

Good News Daily

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Sunday, October 24

Luke 10:25-37 “*He went to him and bandaged his wounds.*” (v.34a NRSV)

The lawyer knew the commands of Scripture. He knew how to answer the question. Intellectually, he knew what was right. As he stood there wishing to appear holy for his wise answer, Jesus showed him there is more to righteousness than knowledge of the right.

The people who should have stopped, didn’t. The priest scurries by pretending he doesn’t see. The Levite is in a hurry and figures the guy must be dead. But the Samaritan, part of the despised, unclean, mixed race stops. And, “moved with pity, he went to him” (vv.33b-34a).

Today we have a similar struggle. We feel pity and see pain but, because of insecurity, busyness or fear, we don’t act. But we must not forget that a touch from a disciple of Jesus can be powerful. Author and Pastor Max Lucado comments, “Our hearts are good; it’s just that our memories are bad. We forget how significant one touch can be. We fear saying the wrong thing or using the wrong tone or acting the wrong way. So rather than do it incorrectly, we do nothing at all” (from *Just Like Jesus*).

May God grant us boldness to reach out in His name to the beaten, bruised, and left-for-dead that we encounter every day.

Haggai 1:1—2:9; Psalms 63, 98; Acts 18:24—19:7

Monday, October 25

Psalms 52 *The righteous will see, and fear, and will laugh at the evildoer, saying, “See the one who would not take refuge in God, but trusted in abundant riches, and sought refuge in wealth!”* (vv.6-7)

I call them, “holy reversals.” It is when God turns our human ways of seeing and thinking on end and says, “No, that’s *not* how it works.” Think about it.

A barren, elderly woman, Sara, with a walker *and* a baby carriage.

A one-time Christian killer, Paul, imprisoned for his Christian faith.

A carpenter’s son from Nazareth, who is the Messiah...God made man.

Of course, there are more. Look at all the times Jesus says, “You have heard it said...” and then follows with, “But I tell you...” Sometimes we need to be reminded that God does have the final word—love is stronger, faith is real, and His promises are true.

Look at who is being chastised in verses 6 and 7. It’s a “holy reversal.” The faithful aren’t considered foolish for trusting in what they cannot see. Rather, the faith-less are ridiculed for trusting in what they can see—

riches and wealth, fame and glory. They are chastised because what they cannot see is that all those things are the fading, elusive, momentary things of this world and will pass away.

Our faith is in the eternal love and provision of our God, who is eternal.

Zechariah 1:7-17; Psalm 41; Revelation 1:4-20; Matthew 12:43-50

Tuesday, October 26

Matthew 13:1-9 *And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow." (vv.3-4)*

Although I have read this often, something struck me differently this time. We usually read this and think of the different types of ground. We jump to the natural evangelistic point of this passage. Other times we key in on the way God's word is received by different people. Sometimes we even see ourselves as the Evangelist-Sower and learn why everyone doesn't embrace our faith.

But tonight, something leapt out at me. It is the sower. Do you see what he does? He sows. He keeps on scattering seed. No matter where it falls or what happens to it once it hits the ground, he continues to sow. That is his job.

Of course, God is the sower in the parable, as Jesus will explain later in this passage. But for now, I am astounded at the diligence and faithfulness of the sower. No matter what happens, He sows His word and scatters the seeds of faith. He knows that not all the seed will produce, but some will. What love is this that sends seeds to us even while our hearts are hard and distracted by thorns?

Praise God for His faithfulness and His active participation in leading us into a mature faith.

Ezra 5:1-17; Psalm 45; Revelation 4:1-11

Wednesday, October 27

Matthew 13:10-17 *"But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." (v.16)*

In the movie, *At First Sight*, Val Kilmer plays the part of a blind man who, for a while, regains his sight. He must learn to perceive through his now functional eyes. It is a difficult transition. Color, depth, texture and many other things must be learned in order for him to live with his "new" eyes.

In today's passage, Jesus explains that "seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen" (v.13). He is describing the spiritual condition of some in his audience. Their hardness of heart and thickness of skull prevent them from seeing and hearing the truth which is right before their human eyes. However, to those whose hearts and minds are open, insight will be given.

When we come to Christ it is like seeing, truly seeing, for the first time. Often, as with the character in the movie, our perception is off and our steps unsteady. But if we persevere and trust, “more will be given” (v.12). Over time our spiritual sight will sharpen and focus, and our ears will become attuned to the voice our Savior.

Ezra 6:1-22; Psalm 119:49-72; Revelation 5:1-10

Thursday, October 28

Matthew 13:18-23 “*Such a person has no root, but endures only for a while.*” (v.21a)

Last year I planted a garden. I tilled up a patch in the backyard and commenced planting. Very carefully I followed the directions on the seed packages. I patted the earth firm around them and stood back with pride and looked upon my little project.

Initially the corn came up, but never made it above waist high. The carrots sprouted their tops, but never developed into the wonderful orange monsters I envisioned. In fact, three months later I mowed over the whole patch and promised myself I’d never try it again.

The seeds were planted with the best of intentions. However, I forgot about the long-term care that would be needed for my crops to succeed. Once the seeds were in the ground, I forgot that the work is just beginning for the seed, for it has a lot of competition.

Many things compete in our lives as well. We can be self-centered, hard-hearted, overly concerned with the cares of the world, and so entwined with all the troubles we are having that we miss the rich, fruitful spiritual life we are meant to have. May we strive to keep our spiritual “seeds” cared for by focusing on the one who has sown His love into our hearts.

Nehemiah 1:1-11; Psalm 50; Revelation 5:11—6:11

Happy Birthday Mary Hood!

Friday, October 29

Nehemiah 2:1-20 *Then I replied to them, “The God of Heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building.”* (v.20a)

He was a trusted member of the palace—the king’s cupbearer. But when he hears of the scorched, broken down wall of Jerusalem, he weeps. Then he cries out in prayer to God. Here in Chapter 2 we see Nehemiah sensing God’s power, as the king gives permission to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. In his book, *Transforming Leadership*, Leighton Ford says, “Genuine leaders operate out of a sense of calling, not a sense of drivenness.”

Nehemiah’s vision is not a result of a drive for earthly fame and fortune. It is rooted in a call from God. In fact, he tells no one of his calling or his plan. He even goes out at night to inspect the wall so that he won’t be seen.

He prays for guidance and courage and when chastised by government officials he again points to the calling of God as his rationale.

We must earnestly seek what God is calling us to do with our lives. What calling might this be? What passion has He given you? Seek His guidance and see where He leads. Let that be your sole motivator and primary source of joy.

Psalms 40, 54; Revelation 6:12—7:4; Matthew 13:24-30

Happy Birthday Elma Rood & Sherry Miller!

Saturday, October 30

Psalm 55 *But I call upon God, and the LORD will save me.* (v.16)

The evening news can be a depressing half-hour. Sometimes all the news seems to be bad. Murder, bombings, disasters, disease, and war seem to dominate the headlines. I think if David had lived in our time, he could have written psalms like this after watching the news.

Hope is scoffed at. Faith in God is considered outdated. Yet that is exactly where David, when faced with similar situations in his day, placed himself—squarely on the hope and faithfulness of his God (vv.16-19, 22).

Paul tells Timothy, “God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). If we allow ourselves to be paralyzed by fear and shrink from our world, we are unfaithful to our Savior, who has himself come to this world.

May we, like David, place our lives firmly on the faithfulness of Christ and, with confidence, live as his ambassadors in a world that is in desperate need of Good News.

Nehemiah 4:1-23; Revelation 7:4-17; Matthew 13:31-35

Happy Birthday C.J. VerSteeg!

by Chris Findley

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