

Bible study for this week 7/16/12~7/22/12

***July 16 (Monday), 2012** { [1 Corinthians 4:1~5](#) } Key: Judge not, that you be not judged. ([Matthew 7:1](#)) “**Judge Not!**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 16–17 & Acts 20:1~16](#)

When Jesus commanded, “Judge not,” He was not implying that we should be naïve or imprudent. Of course we need to think critically and analytically in this world where we are often confronted with error and wrongdoing. Instead, He meant that we should not be condemning or accusing, a point Paul made eloquently: “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts” ([1 Cor. 4:5](#)).

Poet Robert Burns made a similar point, writing of those whose actions are in doubt: “One point must still be greatly dark—the [motive]. Why they do it.” No one knows another’s motives. God alone can bring to light what is hidden in darkness; He alone can expose the intentions of the heart.

Jesus knows the latent forces that motivate others: the cruel beginnings, the fear, the disappointment, the broken heart, the sin that is resisted. Moreover, He is working in every submissive heart to bring it to maturity. Thus in the end—quite often contrary to our expectations—He will bring praise to those He has brought to completion.

The Lord alone can try the heart. Until He returns, let’s ask Him to help us examine our own.

Meditate: “Condemn not, judge not”—not to man Is given his brother’s faults to scan; One task is yours, and one alone— To search out and subdue your own.

Aphorism: Be slow to judge others, but quick to judge yourself.

***July 17 (Tuesday), 2012** { [Titus 3:3~11](#) } Key: Abstain from every form of evil. ([1 Thessalonians 5:22](#)) “**Allergic To . . .**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 18–19 & Acts 20:17~38](#)

A friend recalls: One of our grandchildren is allergic to several kinds of foods. Milk, cheese, eggs, and ice cream are among the items she has to avoid. Even a small amount of these things is detrimental to her health.

She’s not alone in being required to avoid certain things in life. While her allergies are related to her physical well-being, each of us as believers in Jesus has dangers we need to stay away from to maintain spiritual health. Scripture gives us a clear indication of what we are “allergic to” spiritually.

Every kind of evil ([1 Thess. 5:22](#)). This should cause us to think about the choices we make, because taking part in what is clearly evil is not good for our spiritual vitality.

Foolish disputes and arguments ([2 Tim. 2:23](#); [Titus 3:9](#)). This takes discernment, for some arguments have merit in defending the faith. But those for which there is no answer or which have no bearing on truth only cause dissension.

Sexual immorality ([1 Thess. 4:3](#)). The Bible says that any sexual activity outside the boundaries of a marriage between a man and a woman is immoral ([Gen. 2:24](#); [Ex. 20:14](#); [1 Cor. 7:2](#); [Heb. 13:4](#)).

Are we willing to make the effort to steer clear of things we are spiritually “allergic to”?

Meditate: Today avoid sin’s tempting lures
And evil thoughts subdue,
Or sinful things may take control
And someday master you!

Aphorism: To avoid sin, nip it in the bud of temptation.

***July 18 (Wednesday), 2012** { [2 Timothy 4:6~22](#) } Key: I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ([2 Timothy 4:6](#)) “**A Last**

Farewell”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 20–22 & Acts 21:1~17](#)

After being diagnosed with terminal cancer, 47-year-old Randy Pausch returned to Carnegie Mellon University to deliver a final lecture to colleagues, students, and friends. The professor of computer science thought that perhaps 150 people might show up. Instead the 400~seat auditorium was packed. For an hour, Randy opened his heart to them in a humorous, insightful, and moving farewell that was focused more on living than dying. Within weeks, the videotaped lecture had been seen by millions on the Internet and later became the seed of a bestselling book. Those facing death often have an unusually clear perspective on what is truly important in life.

The apostle Paul’s last farewell has inspired countless followers of Christ through the centuries. “The time of my departure is at hand,” wrote Paul. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” ([2 Tim. 4:6~7](#)). Paul’s instruction to Timothy spans the ages to challenge us as well. The letter begins and ends with God’s grace (1:2; 4:22) and in between is a celebration of the unceasing faithfulness of God.

A message from the dying can give purpose to the living. Paul’s triumphant finale, “To Him be glory forever and ever” (4:18), is a message we can all live by.

Meditate: Do we live our lives for what will last Or for what will fade away? Are we striving for the world’s praise Or for Christ’s “well done” one day?

Aphorism: If we are ready to die, we are ready to live.

***July 19 (Thursday), 2012** {[Psalm 23](#)} Key: You are my hope, O Lord God; You are my trust from my youth. ([Psalm 71:5](#)) “**Hope**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 23–25 & Acts 21:18~40](#)

The ancient road from Jerusalem to Jericho is a narrow, treacherous path along a deep gorge in the Judean wilderness. Its name is Wadi Kelt, but it’s known as the valley of the shadow, for this is the location that inspired David’s 23rd Psalm. The place itself offers little reason to compose such a hopeful poem. The landscape is bleak, barren, and perilously steep. It’s a good place for thieves, but not for anyone else.

When David wrote, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil” (v.4), he was in a place where evil was an ever-present reality. Yet he refused to give in to fear. He wasn’t expressing hope that God would abolish evil so that he could pass through safely; he was saying that the presence of God gave him the confidence to pass through difficult places without fear of being deserted by Him. In another psalm, David said that the Lord was his hope (71:5).

Many claim to have hope, but only those whose hope is Christ can claim it with certainty. Hope comes not from strength, intelligence, or favorable circumstances, but from the Lord. As Maker of heaven and earth, He alone has the right to promise hope and the power to keep the promise.

Meditate: Our strength and hope is in the Lord— We rest secure in His sure Word; And though we’re tempted to despair We know we’re kept within His care.

Aphorism: Hope for the Christian is a certainty—because its basis is Christ.

***July 20 (Friday), 2012** {[2 Timothy 1:1~10](#)} Key: Bless the Lord, . . . who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies. ([Psalm 103:1,4](#)) “**Grace, Mercy, And Peace**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 26–28 & Acts 22](#)

The words *grace* and *peace* are found in all of Paul’s greetings in his New Testament letters to the churches. And in his letters to Timothy and Titus, he also includes *mercy*: “Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” ([2 Tim. 1:2](#)).

Let's examine each of these words.

Grace is what our holy God gives that we, as sinful people, don't deserve. In [Acts 17:25](#), we learn that "He gives to all life, breath, and all things." His gifts include our very next breath. Even in our darkest hour, strength is given by God so that we can endure.

Mercy is what God withholds that we do deserve. In [Lamentations 3:22](#), we read, "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed." Even when we're wayward, God gives time and help for us to turn back to Him.

Peace is what God brings to His people. Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you" ([John 14:27](#)). Even in the worst of times, we have inner tranquillity because our God is in control.

We can be encouraged that throughout our lives the Lord will give us the grace, mercy, and peace we need to live for Him.

Meditate: He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater, He sendeth more strength when the labors increase; To added affliction He addeth His mercy, To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

Aphorism: God's grace is immeasurable, His mercy is inexhaustible, His peace is inexpressible.

***July 21 (Saturday), 2012** { [John 1:10~18](#) } Key: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. ([John 1:14](#)) "**Bridging The Gap**" Bible In One Year: [Psalms 29-30 & Acts 23:1~15](#)

A friend recalls: When my kids were young, I thought they would be impressed with what few accomplishments I may have had—that they would read my books and be impressed by my speaking engagements. But then I discovered that they hadn't read any of my books and had no idea where I had been on a speaking gig. When my oldest son finally read one of my books, he told me that the only reason he read it was so that I would stop telling people that my children have never read my books!

Let's face it—for the most part, kids are not impressed with our accomplishments. So the only way to bridge the gap is to meet them where they are, to get into their world—like getting into a game of Chutes and Ladders or playing catch in the backyard.

Jesus did this with us. John said of Jesus, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" ([John 1:14](#)). In other words, He stooped down to our level when He came to this earth, which led to His greatest accomplishment of all: bridging the gap between His world and ours once and for all. Only then could we begin to understand how worthy He is of our utmost adoration and praise!

Meditate: Our Lord is worthy all our days Of all our love and highest praise; He died to take our sin and shame— Oh, bless the Savior's holy name!

Aphorism: Jesus bridged the gap between the infinite God and finite man.

***July 22 (Sunday), 2012** { [Numbers 8:23~26](#) } Key: They may minister with their brethren . . . to attend to needs. ([Numbers 8:26](#)) "**Don't Just Retire**" Bible In One Year: [Psalms 31-32 & Acts 23:16~35](#)

The first people to climb Mt. Everest, the world's highest mountain, were Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953. Hillary was just 33 years old. His feat afforded him fame, wealth, and the realization that he had already lived a remarkable life.

So, what did Hillary do for the next 55 years? Did he retire and rest on his laurels? Absolutely not.

Although Hillary had no higher mountains to climb, that didn't stop him. He achieved

other notable goals, including a concerted effort to improve the welfare of the Nepalese people living near Mt. Everest—a task he carried on until his death in 2008.

Did you know that God told the Levites to retire from their regular duties at age 50? ([Num. 8:24~25](#)). But He did not want them to stop helping others. He said that they should “minister with their brethren . . . to attend to needs” (v.26). We cannot take this incident as a complete teaching on retirement, but we can see a godly implication that continuing to serve others after our working days are over is a good idea.

Many people find that when they retire they have nothing meaningful to do with their time. But as the Levites and Sir Edmund Hillary did, we can refocus when we retire—giving of our time to help others.

Meditate: The Lord will give you help and strength For work He bids you do; Serve others from a heart of love Is what He asks of you.

Aphorism: Life takes on new meaning when we invest ourselves in others.