

Good News Daily

June 12-18, 2016

Sunday, June 12

Psalm 93 *The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.* (v.4 KJV)

This verse brings to mind a day many years ago when I helped my aging mother-in-law up the steps of our beach house and, from the deck, looking out at the ocean, she said, "Isn't God powerful!"

For 44 years our family has been blessed with a place at Flagler Beach, known as "the peaceful beach." It is there I can escape the sometimes chaotic life of Orlando. Most of the time, the only things you see are the sea birds, an occasional porpoise or sea turtle, and the shrimp boats on the horizon. God has told us to find a quiet place to talk with Him, and to be in a contemplative prayer and worship, ready to listen.

Oswald Chambers tells us there is the "call of the mountains" or "the call of the sea" and that nature is sacramental. It is presently Lent as I am writing, and I am reminded how Jesus, on many occasions, escaped the crowds and found such a place.

Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 96; Acts 13:1-12; Luke 12:47-48

Birthdays: Laurena Wild

Anniversaries: None

Monday, June 13

Numbers 9:15-23, 10:29-36 *And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.* (v.15)

As He did when the Israelites were on their exodus from Egypt, I believe God still leads and engineers our lives if we let Him and trust Him (see Proverbs 3:5-6). So this morning at our YMCA annual scholarship fundraising breakfast, God provided me with something he wants done.

Many years ago, I was asked to be on a Christian Awareness Committee at our local YMCA. I was happy to support the Y's mission which is stated in it's logo with the Bible verse from John 17:21. I've been involved with the organization since my boyhood years as a camp counselor but recently, for me, it seems to have lost some of it's Christian emphasis. For instance, we once had a chapel at the entry of our facility with the message, "Jesus, he's why we're here!" That message, and a wooden cross I donated from my office, are now hidden in a less apparent location and our Christian Awareness Committee also is no more.

However, at our morning table fellowship, three of us decided to meet this next week and resurrect the YMCA Christian Awareness Committee. Since then we've met twice and God has us back on track. Praise God!

Psalm 80; Romans 1:1-15; Mathew 17:14-21

Birthdays: Hyacinth Lawrence, Regis Lolo and Christina Norman

Anniversaries: None

Tuesday, June 14

Matthew 17:22-27 *Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.* (v.27)

At this time of the year, I've just finished working on last years' taxes. In todays' Scripture, the tax collectors come to Peter asking about paying taxes. Jesus asks Peter who pays taxes? Since the answer is everyone, Jesus sends him to find the money to pay them in a fish's mouth. My other daily devotional for today was also about money. In Mathew 22:20-22, Jesus is asked by the Pharisees about taxes and he responds, "Whose is the image and superscription on the coin?" Since it was Caesar's image he tells them, "Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God, the things that are God's."

Sometimes I find the lessons from Jesus concerning money to be very difficult. But as with the story of the rich young ruler who could not give up his worldly wealth to follow Jesus, we must remember how he encouraged his disciples: "With God all things are possible."

Numbers 11:1-23; Psalm 78:1-39; Romans 1:16-25

Birthdays: Melissa Holmes, Donna Prawl and Bill Sprung

Anniversaries: Lorna & Trevor Edwards and David & Margaret Williams

Wednesday, June 15

Matthew 18:1-9 *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* (v.3)

At this point of our life, my wife and I find ourselves sharing a lot of time with our three-year-old great granddaughter Kinsley. When Kinsley comes up to me, hugs me, and tells me, "You're my best friend" or when our two little Yorkshire "terrorists" greet me at my homecoming from work with their enthusiastic joy and love, I believe I'm experiencing examples of God's unfailing, unconditional love. Children and "furry children" are so loving, trusting, honest, and dependent on us. We know God is love and we can see His love in so many ways.

As a veterinarian, almost every day at my work I see this love in my clients and their pets; especially in their heartfelt grief during the difficult time of euthanasia to prevent suffering. But, thank God, I also experience the miracle of the beginning of life while performing a C-section or helping a mother cow, cat, or dog deliver her offspring and bring new life into the world.

As a beloved child of God, Jesus asks Peter (and us), "Do you love me?" Our answer should be, like my great grandchild, "Yes, Jesus, you are my best friend and I love you."

Numbers 11:24-35; Psalm 119:97-120; Romans 1:28—2:11

Birthdays: Maurice Greene, Anderson Nandoo, Andrew Scott and Sean Tromans

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, June 16

Matthew 18:10-20 *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* (v.20)

This Lent, God has provided me with these Good News Daily writing opportunities for contemplation, and also a chance to sponsor a new Christian friend for Cursillo. Cursillo has been described as a "non-denominational short course on Christianity" and takes place over a weekend at a local retreat center.

My own Cursillo happened 38 years ago. After the weekend, small "fourth day" groups of 4 or 5 alumni meet weekly. In confidentiality, and with the Holy Spirit's guidance, we pray, review our Rule of Life, report on our past week's activities, and plan for the next week. Over the past 38 years, many of my past brothers have gone on to join our Lord. I thank God for this brotherhood in my life. If you haven't had the opportunity to have your own Cursillo yet, I highly recommend it to you.

Numbers 12:1-16; Psalm 83; Romans 2:12-24

Birthdays: Phillip Chang, Kate Doebler and Tara Fiore

Anniversaries: None

Friday, June 17

Matthew 18:21-35 *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother his trespasses.* (v.35)

In verses 21-22 Peter asks Jesus how many times we should forgive our brother and Jesus says seventy times seven. Pretty strong and clear language on the importance of forgiveness, I'd say.

Two important lessons on forgiveness in my life were in the relationship between my father and myself and the relationship I had with my former partner in veterinary practice. These were very difficult experiences for me, but important times for me to ask for forgiveness for a lot of anger and hatred that I harbored in my heart against both of them. Through my Christian counseling, I was advised that I should ask for forgiveness for my part in the broken relationships, but not expect any conditions on their part. In both cases, I found this to be a very humbling experience. But afterward, God granted me a great healing—freedom and relief from an emotional burden. I also hope it allowed them the same blessing.

Numbers 13:1-3; 21-30; Psalm 88; Romans 2:25—3:8

Birthdays: Chris Nembhard and Keith Samuels

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, June 18

Matthew 19:1-12 *Wherefore, they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.* (v.6)

After 54 years of marriage myself, this statement from Jesus in response to a question about divorce, seems timely—given the high divorce in our country and what's happening in my personal family. We are presently going through two difficult divorces in our children's lives. In both cases, their military careers, with many deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan during their over 20 years of service in the Marine Corps, placed tremendous pressures on their marriages and families.

To be honest, in my own marriage, when I look back at my vows during a church wedding, I realize I didn't have a clue as to the covenant that God had in mind. But, as has been true throughout my life, He had the perfect plan and I've learned a lot through our ups and downs. Recently, my wife, who is a marriage and family therapist, was admiring one of the older married couples in our church and the intimacy they seemed to share. Intimacy is defined as a close, familiar, and usually affectionate or loving personal relationship with another. To me the oneness Jesus describes in John 17:21 is the relationship we are striving to have with both Jesus and our spouse. Certainly, both are difficult; but by following Jesus and trusting God, He blesses our marriages as we grow and develop our friendship and intimacy.

Numbers 13:31-14:25; Psalm 87,90; Romans 3:9-20

Birthdays: Vivien Belnavis, Aston Boothe, Evangeline Dugger, Daphne Fearon, Carla Holness, Dorothy Simon and Allicia Walford

Anniversaries: Keith & Cynthia Ellis, Winston & Pansy Plummer and Mark & Maria Tromans

by R. Bruce Keene

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