

Bible study for this week 8/06/12~8/12/12

***August 06(Monday),2012**{ [1 Peter 4:7~14](#)}Key: Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.([1 Peter 4:9](#))“**The Best Room**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 70~71; Romans 8:22~39](#)

A friend recalls: During a January research trip to Germany, I was dismayed to learn that we would be staying at a monastery. I pictured an austere place with no heat, cold stone floors, and hard beds. Instead, I found a warm, welcoming, comfortable room. My colleague said, “The monks believe in treating their guests as they would treat Christ.” Though they don’t live in such comfort themselves, they are content.

Robert Herrick, a 17th~century English poet, wrote: *Christ, He requires still, wheresoe’er He comes, To feed, or lodge, to have the best of rooms: Give Him the choice; grant Him the nobler part Of all the house: the best of all’s the heart.*

It may seem easier to welcome Christ into our heart than to open our life to others. Whether it’s a room in our home or time in our schedule, too often we treat people as intruders rather than guests.

The apostle Peter wrote: “Above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling” ([1 Peter 4:8~9](#)).

We honor Christ by giving Him the best room, our hearts, and by offering willing hospitality to others.

Meditate: I am Yours, Lord, yet teach me all it means, All it involves of love and loyalty, Holy service, full and glad surrender, And unreserved obedience unto Thee!

Aphorism: To know love, open your heart to Jesus. To show love, open your heart to others.

***August 07(Tuesday),2012**{ [Romans 9:1~5](#)}Key: I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh. ([Romans 9:3](#)) “**What’s It All About?**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 72~73; Romans 9:1~15](#)

Recently I was in a crowded shop~ ping area when I saw a woman plowing her way through the crowd. What intrigued me was the message on her T-shirt, which read in bold capital letters, IT’S ALL ABOUT ME. Her actions reinforced the words on her shirt.

I’m afraid she’s not alone. That message is declared by so many men and women today that it could be the motto of our modern world. For followers of Christ, however, that statement simply is not true. It is *not* all about us—it’s all about Jesus Christ and others.

The apostle Paul certainly felt the weight of this reality. He was so concerned that his fellow Israelites would know Christ that he said, “I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh” ([Rom. 9:3](#)). That is a remarkable statement! Far from thinking it was all about himself, Paul affirmed that he would willingly exchange his eternity for theirs.

Paul’s teaching is a refreshing reminder of self-sacrifice in a challenging world that is destructively self-centered. The question we must ask is: Is it all about me? Or is our life about Jesus Christ and the people He came to reach?

Think about it. What’s it all about?

Meditate: Others, Lord, yes others,May this my motto be.Help me to live for others That I may live for Thee.

Aphorism:Our lives should be marked by love for Christ and others—not obsession with self.

***August 08(Wednesday),2012**{ [Exodus 8:16~19](#)}Key: Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.([Hebrews 3:8](#))“A Gnat Lesson”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 74~76; Romans 9:16~33](#)

During one of my daily walks, I inadvertently walked through a small tornado of little insects. I didn't think much of it at the time, but later on I found all kinds of bites on my ankles and arms. It seems I had walked through a swarm of gnats, whose bites led to uncomfortable itching and sores.

This experience gave me a new perspective on the plague of gnats that God visited upon Egypt when Pharaoh would not free the Israelites. The Hebrew word translated “lice” in [Exodus 8:16~18](#) can also mean “gnats” or “mosquitoes.” Because the insects are compared to the sand of the desert, a swarm of gnats seems the most likely. The pagan priests of Pharaoh who prided themselves in their frequent washings and shavings were now covered with numerous insect bites. God had designed this plague to get Pharaoh to repent and let Israel go, but instead he hardened his heart.

Is God trying to get your attention through some circumstances in your life? Is He trying to persuade you to get back in step with Him? ([Gal. 5:25](#)). We should resist the urge to harden our hearts. But let's instead submit to God ([James 4:6~8](#)) and ask Him what spiritual lessons He wants us to learn.

Meditate:The sun that hardens clay to brick Can soften wax to shape and mold;So too life's trials will harden some, While others purify as gold.

Aphorism:God makes us miserable through conviction to make us joyful through confession.

***August 09(Thursday),2012**{ [1 Peter 5:1~7](#)}Key: Remember those . . . who have spoken the Word of God to you, whose faith follow.([Hebrews 13:7](#))“**The Life That Matters**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 77~78 & Romans 10](#)

Isaac Hann was a little-known pastor who served a small church in Loughwood, England, in the mid~18th century. At the close of his ministry, the membership of the church numbered 26 women and 7 men. And only 4 of the men attended with any regularity.

In this age of mass media and mega-churches, who would consider this a successful work? In our world today, Isaac Hann would be considered one of those pastors who never quite “made it.” He certainly wouldn't have been invited to speak at pastors' conferences, nor would he have written articles on church growth.

Yet, when he died at 88 his parishioners placed a plaque on the wall of their meeting house that remains to this day. It reads in part:

Few ministers so humble were, yet few so much admired: Ripened for heaven by grace divine, like autumn fruit he fell; Reader think not to live so long, but seek to live as well.

[First Peter 5:5~6](#) comes to mind: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” Reverend Isaac Hann “made it big” in a way that matters—humility before God and a reward in heaven. We can too.

Meditate:True greatness does not come to those Who strive for worldly fame, It lies instead with those who choose To serve in Jesus' name.

Aphorism:Humility is the recipe for success.

***August 10(Friday),2012**{ [Revelation 21:1~5](#)}Key: There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

[\(Revelation 21:4\)](#)“Now Is Not Forever”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 79~80; Romans 11:1~18](#)

Think about how good it will feel when it stops hurting,” said my father. I received this advice from Dad often while I was growing up, usually after some minor bump or scrape had resulted in a major dramatic reaction. At the time, the advice didn’t help. I was incapable of focusing on anything other than my pain, and loud wails accompanied by buckets of tears seemed the only appropriate response.

Through the years, however, Dad’s advice has pulled me through some truly miserable situations. Whether it was the pain of a broken heart or the misery of a drawn-out illness, I would remind myself: *Now is not forever*.

The confidence we have as Christians is that God has something good planned for us. Suffering was not part of His original act of creation, but it serves as a temporary reminder of what happens in a world where God’s order has been broken. It also motivates us to spread the word about God’s plan to redeem the world from the suffering caused by sin.

Although we cannot avoid pain and disappointment ([John 16:33](#)), we know that it’s only temporary. Some sorrow will be relieved in this life, but all of it will be relieved when God finally and firmly establishes His new heaven and new earth ([Rev. 21:1](#)). Now is not forever.

Meditate: We’ll catch the broken thread again, And finish what we here began; Heaven will the mysteries explain, And then, ah, then, we’ll understand.

Aphorism:The gains of heaven will more than compensate for the losses of earth.
*August 11(Saturday),2012{ [1 Cor. 10:23–11:1](#) }Key: Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. ([1 Corinthians 11:1](#))“Copy Me”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 81~83; Romans 11:19~36](#)

A friend recalls: As we sat at the table one day last week, my oldest son began protesting about his little sister “always” copying him. When she imitates his laugh or eats her French fries before her burger like he does, it annoys him. My wife and I tried to get him to realize that he has an opportunity to influence her by setting a good example.

Unlike my son, Paul invited others to copy his example ([1 Cor. 11:1](#)). In this verse, he concluded his discussion from chapter 10 about the Corinthians loving others enough to limit their freedom. He said that when they were invited to a nonbeliever’s home for dinner, they were free to eat what was set before them (v.27). But if their freedom to eat the meat offered to idols caused another believer to question whether or not what they were doing was right, they were to limit their freedom for the good of the “weaker” believer (v.28).

Paul encouraged the people to follow his example in this matter, in the same way he followed Christ’s example. Paul did not seek his own good, but the good of others by imitating Jesus’ example of love, unity, acceptance, and sacrifice. In the same way, we are to follow Jesus’ example so closely that we can say with confidence to our brothers and sisters, “Copy me as I copy Christ.”

Meditate:Show me the way, Lord, let my light shine As an example of good to mankind. Help them to see the patterns of Thee, Shining in beauty, lived out in me.

Aphorism:Live a life worth imitating by imitating Christ.
*August 12(Sunday),2012{ [1 John 4:7–5:1](#) }Key: We, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.([Romans 12:5](#))“Cherished Connections”Bible

In One Year: [Psalms 84~86](#); [Romans 12](#)

A friend recalls: When I heard that David was in the office for a board meeting, I was excited. He and I had a mutual friend, Sharon, who had died several years earlier. We had a few minutes to reminisce about her and her love for life and God. What a delight to connect with someone who has loved someone you have loved! There's a special bond because you love to talk about that cherished person.

Those who know Jesus Christ as their Savior have even stronger ties. We are forever connected to Him and to one another. "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another," Paul says in [Romans 12:5](#). We've been "born of God," and we love those who are "begotten of Him" ([1 John 5:1](#)).

When we get together with fellow believers, we have the opportunity to talk about the one we love—Christ—and of the love, forgiveness, and grace we have experienced in Him because of His death and resurrection (4:9~10). At such times, we can encourage each other to continue to trust Him and spur one another on to be faithful in our walk with Him.

This coming Sunday and throughout the week, let's remind fellow believers of all that Jesus has done and of how truly wonderful He is.

Meditate: We Christians have a kinship with All others who believe, And from that bond of faith and love A mutual strength receive.

Aphorism: The more you love Jesus, the more you'll talk about Him.