

## **Bible study for this week** 1/02/12~1/08/12

**\*January02(Monday),2012{[Psalm 25:4~10](#)}**Key: Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. ([Genesis 28:15](#))“Always With You”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 4~6](#); [Matthew 2](#)

The highway that winds around the southern shore of Lake Michigan can be treacherous in the winter. One weekend as we were driving back to Grand Rapids from Chicago, a buildup of snow and ice slowed traffic, caused numerous accidents, and almost doubled our drive time. We were relieved as we eased off the expressway onto our final road. It was then that my husband said out loud, “Thanks, Lord. I think I can take it from here.”

Just as he finished saying the words, our car spun around 180 degrees. As we came to a stop, hearts pounding, we could just imagine God saying: “Are you sure?”

Why do we sometimes try to go it alone in life when at every moment we have access to God? He said: “I am with you and will keep you wherever you go” ([Gen. 28:15](#)). And He assures us: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” ([Heb. 13:5](#)).

Scottish mathematician, theologian, and preacher Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847) wrote: “When I walk by the wayside, He is along with me. When I enter into company, amid all my forgetfulness of Him, He never forgets me. . . . Go where I will, He tends me, and watches me, and cares for me.”

What a comfort to know that God is always with us—we don’t need to go through life alone!

*Meditate:* As I travel down life’s pathway, Jesus keeps me day by day; And although the road is winding, Yet, with Him I need not stray.

*Aphorism:*God’s presence brings great comfort.

**\*January03(Tuesday),2012{[2 Corinthians 5:1~11](#)}**Key: We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#))“The Review”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 10~12](#); [Matthew 4](#)

Imagine going to work one day and being greeted by your boss, who says, “Come by my office at 9:30. I’d like to talk to you about how you’re doing on the job.”

This could be a nervous time for you as you think about what your supervisor might say. You wonder, *How does my boss think I’ve been doing? Could there be a promotion with a pay increase? Or could I lose my job? Am I going to hear, “Well done” or “You’re done”?*

As important as this kind of meeting is, the Bible speaks of another, far more significant review. After this life is past, we will stand before our Lord. Paul wrote, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” ([2 Cor. 5:10](#)). We will not enter that future evaluation fearful of losing our salvation, nor will we desire personal benefit or human approval. Instead, we will be eager to hear the Master say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” ([Matt. 25:21](#)).

The challenge before us as followers of Christ is to serve Him with excellence now so that we can hear His words, “Well done” then. Based on the way I am living today, what kind of review will I get when I see the Savior?

*Meditate:*The day will come when we will stand Before our Judge, God’s Son; Have we so lived that He will say, “Well done, My child, well done”? —Sper

*Aphorism:* Service done well here on earth will receive a “Well done” in heaven.

**\*January04(Wednesday),2012**{ [2 Timothy 2:1~10](#) }Key: I suffer trouble . . . even to the point of chains; but the Word of God is not chained. ([2 Timothy 2:9](#))“Locked In”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 13~15; Matthew 5:1~26](#)

Jean-Dominique Bauby’s memoir, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, describes his life after a massive stroke left him with a condition called “Locked-In Syndrome.” Although he was almost completely paralyzed, Bauby was able to write his book by blinking his left eyelid. An aide would recite a coded alphabet, until Bauby blinked to choose the letter of a word he was dictating. The book required about 200,000 blinks to write. Bauby used the only physical ability left him to communicate with others.

In 2 Timothy we read of Paul experiencing a different kind of “locked-in syndrome.” Under house arrest, the apostle learned that his execution might be imminent. With this in view, he told Timothy: “I suffer trouble . . . even to the point of chains; but the Word of God is not chained” ([2 Tim. 2:9](#)). In spite of his isolation, Paul welcomed visitors, wrote letters of encouragement, and rejoiced at the spread of God’s Word.

For some of us, circumstances may have isolated us from others. Lying in a hospital bed, serving time in a prison, or being a shut-in can make us feel that we are experiencing our own “locked-in syndrome.” If this is true for you, why not prayerfully reflect on some ways you can still reach out to others.

***Meditate:*** Give me to serve in humble sphere, I ask not aught beside! Content to fill a little place, If God be glorified.

*Aphorism:* No deed is too small when done for Christ.

**\*January05(Thursday),2012**{ [Psalm 19:1~7](#) }Key: If I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David. ([Jeremiah 33:25~26](#))“Ordinances Of Heaven”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 16~17; Matthew 5:27~48](#)

Mark your calendar now if you want to see the next celestial convergence of Venus, Jupiter, and the moon. On November 18, 2052, you’ll be able to peer through the evening darkness as those solar system neighbors “gather” in a tiny area of the sky. That remarkable juxtaposition of reflective spheres last sparkled the night sky on December 1, 2008, and it will happen again 4 decades from now.

This predictability, as well as things such as eclipses and the return of Halley’s Comet (July 28, 2061), prove the orderliness of the universe. If no fixed set of laws governed the movement of everything in the universe, such predictions could not be made.

Are these set rules more than random standards? Can we see God’s hand in these celestial certainties? Look at [Jeremiah 33:25~26](#). God has in view the covenantal relationship between Himself and His people, and He uses a scientific fact in the analogy. In effect, God says that His fixed universal laws, “the ordinances of heaven and earth,” have the same certainty as His promises to His covenant people.

God’s laws have governed the universe since its creation—and continue to do so with astounding predictability. So mark your calendar, and be amazed by God’s unchanging control.

***Meditate:*** A Prayer: Dear Lord, I marvel at the wonders of Your creation. You are such a great and awesome God who does not change. As I place my life in Your hands, I will trust You to be faithful. Amen.

*Aphorism:* The wonders of creation reveal God at work.

**\*January06(Friday),2012**{ [Psalm 19:1~7](#) }Key: If I have not appointed the ordinances of

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**Aphorism:** The wonders of creation reveal God at work.

**\*January07(Saturday),2012**{[Colossians 3:8~17](#)}Key: But we have the mind of Christ.([1 Corinthians 2:16](#))“God Loveth Adverbs”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 18~19; Matthew 6:1~18](#)

The Puritans wisely sought to connect all of life to its source in God, bringing the two worlds together rather than dividing them into sacred and secular. They had a saying, “God loveth adverbs; and careth not how good, but how well.” Adverbs describe verbs—our words of action and activity. The proverb implies that God cares more about the spirit in which we live than the concrete results.

Pleasing God doesn’t mean that we must busy ourselves with a new set of “spiritual” activities. As the Puritans said, whether cleaning house or preaching sermons, shoeing horses or translating the Bible, any human activity may constitute an offering to God.

We spend much time immersed in the mundane. “But we have the mind of Christ,” Paul reminds us ([1 Cor. 2:16](#)). That truth is to guide everything we do. Caring for an elderly parent. Cleaning up after a child. Sitting on a porch with a neighbor. Fielding a customer’s complaint. Filling out patient charts at a nurses’ station. Sitting in traffic. Sawing lumber. Reporting tips. Shopping for groceries.

We need faith and the mind of the Lord Jesus to recognize something of lasting value in even our most ordinary tasks.

**Meditate:** In the common round of duty Lift thy heart in praise; For the Lord hath surely promised Strength for all thy days.

**Aphorism:** The world crowns success; God crowns faithfulness!

**\*January08(Sunday),2012**{[Revelation 15](#)}Key: All nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested. ([Revelation 15:4](#))“The Final Opening Ceremony”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 20~22; Matthew 6:19~34](#)

Some words used to describe the opening ceremony of the 2008 summer Olympics were *awesome*, *brehtaking*, and *extravagant*. One commentator observed, “This shows what happens when you give an artist an unlimited budget.”

When I heard this, I thought, *That’s what God did at creation!* He held nothing back. The resulting universe is stunning in beauty, staggering in complexity, extravagant in all regards.

The Olympic ceremony was perfect in its precision; but if just one drummer or dancer had decided to alter the artist’s vision, the whole ceremony would have been flawed.

That’s what happened shortly after creation. Unlike the Olympic producer, God allowed free choice, and His work of art was marred by Adam and Eve’s idea of a better way. In Isaiah’s words, “We have turned, every one, to his own way” (53:6).

God’s solution to our waywardness was unimaginable: The Artist paid the price to recreate what we ruined. One day, there will be another opening ceremony, and everyone in heaven and on earth will bow at the name of Jesus ([Phil. 2:10](#)). And those from every nation who have accepted God’s plan in Christ will worship together in the flawless New Jerusalem ([Rev. 15:4](#)).

***Meditate:*** Yes, God was so great in creation, But greater, much greater in grace! For when man had sinned and had grieved Him, He sent Christ to die in his place!

***Aphorism:*** We have all eternity to praise God—begin today.