

# *Good News Daily*

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## **Sunday, June 28**

Luke 13:10-17 *She was bent over and could not straighten up at all.* (v.11b NIV)

One Sabbath day, Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, and a crippled woman limped in. Curved over into a painful angle, she was probably shunned by others and personally embarrassed.

Some folk gravitate to influential individuals in a gathering. But Jesus bypassed them and went directly to this needy one. But then another problem presented itself. He knew that the Pharisees were watching him. He could have whispered, “Woman, would you please come back tomorrow? And I’ll heal you then.” Yet he didn’t. He wouldn’t let her suffer another day. So, he healed her immediately—straightening her up again.

Was the ruler of the synagogue pleased? Not at all. Incensed, he accused Jesus of breaking a law of God. The result was that Jesus, in lifting a burden from this woman, brought a burden upon himself. He became the target of criticism, which eventually resulted in his crucifixion.

But notice that all the bystanders rejoiced. Their burden of subjection to false restrictions was lifted. And they were also able to stand straight in the service of God.

What are our burdens? Physical, emotional, spiritual? Ask the Lord to lift them today!

Numbers 21:4-9, 21-35; Psalm 118; Acts 17:12-34

## **Monday, June 29**

Matthew 21:12-22 *Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there.* (v.12a)

When Jesus walked into the temple, he saw it filled with worldly business that was obstructing the worship of God. So, he cast out all the sellers and buyers and their wares. Then the needy people were free to approach him again (v.14).

Should we ask, “Is our church suffering from the same problem?” Are we trying to support it through sales and parties in the parish hall? And in our worship itself, have we accumulated customs and language which may have been useful in their day but are now outmoded? Are we getting cluttered up with so much stuff that it is hard to hear Jesus? Centuries ago, the church was purified by the Reformation. Do we need another one?

When Jesus walked out of the temple, he saw a fig tree displaying leaves but offering no fruit. So, he dried it up (v.19). Similarly, our church

may be presenting a good front but not be meeting the world's needs. Attractive articles may be in the window with nothing inside the store.

Pray that we may be cleansed and refreshed by the Holy Spirit, so that we can serve the Lord as loving Christians and as fruitful churches. Numbers 22:1-21; Psalm 106:1-18; Romans 6:12-23

**Happy Birthday Joe Kovitch!**

## **Tuesday, June 30**

Matthew 21:23-32 *By what authority are you doing these things?* (v.23b)

Authority! That's what the American Revolution was all about. "Who's going to rule over us?" asked the patriots. And they replied, "Nobody but ourselves!"

Freedom is wonderful, and we need it. But it can turn into license, which may then become anarchy. No, there must be some authority in our lives.

Happily, they realized—and today Christians like us realize—that we are under the authority of God. "One nation under God" is a great standard to follow.

But how do we recognize what God wants? The answer is through his Son, Jesus Christ: "And he made known to us the mystery of his will..."(Ephesians 1:9). And all power has been given to him to accomplish that will (see Matthew 28:18).

Jesus may look weak. And he may be despised and rejected by men, as he was by the Pharisees. But one day he will be recognized as the Lord of heaven and earth, and then all nations will bow before him (see Philippians 2:10-11).

Numbers 22:21-38; Psalm 120, 121, 122, 123; Romans 7:1-12

**Happy Birthday Elliott McCartha!**

## **Wednesday, July 1**

Matthew 21:33-46 *"This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance."* (v.38)

Many of our neighbors assume they own the world. They figure it's theirs to do with as they will—to make it their playground or their workplace. Though environmental activists warn us about spoiling our environment, the despoilers go about their business on the grounds that they can do whatever they want to with their own property.

In one sense that's true. The world has been entrusted to us. But it has been entrusted to us by its Creator. And that Creator is God. It really belongs to Him!

The problem is that when God expects us to produce for Him, many of us snort "Ha! I'm here for myself. I want to grab as much of it as I can." We reject the Lord, as the workers did in this parable and as the world did at

Calvary. But at the day of judgment, such people will come to Him emptyhanded and red-faced.

Didn't Jesus warn us about that? Didn't he say, "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36).

Because we're only—and always will be—tenants, let's treasure what the Lord has placed in our care.

Numbers 22:41—23:12; Psalm 119:145-176; Romans 7:13-25

## **Thursday, July 2**

Matthew 22:1-14 *"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son."* (v.2)

In this parable we see three truths about the Christian life: It isn't a funeral, but a feast—we're meant to be happy; It isn't expensive, but free—everything's prepared by the Lord; and those invited aren't superior types like the rich and talented—they're ordinary people, the good with the bad.

How do we enter the kingdom? First, we have to accept the invitation. Some folk refuse. Either by point-blank rejection or by being too involved in other activities, they turn a deaf ear and shut themselves out.

Second, having come, we must accept what's offered. It's not enough just to make the journey outwardly. That's like coming to church and thinking we've done enough. The Lord waits to clothe us with His "robe" of forgiveness. It covers our sins and makes us all equal.

Sadly, some of us do only the first thing. We come to the church and stop there. But the Lord waits for us to accept what we cannot provide for ourselves—His forgiveness. If we don't, whatever else we've done won't really matter. When we do accept the invitation *and* the gift, we enter fully into the kingdom of heaven.

Numbers 23:11-26; Psalms 131, 132, 133; Romans 8:1-11

**Happy Anniversary Rick & Linda Shumway!**

## **Friday, July 3**

Matthew 22:15-22 *"Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"* (v.17)

How do you react when someone asks you a question about your faith? Do you become angry or evasive, especially if you know your questioner is not sincere and simply wants to embarrass you?

Here some people approach Jesus with flattering words and ask him a question. But he perceives their insincerity and confronts them with it. It's important to recognize the motive of our questioners. Rather than speak in general terms, Jesus asks for a specific object to represent their question. So, when people question us, we should enquire, "To what particular occasion or Bible verse are you referring?" Then, instead of giving them an answer, Jesus throws the ball back into their own court by posing a question to them.

Don't be afraid of asking questions when you are witnessing. Your questioner has to do some thinking, too. Finally, Jesus gives them a perfect answer: "Give unto Ceasar....", that turns them away in amazement.

Our faith is not meant to be played with. It's a matter of life and death. Let the Holy Spirit be your guide when you face a questioner. Pray for the right words and you will be led to them.

Numbers 24:1-13; Psalms 140, 142; Romans 8:12-17

## **Saturday, July 4**

Matthew 22:23-40 "*Love the Lord your God....*" (v.37)

What is love? It's a longing for the other person, an ache to be in their presence, a desire to make them happy, and a thrill to realize that they feel the same way about us.

That's how we should feel about God. Jesus states that it should be with all our heart (gladly), with all our soul (fervently), and with all our mind (intelligently—and not leaving our brains outside).

Then Jesus goes further. He extends this command to include our neighbors and ourselves. But how can cold and empty people like us give this kind of love?

The secret is to let God's love come into us first. Then, basking in it, we can share it with others. That's why John wrote, "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

O Lord, You know that sometimes my love is cold and faint. Please help me to feel the warmth of Your love so that mine may grow to be more like Yours.

Numbers 24:12-25; Psalms 137, 144; Romans 8:18-25

**by John Pearce**

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