

Bible study for this week 5/07/12~5/13/12

***May07(Monday),2012**{[Colossians 3:12~17](#)}Key: Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. ([Colossians 3:17](#))“**Becoming Inclined To God**”Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 1~3](#); [Luke 24:1~35](#)

I have learned much about the conscious remembrance of God from Brother Lawrence, a cook in a 17th-century monastery. In his book *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence mentioned practical ways to “offer God your heart from time to time in the course of the day,” even in the midst of chores such as cooking or repairing shoes. One’s depth of spirituality, said Lawrence, does not depend on changing things you do but rather changing your motive—doing for God what you ordinarily do for yourself.

One of his eulogies said, “The good Brother found God everywhere, as much while he was repairing shoes as while he was praying . . . It was God, not the task, he had in view. He knew that the more the task was against his natural inclinations, the greater was his love in offering it to God.”

That last comment affected my wife deeply. While working with senior citizens in downtown Chicago, she at times was called to do tasks that went beyond her natural inclinations. As she tackled some of the least desirable duties, she reminded herself to keep God and His glory in view. With effort, even the most difficult tasks can be performed and presented as an offering to God ([Col. 3:17](#)).

*Meditate:*Follow with reverent steps the great example Of Him whose holy work was doing good; So shall the wide earth seem our Father’s temple, Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

*Aphorism:*Duty alone is drudgery; duty with love is delight.

***May08(Tuesday),2012**{[Ruth 2:1~12](#)}Key: A full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge. ([Ruth 2:12](#))“**Safety Zone**”Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 4~6](#); [Luke 24:36~53](#)

When the horrors of war visited the civilians of Nanjing, China, women were not spared in the mounting violence and many were assaulted and killed. In this threatening environment, Minnie Vautrin took heroic measures to protect Chinese women from harm. Serving as a missionary teacher at Ginling College in Nanjing, Minnie cooperated with Chinese nationals, missionaries, surgeons, and business people and turned the college into a “safety zone,” a place of refuge for thousands of women and girls.

In the Bible, we learn that Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, were in need of some protection too. To survive as widows, they had to glean what they could from the harvested fields. As was the custom, Ruth sought a “kinsman redeemer.” This was a next of kin or close relative to her deceased husband who would marry her to continue the family line. Boaz was just such a man. He was touched by Ruth’s sacrificial care for Naomi and her desire to look for refuge in the Lord ([Ruth 2:12](#)). Boaz worked honorably to “redeem” Ruth and to make her his wife. He then provided for her and Naomi.

Our ultimate refuge is in the Lord Himself ([Ps. 46:1](#)). Yet He wants to use us as instruments to provide a “safety zone” for others.

Meditate: Thinking It Over In what ways can you meet the needs of others? Check with community ministries or a local church to see how they’re reaching out, and join in.

*Aphorism:*They truly love who show their love.

***May09(Wednesday),2012**{[John 19:25~30](#)}Key: When Jesus therefore saw His mother,

and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”([John 19:26](#))“**Tangible Love**”Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 7~9](#); [John 1:1~28](#)

A friend recalls: The Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland, houses a wonderful collection of ancient Bible fragments. One very small fragment is a portion of John 19. This piece of John’s gospel describes the moment, as Jesus was being crucified, when He spoke to His mother in a display of love and concern for her. The words are from verse 26, where we read, “When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’”

As I stared at that ancient fragment, it struck me afresh how tangible Jesus’ love was for His mother and friend. With clear words He let the world know of His love and affection by showing His concern that Mary be cared for by His friend John when He was gone. Hanging on the cross, Jesus said to John, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home” (v.27).

I think that today, on this Mother’s Day, would be a wonderful time to declare publicly your love for your mom if you still have her—or to give thanks to the Lord for her if she is no longer with you. Then show in some tangible ways how much you love her and how much she has meant to you.

Meditate: Since this priceless gift God gave us Must from us one day depart, Lavish her with love and kindness, Real true love, with all your heart.

*Aphorism:*God bless my mother; all I am or hope to be I owe to her.

***May10(Thursday),2012**{[Exodus 25:1~9](#)}Key: Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#))“**A Little Piece Of Heaven**”Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 10~12](#); [John 1:29~51](#)

A friend recalls:A couple of weeks ago my wife met a woman who needed a ride. She sensed that this could be from God, so she agreed to take her to her destination. During the ride, the woman revealed to my wife that she was a believer but she struggled with drug addiction. My wife listened to and talked with this hurting woman. As she gave her hope for a better tomorrow, I believe that the woman experienced in some small way a little piece of heaven on earth.

When God instructed Moses to build the tabernacle according to His specifications, it was so that God’s people would sense His presence. I like to think of it as a little piece of heaven on earth. The temple was a physical example of God’s presence on earth also (1 Kings 5–8). The purpose of these holy places was for God to dwell among His people. This was God’s plan when Jesus, the perfect temple, “tabernacled” among us ([John 1:14](#)).

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers ([John 14:16~17](#)), so that we would be God’s tabernacles and temples in the world ([1 Cor. 3:16](#); [6:19](#)). As God’s representatives of His presence, let’s find ways to bring the peace and hope of heaven to others on earth.

Meditate: For Further Thought Ask God to use you in the lives of others and to show you some ways to apply this devotional at work, in your home, and in your neighborhood.

*Aphorism:*A Christian who is willing to do little things for others can do great things for the Lord.

***May11(Friday),2012**{[Ephesians 6:1~6](#)}Key: Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.[\(Ephesians 6:6\)](#)“**Dilbert**”Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 13~14](#); [John 2](#)

Cartoonist Scott Adams has become famous for his humorous cartoon strip “Dilbert.”

He also wrote a book in the 1990s called *The Dilbert Principle*. In it he mocks technology, leadership fads, and incompetent managers. Many laugh out loud at the connections the book makes with their own work-a-day world.

Regarding employee laziness and deceit, the author writes: “When it comes to avoiding work, it is fair to say I studied with the masters. After nine years . . . I learned just about everything there is to know about looking busy without actually being busy.”

Believers, however, have a much higher calling when it comes to dealing with employers. In the Scriptures, we are encouraged to exhibit a respectful attitude toward those who supervise us: “Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” ([Eph. 6:5~6](#)).

The right work ethic begins with a heart of sincerity in which we consider Jesus Christ our employer. We please Him when we diligently serve our boss and others in the workplace.

Meditate: Whatever task you find to do, Regardless if it’s big or small, Perform it well, with all your heart, Because there’s One who sees it all.

Aphorism: No matter who your boss is, you are really working for God.

***May 12 (Saturday), 2012** {[Acts 6:1~7](#)} Key: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ([1 Peter 4:10](#)) “**The Boat**” Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 15~16](#); [John 3:1~18](#)

A group of teenagers on a ministry trip in Jamaica were enjoying some downtime with a game of Ultimate Frisbee. But when someone noticed that a boat had overturned off a nearby beach, the game ended and the teens eagerly rushed to the water to help.

There they found a small group of professional boat operators struggling with their craft—trying to turn it upright. That’s where the teens could help. They waded in, put their young strength to work, and together they were able to right the boat.

What happened that day in the Caribbean Sea reminds me of what can happen in the church. The “professionals,” the pastor and others who are trained to lead the church, face a task they can’t do alone. It’s often a struggle to get the work of the church done until laypeople join in and work alongside the leadership.

This was the situation in Acts 6. Some people in the church were being neglected, and the “professionals,” the apostles who were leading the church, realized they couldn’t do everything by themselves. Only when seven laypeople pitched in to help the leaders could the church proceed.

How can you come alongside your pastor and other leaders to help keep your church moving ahead?

Meditate: O Lord, help me in every way To have a faithful heart; Teach me to love and serve Your church, And always do my part.

Aphorism: Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect.

***May 13 (Sunday), 2012** {[Deut. 24:17~22](#)} Key: Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share. ([1 Timothy 6:18](#)) “**Don’t Forget**” Bible In One Year: [2 Kings 17~18](#); [John 3:19~38](#)

Some mornings as I leave for work, my wife says to me, “Don’t forget to . . .” Later in the day, she’ll phone me and ask, “Did you forget?”

We all have a tendency to forget. I think that may be why God repeats important truths

to us. Twice in Deuteronomy 24, the Lord reminded the Israelites that they were slaves in Egypt but they had been rescued and redeemed by Him (vv.18,22). Through Moses, He told them, “You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you from there” (v.18).

Because they had been redeemed, the Israelites had certain responsibilities that the Lord wanted them to remember. Moses said, “I command you to do this thing” (v.18). What was “this thing”? They were told to care for “the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow” (v.19). If part of the harvest was left in the fields, they were to leave it for these needy people. He reminds them of the people in verses 20 and 21 also.

We are redeemed people through Jesus’ death on the cross and His resurrection. We too are told numerous times to be willing to share with those in need. [Hebrews 13:16](#) says, “Do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Meditate: For Further Study Read the following Scriptures and determine how you might apply them to your life: [Romans 12:1~13](#); [1 Corinthians 12:1~11](#); [2 Corinthians 9:6~8](#); [Titus 3:14](#).

Aphorism: Getting gratifies, but sharing satisfies.