

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

FRIDAY

“THESE, TOO, GAVE THANKS”

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 107:17-22

“Some were sick through their sinful ways,
And because of their iniquities suffered affliction;
They loathed any kind of food,
And they drew near to the gates of death.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
And he delivered them from their distress”

This could have been written today . . . there are so many who are suffering so terribly from their own weakness. Society seems helpless to aid them — we watch them waste away, and know that they will surely die unless someone, somehow can do something for them.

Yet even to these, David says, God comes: “He sent forth his word, and healed them” And if you’ve ever met a man or woman who has known release from the “affliction of weakness of their own flesh,” you know what joy is.

God is able to do anything . . . if only we could learn this, could learn to turn to him early.

Prayer: Lord, help me to trust you so much that I can find the way to bring those to you who have given up hope of ever finding life again. God, you are able to do anything we could ask or hope . . . Grant us who believe, the faith to bring these to you so that they, too, may know joy and deliverance and peace again. AMEN

SATURDAY

“COUNT TO TEN BEFORE YOU STOP”

SCRIPTURE:

II Corinthians 9:6, 7

One day, a mother noticed her son looking thoughtfully at his hands. After some time, she asked him what he was thinking. He said, “I am ten now and I want to be ten years’ worth.” His mother, puzzled, asked what that meant. He replied, “Just that for so many years of living, I should be giving some back!”

She smiled. “And what have you decided to do?”

“Every day I will do ten things — for you or for God or for someone before I stop my day.”

How long since you counted to ten before stopping? So often the little almost insignificant things we do for others can make the day lovelier and more meaningful. It is so easy to overlook them, though. Mothers usually do them effortlessly — yet even this can be monotonous if it is done without the consciousness of love.

Count the things you have done today for someone else . . . is it more than you had thought, or less?

There is nothing in the world as vitalizing as giving yourself, your interest and your understanding to those you meet. Like moving waters remain fresh and clean, so those who give of themselves never seem to become stagnant.

Prayer: Lord, there is so much need in the world. Help me to do more in the days to come than I have in the past. May not a day pass without my serving you in some way, I pray. AMEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024

*“SPIRITUAL NOMADS
IN SEARCH OF A REFUGE”*

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 107:1-9

“Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no city to dwell in.
Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.
He led them by a straight way, until they reached a city to dwell in.”

The paradox of the cities is this loneliness in the midst of crowds . . . the hunger which nothing seems to satisfy, the thirst that is never quenched.

It is not physical . . . if it was, alcohol and physical relationships could cure it. It is not mental, or knowledge would suffice. It is the spirit searching for a place of its own — and so the man who finds God, comes to his “place of refuge” — and finding it discovers that the desert is not around us, but within us:

“For he satisfies him who is thirsty and the hungry he fills with good”

Prayer: Dear Lord, turn my eyes from the physical things which cannot satisfy me wholly . . . from the intellectual which stimulate but do not fill, and just for today, let my soul feast at your “table” and within your city . . . Lord, help me to know the wonder of your love . . . that inner life which you have promised to all who commit themselves to you. Teach my spirit to hear your word. Father, I pray. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“LOOK BACK ON YOUR VALLEYS”

SCRIPTURE:
Psalm 103:1-5

An old man and a young boy were going toward a very high mountain. As the journey went on hour after hour, the boy grew weary and exclaimed, “We are no nearer than before! Let us stop and go back!” But the old man said, “Stop, boy, and look back.”

There below them lay the valley . . . farther behind them than the distance ahead to the mountain peak.

Our progress in our spiritual life is often so gradual, we scarcely realize how far God has brought us until we turn around and look behind us at the valleys and the rocky places, the “pits” of despair and failure, indecision and addiction.

In these beautiful verses, we see how many things God has done for David . . . forgiven sins, healed his diseases, lifted him from the depths — surrounded him by love and mercy and satisfied and renewed the inner man.

All of us, if we will, can look at these blessings and say, “Yes, he has done this for me, too.” And as we remember, we become more aware of just how much we count on God to give our lives meaning and purpose.

From time to time, take a moment to stop and look back. It is only in retrospect that we see how far we’ve come and how much we have for which to be thankful to God.

Prayer: Life is more than things. Help me to see your hand in all of it, comforting, guiding, and sustaining me. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“PRAISE FROM A REBEL”

SCRIPTURE:
Psalm 107:10-16

“Some sat in darkness and in gloom, prisoners in affliction and irons,
For they had rebelled against the words of God,
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
Their hearts were bowed down with hard labor;
They fell down, with none to help —
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.”

Most of us have experienced some sort of rebellion . . . we know the resistance our pride puts up — like iron bars which keep us prisoners of our own darkness. We know the exhaustion of remaining rebels against everyone, the gloom and darkness of being shut off from God.

In these verses David tells, though, of God’s ability to break through even this kind of barrier. God can do what we in our weakness cannot. David likens it to “shattering the doors of bronze” . . . “cutting bars of iron.”

Bronze does not shatter, and in early days, iron was not easily cut. Yet David says, “God does the impossible for those who call upon him.”

Have you tried everything and still remain a prisoner of some rebellion? Stand aside and let God’s power go to work for you.

Prayer: Others have asked you for help and you have answered. Lord, will you shatter the bronze doors of my doubt, too, I pray, and free me. AMEN

THURSDAY

“FOR THE DELIGHT OF OUR SPIRIT”

SCRIPTURE:
Genesis 1:26, 27; Matthew 22:37-40

How long since you have lifted up your face and said, “Thank you”

How long since you have thought of all the small and lovely things without which life would be less lovely?

We are spirits, and the loveliest things in all the earth are those which God has fashioned for the delight of our souls and the nourishment of our inner beings.

What good would our vision be if we had not the soul to thrill to color and line . . . or our hearing if we had no spirit to interpret the words, or our voices if there were no love to move us, or sorrow to bring tears?

It is the spirit within us which continues to push up through the dry crust of mortal man

. . . the soul of man which keeps searching though the body grows weary and the mind stumbles to a halt . . .

Love and compassion, endurance and faith, hope and forgiveness are the fruits of the spirit, the expression of God through us which can transform barren existence into divine purpose on this battered earth.

If nothing else brings you to God this day, thank him for making man in his image — a spirit with ability to believe and doubt, reach out . . . and pray.

Prayer: Lord, sometimes in the press of living — of earning and eating, of struggling and competing, I forget I am more than this. Father, help me to remember my need for you and the hunger my spirit feels apart from your presence. AMEN