

Good News Daily

July 3-9, 2016

Sunday, July 3

Mark 1:14-20 *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him.* (vv.17-18 NIV)

I frequently consider the question of "how does God work in the world?" Not the human part, to which I contribute as member of the Body of Christ, but the *supernatural* part. This is my crisis of faith because, to my continued frustration, I want to have an intellectual understanding of God's ability to penetrate human existence. Well, I'm certainly not alone. Even the apostle Thomas doubted the supernatural when confronted with its reality. He wanted the physical proof. He wanted to put his fingers in the holes and his hand in the side! I get that.

I live in an incredible naturalistic, scientific based culture. And yet, I believe that there is no contradiction between faith and science. I believe science continues to reveal the nature of God. But, I rationally understand that science stops at the threshold of the supernatural realm. So, I am back to a firm belief in something for which there is no proof. My faith.

Numbers 27:12-23; Psalms 146, 147; Acts 19:11-20

Birthdays: Jennifer Burrowes, Russell Cheatham and Anna Hayle

Anniversaries: None

Monday, July 4

Matthew 23:1-12 *"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."* (v.12)

As I initially read this, I got it confused with pride and humility in my life. I don't see pride as always being a sin. I am proud of many things because it is a reasonable or justifiable self-respect.

The lesson I have come to understand from this passage is that I am warned to resist the impulse to abuse my rise in rank that comes over time. And it can't be a balancing test, like a little today and a lot less tomorrow. And for the humbling portion of the equation, well, I have been humbled by the outside world on any number of occasions and that *never* made my day. Clearly my lesson to learn is that the humility must be self-inflicted. It never seems to hurt then when I genuinely put aside my self to do what I believe is in everyone's best interest. Putting aside self to be a good servant—let me practice that.

Numbers 32:1-6, 16-27; Psalms 1, 2, 3; Romans 8:26-30

Birthdays: Tanisha Valere

Anniversaries: None

Tuesday, July 5

Romans 8:31-39 *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depths, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (vv.38-39)

This is the most wonderful statement and assurance to me in my life. Paul, the writer of Romans, describes, in this one phrase, the incredible mystery of God's transcendent presence in all of existence.

I experience love in my daily life. I express love in ways that I believe are appropriate. But the love expressed by God is the deep, foundational substance of reality. To me, it's analogous to the residual cosmic microwave background radiation that science has detected permeating the entire universe as a left over of the "big bang." It's the "dark matter" that inexplicably makes up around 85 percent of all the matter in the universe but its existence is only inferred from its gravitational effects on visible matter.

God is transmitting on the "Love Channel" and I have set my receiver to that frequency to hear His song. That is a connection that storms and static cannot disrupt.

Numbers 35:1-3, 9-15, 30-34; Psalms 5, 6; Matthew 23:13-26

Birthdays: Marguerite Kocher, Juzann McGrath, Roger Roberts and Jordan Scott

Anniversaries: None

Wednesday, July 6

Romans 9:1-18 *I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.* (vv.2-4a)

Paul is reacting to the reality of God's sovereign election. Election is inherent in God's plan: "It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy" (v.16). In all candor, I'm frightened and anxious by that. Have I been kidding myself, believing I've been accepted as an adopted son of God? Where then is my assurance? OK, take a deep breath. Slow the pulse rate.

So I review, of all things, the 39 Articles of Religion located in the Book of Common Prayer. And my assurance is this: XVII. Of Predestination and Election: "Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by *his Spirit working in due season: they through Grace obey the calling...*"

Obey the calling. Stop being the rebel. I going have a small plaque made for my desk. "Stop being the rebel."

Deuteronomy 1:1-18; Psalm 119:1-24; Matthew 23:27-39

Birthdays: Vincelyn Ridley and Fran Thomas

Anniversaries: Peter Gannett & Theresa Imhoff-Gannett and Eric & Heather Trebbien

Thursday, July 7

Psalm 18:1-20 *In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears. (v.6)*

You know, I've taken a lot of things for granted. Miracles for instance. How many miracles do you think have been performed on my behalf during my lifetime? A couple? A couple of dozen? How would I really know? Do you think you would always recognize a miracle when you see one? I don't think I always recognize "miraculous" things happening around me for what they truly are.

I do call upon God for help. Usually, it's for strength, patience, and understanding in dealing with people. I really need that a lot! But more than that, I believe that when I call upon God, in my ignorance I know not what to ask.

I will always continue in my personal and corporate prayer to God, knowing that my Father is ready to come to my aid. But I testify that God has already poured out his blessings upon me without my cries and without my prayers and has given life abundantly. Amen.

Deuteronomy 3:18-28; Romans 9:19-33; Matthew 24:1-14

Birthdays: Sally Moran, Felicia Ramcharitar and Earnest Williams

Anniversaries: Millard F. Mann & Dorothy C Mann, Terrell Manyak & Marlene Wepf and Tyrone & Donna Scott

Friday, July 8

Deuteronomy 31:7-13, 24—32:4 *"Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. There it will remain as a witness against you. For I know how rebellious and stiff-necked you are. If you have been rebellious against the LORD while I am still alive and with you, how much more will you rebel after I die!" (vv.26-27)*

I think about Moses and the arduous life he had. Being a leader is a tough job. Even after 40 years of wandering things didn't get that much better; and, Moses doesn't get to enter the Promised Land. It is God who reveals to Moses that the Israelites will be rebellious. I wonder if Moses was bitter about how things turned out. What a harsh world it was for humankind.

What about today? Is the world so much farther ahead? Any less rebellious? Probably not. But this time, in addition to the Law which is still needed, I have something wondrous working in me. The Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life. Sent at Pentecost to be my Comforter. The Lord is present in this Temple of my person, to give me the guidance that I need. Please make me conscience of your presence each day Holy Spirit.

Psalms 16, 17; Romans 10:1-13; Matthew 24:15-31

Birthdays: Kolawde Adebayo, Leon Hughes and Deondre Williams

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, July 9

Matthew 24:32-51 *"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away." (vv.37-39a)*

Was Noah the first "prepper"? You know, someone who believes a catastrophic disaster is likely to occur in the future and make active preparations for it. Yes, he was. I think about making disaster preparations. I stockpiled for the Y2K bug back in 1999. Remember that? But later, I ended up eating all the freeze-dried meals I had put away. So it comes and goes. One day planning for the future and the next day eating and drinking.

In Matthew's account, Jesus talks a lot about being prepared spiritually for his coming again. There is no room for anyone who is "asleep at the switch" about their faith. This is the call for consistent and dedicated servant-hood. I become physically tired each day as I return from work, but, when I get home, I realize my relationship with the Lord and am refreshed. Now, if only I could tap into that spiritual awareness each waking minute of my day. That might require some further preparations.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalms 20, 21; Romans 10:14-21

Birthdays: Susan Franco-Velez and Iris Sandoval

Anniversaries: Tyrone & Patrice Bennett

by Larry Standish

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