

Bible study for this week 4/02/12~4/08/12

***April02(Monday),2012**{[John 15:9~17](#)}Key: He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. ([Isaiah 53:7](#))“**Like A Lamb**”Bible In One Year: [Judges 16~18](#); [Luke 7:1~30](#)

In 1602, Italian artist Caravaggio produced a painting called *The Taking of Christ*. This work, an early example of the Baroque style, is compelling. Created in dark hues, it allows the viewer to contemplate Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Two main elements of the scene depicted in the painting demand the observer's attention. The first is Judas as he delivers the traitor's kiss. Immediately, however, the viewer's focus is drawn toward Jesus' hands, which are passively clasped together to show that He offered no resistance to this injustice. Although He possessed the power to create a universe, Christ gave Himself up voluntarily to His captors and to the waiting cross.

Long before this scene took place, Jesus told His listeners that no one could take His life from Him—He would lay it down willingly ([John 10:18](#)). This heart of voluntary surrender was prophesied by Isaiah, who wrote, “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth” ([Isa. 53:7](#)).

Christ's lamblike self-sacrifice is a grand indicator of His powerful love. “Greater love has no one than this,” He explained, “than to lay down one's life for his friends” ([John 15:13](#)). Think of it. Jesus loved you that much!

Meditate: Love sent the Savior to die in my stead. Why should He love me so? Meekly to Calvary's cross He was led. Why should He love me so?

*Aphorism:*The nail-pierced hands of Jesus reveal the love-filled heart of God.

***April03(Tuesday),2012**{[Romans 6:1~11](#)}Key: Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ([Romans 6:4](#))“New Normal”Bible In One Year: [Judges 19~21](#); [Luke 7:31~50](#)

A friend recalls: After my doctor announced that I had cancer, I tried to listen to what he said, but I couldn't. I went home, pulled a blanket over my head, and fell asleep on the couch, as if sleeping could change the diagnosis.

When I finally gained enough strength to tell my loved ones, my friend Judy Schreur said something especially memorable. After expressing her sympathy, she said, “This is what will happen. You will feel really bad for 3 days. Then you will get up, figure out what you have to do, and get on with your life.” Then she added, “I think it has to do with death, burial, and resurrection.”

At the time, I didn't believe it. I was sure that life as I knew it was over. Nothing would ever be the same. I couldn't imagine feeling normal again. But she was right. Three days later I woke up and realized I didn't feel quite so bad. And little by little, despite the physical misery of chemotherapy treatments, my emotional and spiritual condition improved significantly. I “died” to my old reality and was “raised” to a new normal.

Thankfully, God is in the business of resurrection. For those who have died in Christ, the death of one reality means resurrection to a new, glorious normal so that we can “walk in newness of life” ([Rom. 6:4](#)).

*Meditate:*Jesus redeemed us and died in our stead; In Him we died and rose from the dead. No longer is death a thing that we dread; The old is behind us, the new is ahead.

*Aphorism:*To be “in Christ” is to share in His life, in His death, and in His resurrection.

***April04(Wednesday),2012**{[Acts 18:1~11](#)}Key: I have many people in this city. ([Acts](#)

[18:10](#)“Many People”Bible In One Year: [Ruth 1~4; Luke 8:1~25](#)

A friend recalls: New York City. Easter Sunday, 7:30 a.m. I was the only customer at Jimmy’s Diner in East Harlem when a man entered and approached my table. He said, “Good morning, and God bless you,” left a gospel tract, and quickly walked out. I smiled, appreciating his witness and realizing that God has His people everywhere. That night I attended church with our daughter Debbie, joining an enthusiastic congregation of 300 people, most in their twenties and thirties. Their infectious love for Christ and others was a bright light in a city that is often considered spiritually dark.

In the first century, Paul visited the Greek city of Corinth, which was known for its immorality and corruption. When he faced opposition for presenting Jesus as Messiah, the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city” ([Acts 18:9~10](#)).

No matter where we go, the Lord’s people are there. The risen Christ is powerfully present in and through all who know Him. The Lord has His people where you are today. Look for them. Join them. Christ is risen indeed!

*Meditate:*When Christians join in blessed fellowship Commemorating Jesus’ resurrection, They sense a common bond of unity—Their mutual faith in Him the true connection.

*Aphorism:*God has His people where you are today.

***April05(Thursday),2012**{[Isaiah 61:1~3](#)}Key: The Lord has anointed Me . . . to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning. ([Isaiah 61:1,3](#))“The Power Of Praise”Bible In One Year: [1 Samuel 1~3; Luke 8:26~56](#)

Praise is powerful! When Scottish pastor Robert Murray McCheyne was troubled with a coldness of heart toward the things of the Lord, he would sing the praises of God until he felt revived in his spirit. Those in his household were often able to tell what hour he awoke because he began the day with a psalm of praise.

One day, while he was trying to prepare his heart for preaching, he wrote in his journal: “Is it the desire of my heart to be made altogether holy? . . . Lord, You know all things . . . I’ve felt so much deadness and grief that I cannot grieve for this deadness. Toward evening I revived. Got a calm spirit through [singing psalms] and prayer.” McCheyne had been uplifted by praising God.

Perhaps you feel as if you are mired in what John Bunyan called the “slough of despond.” Lift a song of praise to the Lord. The psalmist said, “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever” (89:1). When we do that, the praise will flow not only from our lips but also from our heart. The Lord delights to give “the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” ([Isa. 61:3](#)).

Yes, “it is good to sing praises to our God”—at all times ([Ps. 147:1](#)).

Meditate: Praise, my soul, the King of heaven, To His feet your tribute bring; Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, Evermore His praises sing.

*Aphorism:*If you find yourself wearing a spirit of heaviness, try on a garment of praise.

***April06(Friday),2012**{[Psalm 66:1~15](#)}Key: I will never leave you nor forsake you. ([Hebrews 13:5](#))“For This I Have Jesus”Bible In One Year: [1 Samuel 4~6; Luke 9:1~17](#)

In an evangelistic meeting in Ireland, the speaker was explaining what it means to abide in Christ and to trust Him completely in every trial. Concluding his message, he repeated several times, “It means that in every circumstance you can keep on saying, ‘For this I have Jesus.’”

The meeting was then opened for testimonies. One young woman said, “Just a few minutes ago I was handed this telegram. It reads, ‘Mother is very ill; take train home immediately.’ When I saw those words, I knew that tonight’s message was meant just for me. My heart looked up and said, ‘For this I have Jesus.’ Instantly a peace and strength flooded my soul.”

Three or four weeks later the evangelist received a letter from this woman. It read, “Thank you again for the message you gave that day. Life has become an uninterrupted psalm of victory, for I have come to realize that no matter what life brings, for this I have Jesus.”

That believer in Christ had found in her Savior the One who would be with her “through fire and through water,” and who would bring her “out to rich fulfillment” ([Ps. 66:12](#)).

If you are enduring a great trial of affliction, remember—for this you have Jesus!

Meditate: I’ve found a refuge from life’s care in Jesus, I am hiding in His love divine; He fully understands my soul’s deep longing, And He whispers softly, “Thou art Mine.”

Aphorism: If every circumstance finds us abiding in Christ, we will find Christ abiding with us in every circumstance.

***April 07 (Saturday), 2012** { [1 Thess. 4:13~18](#) } Key: We should live . . . godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope. ([Titus 2:12~13](#)) “Our Only Hope” Bible In One Year: [1 Samuel 7~9](#); [Luke 9:18~36](#)

An anonymous author wrote, “When I was first converted, and for some years afterward, the second coming of Christ was a thrilling idea, a blessed hope, a glorious promise, the theme of some of the most inspiring songs of the church.

“Later it became an accepted tenet of faith, a cardinal doctrine, a kind of invisible trademark of my ministry. It was the favorite arena of my theological discussions, in the pulpit and in print. Now suddenly the second coming means something more to me. Paul called it ‘the blessed hope.’ But today it appears as the only hope of the world.”

From the human standpoint, there is no solution for the struggles of the world. Leaders are naturally frustrated in trying to deal with the increasing problems in society. The only complete and permanent solution is found in the return of Christ to earth. When He comes, He will set up His kingdom. He will rule the nations in righteousness, and “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” ([Hab. 2:14](#)).

As we await our Savior’s return, let us keep on praying, working, and watching, while “looking for the blessed hope”—our only hope for this world.

Meditate: And for the hope of His return, Dear Lord, Your name we praise; With longing hearts we watch and wait For that great day of days!

Aphorism: As this world gets darker, the promised return of God’s Son gets brighter.

***April 08 (Sunday), 2012** { [Ephesians 4:17~32](#) } Key: Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification. ([Ephesians 4:29](#)) “Clean Up The Environment” Bible In One Year: [1 Samuel 10~12](#); [Luke 9:37~62](#)

What a frustrating problem pollution is! Everybody suffers with it, yet everybody contributes to it.

Pollution takes many forms, but one type is often overlooked. Charles Swindoll calls it “verbal pollution,” passed around by grumblers, complainers, and criticizers. “The poison of pessimism,” Swindoll writes, “creates an atmosphere of wholesale negativism where nothing but the bad side of everything is emphasized.”

A group of Christian friends became concerned about this form of pollution and their personal part in it. So they made a pact to avoid critical words for a whole week. They were surprised to find how little they spoke! As they continued the experiment, they actually had to relearn conversation skills.

In Ephesians 4, Paul called believers to that sort of decisive action. He said we are to “put off” the old self and its conduct that grieves the Holy Spirit (vv.22,30) and “put on” the new self that builds up others (v.24). As we rely on the help of the Spirit ([Gal. 5:16](#)), we can make those changes in our conduct, our thinking, and our speaking.

If we want to be rid of verbal pollution, we must choose to change and ask for God’s help. It’s a great way to start cleaning up our spiritual environment.

Meditate: What! Never speak one evil word, Or rash, or idle, or unkind! O how shall I, most gracious Lord, This mark of true perfection find?

Aphorism: Help stamp out pollution—clean up your speech!