

Anniversaries: Mr. & Mrs. Philip Lipofsky

October 2-8, 2016

Sunday, October 2

Hosea 13:4-14 "But I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me." (v.4 NIV)

"You shall acknowledge no God." Idols come in different forms. Ask yourself with me, what do we love more than God? What is it that robs and blocks the places in our heart where God should occupy?

"No Savior except me." The truth is that no other deity, person, or thing *has* the power or *has* the ability to be our savior. Only within the outstretched arms of Jesus can we find the embrace of his forgiveness. Only through the cross.

Yes, God is a jealous God. That must be. Does God need our attention? Hardly. God is both central and essential to life. He just *is*. For us to acknowledge that is to recognize truth. I appreciate J. I. Packer's definition of godly jealousy. He defines it as "holiness reacting to evil in a way that is morally right, glorious, the wrath of God in judicial action, a zeal to preserve something precious." What a thought, God wants to preserve what is precious. Something precious...isn't God's "something precious" us?

Psalm 118; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; Matthew 14:1-12

Birthdays: None

Anniversaries: None

Monday, October 3

Luke 6:39-49 "The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." (v.45)

When I receive my bank statement every month I can see the progress that I am making as I put money in savings. Even if I save small amounts and put them into my account, I can know that every dollar makes a difference over time. The heart in ways is like a treasury. When we stockpile good and righteous things in it, those good things make our lives rich with spiritual wealth.

Saving isn't easy. Behind it all is always a choice. Part of it is making the choice of keeping the enemy from robbing us of making "good deposits" into our heart. Part of the choice requires time and discipline. It is important to remember that when we walk with God long enough, we come to know His heart. When we spend time with God, we come to know more and more His presence. When we read God's Word long enough, He will begin to guide our life. If we are willing, God promises to transform us, more and more, into His image and give us an abundant life filled with happy returns. What a payoff. Good things take time.

Hosea 14:1-9; Psalm 106:1-18; Acts 22:30-23:11

Birthdays: Alexander Freedman, Joseph Hopper, Leonie Laing, Bonnie Magid and Jeremy Sampson

Tuesday, October 4

Luke 7:1-17 "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve ~~to have you come and heal me~~ ~~when I have not found such great faith even in Israel.~~ ~~When I have not found such great faith even in Israel.~~ (vv.6b-7, 9)

"Just say the word." What confidence. A simple faith impresses Jesus.

Sometimes organized religion can trap and box us in to complicate this matter of faith. Don't think those who need to hear the Word of God fail to pick up on this. You have heard comments like, "Christianity is just a bunch of rules." "Don't do this, don't do that, and you will be saved." But it isn't the "do's" and "don'ts" that save us is it? When it came to mission, Jesus never started with the "don'ts." He started with the "do's": Do turn around. Do believe in me. Do follow. Christianity is about faith, simple faith in the one who came to save us.

This humble Centurion listened and believed. It was just that simple. And Jesus was impressed. Do you know what I believe? I believe this story from long ago was told to remind us of the need for simplicity, for an uncluttered response to God, for an openness of our hunger for more of the Lord in our life. We are no different that this Centurion. We just need to ask for a refilling of this simple faith and believe that He will grant it. We can confidently ask, "Just say the word and your servant will be healed."

"Blessed are the pure in heart. For they will see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Micah 1:1-9; Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; Acts 23:12-24

Birthdays: Norman Allen, Alice-Marie Ford, Kai Nembhard, Mary Rugg and Ainsworth Scott

Anniversaries: None

Wednesday, October 5

Psalm 119:145-176 *Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws.* (v.164)

Bubbling over with gratitude. That's how I see the psalmist David. God touched his heart. He was whole, he was satisfied with a deep awareness that Holiness had come in contact with his life and blessed him.

Seven times you may ask? Seven is a number signifying completeness. From the seven days of creation to the seven seals of Revelation, the Scriptures are saturated with this number. How significant then it is that David would use this number to declare his praise to God. He had a deep appreciation for the laws, knowing that they themselves were the very charts that kept him on the course of obedience. David's heart was full to the brim. It was only natural to praise and communicate this to God through the completeness of his day, sun up to sun down.

The Word, His presence, the promise of eternal life—God has given us so many gifts hasn't He? Return His gift with one another. Give Him the gift of thanks. Let your heart fly! Let it bubble over with praise. God will be blessed.

"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise His Holy name" (Psalm 103:1).

Micah 2:1-13; Acts 23:23-35; Luke 7:18-35

Birthdays: Christopher Bartley, Alison Durning, Stephen Ratsky and Margaret Williams

Anniversaries: Robert & June Johnson

Thursday, October 6

Luke 7:36-50 ~~"She brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him, tears at His feet were wiped, and she brought her head and kissed them and poured perfume on them."~~ (vv.37b-38)

What catches me off guard as I read these passages is this woman's utter abandonment to the love she felt for Jesus. This woman did not care what other people thought of her; she did not care of the taste of Jesus' dusty feet, or whether or not this act was appropriate. The kisses that she offered were an act of worship, her heart was filled to capacity, broken with love overflowing.

I ask myself. What would I do if I saw Jesus on the street today? Would I worship him on the sidewalk? What emotions would compel me? Embarrassment...Shame...Love...Brokenness?

You have seen those little hand-blown perfume jars in the stores. I have often thought of buying one to put in my house. It would serve as a reminder of God's extravagant love for me. He spared no cost when He sent Jesus. His love was overflowing, spilled, and emptied out for me.

Micah 3:1-8; Psalms 131, 132, 133; Acts 24:1-23

Birthdays: Gaile Armagost, Aaron Logan and Suzee Newman

Anniversaries: Frank & Charmaine D'Angelo

Friday, October 7

Luke 8:1-15 *"Still other seed fell on good soil."* (v.8a).

We have been given the part of planting seeds of faith in others. Even if we feel inadequate to do so, God can use all of us. He is always on the search for willing hearts.

I recall how years ago seeds were planted in the beginning of my own journey. I don't know the name of this woman, but she worked in the local ice cream parlor I frequented while in college. The thing she did most was whistle! The whistling drew me in to wonder about this woman. I began to take notice of her joy as I saw her each time. One day I overheard her talking to someone about God. She didn't know I was listening but even so the "seeds" of her conversation took hold in my heart. Looking back, I see God was placing me in that another "just right" circumstance where things began

"adding up" for me. Seed after seed was sown, making my hunger for God begin to grow.

You see, our availability touched with His sufficiency equals eternal results for others! We should all be seed-throwers. God will do His part to make ready the soil of the heart for growth. God promises to use us. Don't underestimate Him. He can even use our whistles.

Micah 3:9—4:5; Psalms 140, 142; Acts 24:24—25:12

Birthdays: Debra Carr, Edward Champagnie, Pat Henderson, Ralph Olmeda and Brandon Plummer

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, October 8

Luke 8:16-25 *"No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so those who come in can see the light."* (v.16)

In Jesus' day lamps were simple. They were small molded clay with a reservoir for olive oil and a little opening where a wick would sit. Lamps were held in the palm of the hand and carried from place to place. In other words, they were portable.

Take your light wherever you go, Jesus tells us. When you stop place it high so that the affect of it will illumine the entire room. Hold it high so everyone will know from where the light source is coming. The Light of Christ is the light of truth. It is letting what Christ has done for us be known in our words and in our actions. Oh, how we need Light in this day! People are desperate to hear absolute truth in a world that shouts truth is just whatever "feels right." Only belief in God will change this darkening world.

O Lord, pour in us your oil of the Holy Spirit so that we can let Your light shine.

Micah 5:1-4, 10-15; Psalms 137:1-9, 144; Acts 25:13-27

Birthdays: None

Anniversaries: None

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