

Bible study for this week 3/26/12~4/01/12

***Murch26(Monday),2012**{[Philippians 2:19~30](#)}Key: Receive [Epaphroditus] therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem. ([Phil. 2:29](#))“Worthy Of Respect” Bible In One Year: [Joshua 22~24; Luke 3](#)

Just before kickoff at Super Bowl XLIII, Kurt Warner of the Arizona Cardinals received the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award—a tribute given to the player who had best combined on-field excellence with off-field community service. “I am humbled the Lord has given me such an amazing life to impact others,” said Warner, a dedicated Christian. “Of all the awards given to NFL athletes, [this one] stands out . . . because of what it represents.” It represents a commitment to giving and sacrificing for others.

Paying homage to those who serve is not a new concept. Paul spoke of it when he reminded the Philippians to honor those who gave themselves in serving Christ. He told them of their friend Epaphroditus, who had nearly died ([Phil. 2:30](#)) because of his efforts for Christ in ministering to others—including the people at Philippi. How should they respond? Paul said, “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem” (v.29). Clearly, when we think of those who sacrifice in serving the Savior, they are worthy of our respect and appreciation.

Why not look for ways to show gratitude to those who have served you spiritually. Give them the honor they deserve.

Meditate: To honor is to show respect, To meet another’s need, To give someone encouragement, To love in word and deed.

Aphorism: We honor God when we honor those who serve God.

***Murch27(Tuesday),2012**{[1 John 4:7~21](#)}Key: Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ([1 John 4:11](#))“Loving God”Bible In One Year: [Judges 1~3; Luke 4:1~30](#)

A friend recalls: Early in our marriage, I thought I knew the ultimate shortcut to my wife’s heart. I arrived home one night with a bouquet of a dozen red roses behind my back. When I presented the flowers to Martie, she thanked me graciously, sniffed the flowers, and then took them into the kitchen. Not quite the response I had expected.

It was an introductory lesson in the reality that flowers are not my wife’s primary language of love. While she appreciated the gesture, she was mentally calculating the cost of an expensive bouquet of flowers—a budget breaker for a young couple in seminary! And as I’ve discovered through the years, she is far more interested in my time and attention. When I devote myself to her in an uninterrupted and attentive way, that’s when she really feels loved.

Did you ever wonder how God wants us to show that we love Him? We get a clue when we read, “He who loves God must love his brother also” ([1 John 4:21](#)). It’s that simple. One of the primary ways we show our love for God is by loving our brothers and sisters in Christ. When we genuinely love each other, it brings pleasure to our heavenly Father.

So watch for opportunities to tell Jesus that you love Him. He’s infinitely worth whatever it costs.

Meditate: All those who say they love the Lord But don’t love one another, Should question the relationship They have with God the Father.

Aphorism: To show your love for God, share your love with others.

***Murch28(Wednesday),2012**{[Mark 11:1~7](#)}Key: If anyone says to you, “Why are you doing this?” say, “The Lord has need of it.” ([Mark 11:3](#))“God Needs You!”Bible In One

Year: [Judges 4~6; Luke 4:31~44](#)

For His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus chose a donkey to serve as His royal transportation. His disciples were instructed to say, “The Lord has need of it” ([Mark 11:3](#)). Isn’t it astounding that the Son of God should use such lowly means to accomplish His purposes? Alexander MacLaren commented on this: “Christ comes to us in like fashion, and brushes aside all our convenient excuses. He says, ‘I want you, and that is enough.’”

Think of it! The Creator of the universe needs us and desires to fit us into His eternal design! Though all-powerful and not dependent on any creature, He has chosen to carry out His plans through lowly human instruments. If this were not so, He would have taken us to heaven as soon as He saved us by His grace.

Someone once asked Francis of Assisi how he was able to accomplish so much. He replied, “This may be why: The Lord looked down from heaven and said, ‘Where can I find the weakest, littlest man on earth?’ Then He saw me and said, ‘I’ve found him. I will work through him, and he won’t be proud of it. He’ll see that I am only using him because of his insignificance.’”

You may be small in your own eyes, but God has need of you!

Meditate: Yours is a mission you alone can fill, Whether it be to build or teach or till; Your goal may still be hidden from your view, But somewhere God has urgent need of you.

Aphorism: God is looking for ordinary people for extraordinary work.

***Murch29(Thursday),2012**{[Psalm 105:1~5](#)}Key: Oh, give thanks to the Lord! ([Psalm 105:1](#))“Thanks, God!”Bible In One Year: [Judges 7~8; Luke 5:1~16](#)

At RBC Ministries, our human resources team has developed an effective and encouraging program that centers around gratefulness.

When an employee notices something good another employee does here at the office, he or she can take a special “Thank You” card provided by human resources and write a note of appreciation. It’s a good feeling to walk into your office and find one of those cards on your desk.

Isn’t it great to be thanked for a job well done? Doesn’t a good, hearty “thank you” brighten your day? And doesn’t it make your relationships a little more special—just to know that your work is not being taken for granted?

Everybody loves to be thanked. Even God. Our heavenly Father finds pleasure in our expression of thanks to Him. It’s His will that we tell Him “Thank You.” “Give thanks in all circumstances,” Paul said, “for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” ([1 Thess. 5:18](#) niv). The writer of Hebrews took it a step further by saying, “Let us be thankful, and so worship God” (12:28 niv).

Keep looking for ways to improve your relationship with God. Don’t forget what may be the most basic way to worship and honor Him: Tell Him “Thanks.”

Meditate: Then let us adore and give Him His right, All glory and power, all wisdom and might, All honor and blessing, with angels above, And thanks never ceasing for infinite love.

Aphorism: The worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful heart.

***Murch30(Friday),2012**{[1 Peter 3:8~17](#)}Key: Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. ([1 Peter 3:15](#))“The Kingdom Of Me?”Bible In One Year: [Judges 9~10; Luke 5:17~39](#)

In 1977, 15-year-old Kevin Baugh and a teenage friend decided to create their own country, just for fun. The Republic of Molossia began as they drew a map, created paper

money, and made a flag. Today, Mr. Baugh continues his micro-nation the same way it began—just for fun. When *Chicago Tribune* reporter Colleen Mastony toured his 1.3 acre kingdom in the Nevada desert, Baugh assured her he still pays US taxes, which he calls “foreign aid.”

“It’s always tongue-in-cheek,” Baugh admits. “I’m doing this for the pleasure and enjoyment of having my own country.”

Not many of us will create our own nation, but we all have a kingdom of the heart where we decide who will rule. The apostle Peter wrote: “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” ([1 Peter 3:15](#)). “Sanctify” means to set apart Christ as Lord or Ruler of our life.

There is something within each of us that longs to be in control of our lives. It may be only a small corner where we assert our spiritual independence and answer to no one but ourselves.

But true freedom comes when we allow Christ to rule our hearts.

Meditate: ’Tis mine to choose if self shall die And never rise again; ’Tis mine to yield the throne to Christ And bid Him rule and reign.

Aphorism: When Christ rules in our heart, our feet will walk in His ways.

***Murch31(Saturday),2012**{[Luke 15:11~24](#)}Key: When he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran . . . and kissed him. ([Luke 15:20](#)) “The Beauty Of Forgiveness”Bible In One Year: [Judges 11~12; Luke 6:1~26](#)

What started out as a collection has grown into a ministry opportunity for Larry and Mary Gerbens. For the past 10 years they’ve been collecting artistic works based on the story of the prodigal son from Luke 15. Their collection includes a painting by Rembrandt and a number of items by other artists depicting this story.

The Gerbens wanted to share their collection, so they put it on display at a local college. Larry said, “The artists have ministered to us, and we hope their work will minister to others.”

As I wandered through the displays, I was touched by the deep need of the prodigal, his honest repentance, and the beautiful forgiveness of the father portrayed in the variety of art pieces—paintings, etchings, engravings, glasswork, sketches, and silk screens.

We have all been like the son in this story, who had other plans for his life than what his father had for him. We have all run away from our heavenly Father ([Rom. 3:10~12](#)). But He welcomes us when we come to Him.

You too will see the beauty of forgiveness in your heavenly Father’s face when you cry out to Him, “Father, I have sinned . . .” ([Luke 15:18](#)). If you’re away from Him, head home now and experience His love.

Meditate: O Lord, I now admit my guilt, And I accept Your grace; Transform my life and help me grow Until I see Your face.

Aphorism: When God forgives, He removes the sin and restores the soul.

***April01(Sunday),2012**{[Mark 14:53~65](#)}Key:[Jesus] kept silent and answered nothing.([Mark 14:61](#))“To Speak Or Not To Speak”Bible In One Year: [Judges 13~15; Luke 6:27~49](#)

Sometimes silence is the best response to a false charge. At other times we must speak up.

When false witnesses accused Jesus as He stood before the Sanhedrin, He “kept silent” ([Mark 14:53~61](#)). Defending Himself would have been useless. Furthermore, He was fulfilling the prophecy of [Isaiah 53:7](#). But earlier in His ministry, Jesus rebuked the

Pharisees, challenging them to prove that He sinned ([John 8:13~59](#)).

A pastor resigned from his church because a few members made untrue statements about him. He thought it unchristian to defend himself, and in some instances it is. But in this case, the troublemakers needed to be confronted and their false charges refuted. He should have urged them to repent or face church discipline.

Saying nothing may allow wrongdoers to go unchallenged in their evil ways. But if God's Spirit leads us to remain silent, or if we want merely to try to salvage our wounded pride, then we should hold our tongue.

Are you being falsely accused? If you discern that it's futile to argue, or if your pride has been hurt, ask God for grace to say nothing. But if you feel concern for the wrongdoers and want to see justice done, speak up!

Meditate: Lord, give us wisdom to discern When what is false must be revealed Or if we need Your grace and strength To close our lips and keep them sealed.

Aphorism: Silence can be valuable; don't break it unless you can improve on it.