

Good News Daily

January 10-16, 2016

Sunday, January 10

John 1:29-34 *"I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."* (v.31 ESV)

After the stroke my first week was spent in my local hospital. My wife stayed with me and ate all her meals in my room. The last night she decided to have her supper in the hospital cafeteria. While she was gone I prayed that God would explain why He allowed my health crisis. I got silence.

When my wife returned she was excited. A couple of nurses at the next cafeteria table had been distressed and ready to quit their jobs. My wife listened sympathetically and urged them to keep working. They decided God had sent an angel to encourage them! I realized that my wife was there only because I was also there.

We may not always know why God has us where we are. But if we will patiently serve Him and trust Him, who knows what blessings He may bring about that glorify Him?

Genesis 1:1—2:3; Psalms 146, 147; Ephesians 1:3-14

Birthdays: Ashley Devierno, Diane Dunkley, Elena Gilley, Eulalee Robinson and Raymond Young, Jr.

Anniversaries: None

Monday, January 11

Hebrews 1:1-14 *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...* (vv.1-2a)

Bob Bennett wrote a song about baseball in which he recalls the stresses of his childhood baseball games. Following yet another strike out at home plate he sings, "But none of it mattered after the game, when my father would find me and call out my name."

Our Heavenly Father has continually sought us out over the ages so that we may enjoy His company and He may enjoy ours. That relationship was what Adam and Eve lost in Eden. It is what our hearts were made to desire. Although we get preoccupied by the challenges of our daily games, none of that is what really matters. At the end what will cheer and comfort us is the sound of our Heavenly Father's voice calling to us.

And Jesus promised that we would know His voice. Are you learning to listen carefully so you can respond quickly when He calls you?

Genesis 2:4-25; Psalms 1, 2, 3; John 1:1-18

Birthdays: Gaile Choate, Davidson Elie, Elaine Finley and Katana Ying

Anniversaries: Michael, Jr. & Jackie Boccia, Ian & Sandra Harris, Sade' Osborne-Corbin and Calvin & Andrea Thompson

Tuesday, January 12

Hebrews 2:1-10 *Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.* (v.1)

One of the frustrations I had in my experience with therapists was my own bad memory. They would patiently describe exercise routines to me. They would guide me through each exercise to make sure I could do it properly. The plan was that I should repeat all of them on my own during the week between their visits. And that is where I quickly realized I needed help. My wife stepped up to write down the various exercises and to help me make sure I didn't leave any out.

Our Heavenly Father has been faithful to speak to us. He has spoken clearly in the Bible and through faithful teachers in the Church. But it takes more than merely listening. There must be the obedient action that follows on our part! Take time today to listen to (and review) the instructions God has already given you, so that you can make sure you really are *doing* them.

Genesis 3:1-24; Psalms 5, 6; John 1:19-28

Birthdays: Oral Allen, Connie D'Oench and Tyson Jones

Anniversaries: Lloyd & Joan McBean

Wednesday, January 13

Hebrews 2:11-18 *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.* (vv.14-15)

The best leaders do so by example. At a workout the instructor probably doesn't need the exercise like the out-of-shape students do, but she will carefully do each one with the whole class. She wants to prove that even the hardest exercises *can* be done.

This principle is exactly the one Jesus lived by! The Son of Man came not to *be* served but to serve. What he asked his followers to do, he did first by demonstration and example. Even hanging on the cross, he asked forgiveness for those who crucified him. Jesus showed us how to overcome our fear of death by facing it personally for us. He led by

example. It's one reason we should believe following that example can be done.

Genesis 4:1-16; Psalm 119:1-24; John 1:29-42

Birthdays: Jean D'Costa, Dadika Greer, Madison Litsky, Phillippa Norman and Daniella Prawl

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, January 14

Hebrews 3:1-11 *Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years.* (vv.8-9)

"No" is a short, simple word that we hear and (hopefully) obey from an early age. There are plenty of things our eyes and hands can find to do. Not all of them are good or safe. It's sad that the order to "do not..." is difficult when it is meant to protect us.

We are told plainly to expect this test. It is one God allows in order for it to be plainly seen whether we are listening. It is a test of our choices in whom to trust. It is the point of the very first commandment on Moses' tablets. God doesn't mind showing us His power and love. But after we have seen what He can do, are we willing to follow Him? Or will we want to argue?

Genesis 4:17-26; Psalm 18:1-20; John 1:43-51

Birthdays: Xavier Vargas and Wendy Williams

Anniversaries: None

Friday, January 15

Hebrews 3:12-19 *But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.* (vv.13-14)

One of the damages to my body as a result of my stroke was a loss of my swallowing reflex. I needed a feeding tube to be inserted in my stomach so I could receive nourishment. A friend who had a similar feeding tube during a bout with throat cancer visits with me regularly. He had his feeding tube four and a half months. In another week (as I write) I will pass his record. I lean on my friend's prayers and encouragement every day while I wait for my healing.

In the daily spiritual race, we also need encouragement from each other. The prize we seek only comes at the end. We must support each other each day until then.

Genesis 6:1-8; Psalms 16, 17; John 2:1-12

Birthdays: Savannah Simmons, Ahna-Lanise Superville and Michael Williams

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, January 16

Hebrews 4:1-13 *For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.* (v.2)

For a number of years I held a job that required me to visit a different church every week. That time served to teach me that the many churches across the community were indeed sharing the same good news. I felt united by faith to many new brothers and sisters in the larger family of God. And my appreciation grew for the saints who had gone before and handed down their testimonies of faith to us.

See to it that you hand on that good news of Jesus Christ today. It cannot benefit those who have not heard it. People need to see the difference visible in our own lives when we walk by faith in God. It is our privilege to bear that witness today.

Genesis 6:9-22; Psalms 20, 21; John 2:13-22

Birthdays: Audrey Gordon and Arianna Ho-Fatt

Anniversaries: None

by Rick Hoover

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