? Anything? What is there about me or that I regard as mine that I am unwilling to totally abandon for You?

Reveal it to me, Lord Jesus, and drive me to my knees in submission to You.

Wednesday, 3 August 2016 Matthew 20:1-16

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now

when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' So the last will be first, and the first last."

My Eleventh Hour was about 5:30AM at the Weston Priory on May 27, 1979. I know the call had been issued before but this was the time I heard the call to come and enter into the vineyard. My work assignment was the same as everyone else--go and make disciples (Matt 28:19). My wages are to enter into the righteousness, peace and joy of life in relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Hallelujah!

Thursday, 4 August 2016 Matthew 22:2-3, 8--14

"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. ...Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests."But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Praise the Lord, He sent His servants out to call me in the broken state that I was in and provided me with the wedding garments. My Lord called e to demonstrate my love for Him by my obedience to His Word (John 14:15-16) and by my willingness to apply my faith to my personal mission field. (Phil. 2:12) I am called to trust Him in all aspects of my life---no whiff of hypocrisy.

Friday, 5 August 2016 Matthew 23:13

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.

Am I getting pastoral leadership that holds out the hope of the Kingdom in the here and now or I getting words of vain hopes

based on visions of the leadership's own minds? Is the mindset of the congregation of which I am a member solidly focused living on the Kingdom Turn? Maybe I need to spend some time meditating upon and praying over Jeremiah 23:14-20 (ESV) especially the last verse.

Saturday, 6 August 2016 Matthew 25:1-13

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Am I walking daily in those "Good works, prepared beforehand for me" (Eph 2:10), applying the Word to every aspect of my life? Am I constantly seeking to be one of the five prepared to welcome the the Bridegroom?

Reveal to me, Lord, where I fall short. I constantly need the John 14:26 reminder.

Lord's Day, 7 August 2016

Psalms 119:75-77

I know, O LORD, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me. Let your steadfast love comfort me according to your promise to your servant. Let your mercy come to me, that I may live; for your law is my delight.

Lord, I cry out to You in the depths of my despair over my son's marriage. I know and accept that all things work for good for those who love You and are called according to Your purpose, but it is hard. So hard to see them going through this, to think of the impact on their children—Lord, heal them all and Betty and me too!

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



August 1-7, 2016

I was dealing with a very difficult and perplexing problem in the spring of 1989 and tackling it by trying to learn everything I could on the subject. One evening, as I continued my studies, God told me very clearly that the root of the problem was that I did not know Him. I put down the book I was reading and picked up a Bible figuring that was where I was going to find Him. That began what has been a 27-year search to know, really know in a John 17:3 way, the Lord, God the Almighty.*

Voices Together has and continues to be, a very important part of that search. It is extracted from my daily meditations and is shared in the hope that others will be encouraged to turn to the Scriptures as a rich source of guidance for prayer and meditation.

It 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.

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 at
The Fellowship of Ailbe, voices@ailbe.org
Realizing the presence, promise and power
of the Kingdom of God.

*LORD or LORD, God the Almighty always refers to the Trinitarian God.