

Bible study for this week 8/27/12~9/02/12

***August 27(Monday),2012**{[Matthew 15:7~20](#)}Key: Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way. ([Psalm 119:37](#))“**Both Near And Far**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 120~122; 1 Corinthians 9](#)

A friend recalls:Everything was quiet in our yard. While I worked at the patio table, our dog, Maggie, lay nearby in the grass. A slight rustling of dry leaves changed everything. Maggie made her move, and suddenly she was circling a tree, where a woodchuck clung tightly to the trunk.

Maggie came when I called, but I couldn't get her to look at me. Her neck was in a rigidly fixed position. Although she was near me physically, her thoughts and desires were with that woodchuck.

Maggie and the woodchuck remind me of how quickly I become preoccupied with things that take my eyes off Jesus. Old temptations, new responsibilities, or ongoing desires for possessions or pleasure can quickly divert my attention from the One who knows and wants what is best for me.

A similar spiritual condition afflicted the Pharisees ([Matt. 15:8~9](#)). They were serving in the temple and instructing others, but their hearts were far from God.

We too can teach and serve at church but be far from God. Even our religious activity becomes meaningless when our focus is not on Jesus. But if we stop being “stiff-necked” ([Acts 7:51](#)), the Lord can turn our eyes away from worthless things and revive our hearts.

Meditate:Some people follow Jesus Christ, Then obstacles get in their way; But if they'll focus on the Lord They won't be led astray.

Aphorism:When Christ is the center of our life, all else comes into proper focus.

***August 28(Tuesday),2012**{[John 8:1~11](#)}Key: Whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak. ([John 12:50](#))“**The Slowness Of Wisdom**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 123~125; 1 Corinthians 10:1~18](#)

When the Pharisees came to Jesus with the woman caught in adultery and asked Him what should be done with her, He knelt for a moment and scribbled in the sand ([John 8:6~11](#)). We have no idea what He wrote. But when they continued asking Him, Jesus responded in one short sentence: “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first” (v.7). His few words accomplished much in confronting the Pharisees with their own sin, for they walked away one by one. Even today those words resound around the world.

Jesus had such a closeness to and dependence on His Father that He said of Himself, “Whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak” (12:50). Oh, that we had such a relationship with our Father that we knew how to respond with His wisdom!

Perhaps it begins with obeying James' challenge to be “swift to hear, slow to speak” (1:19). This is not the slowness of ignorance, emptiness, timidity, guilt, or shame. But the slowness of wisdom born of dwelling quietly on the Lord and His thoughts.

We're often told to stop and think before we speak. But I think we should take it much further and live a life where we're always listening for God's wisdom.

Meditate: Lord, grant that we may hear You speak; For truth within our hearts we seek; For unto Christ we would be true And know what He Himself would do.

Aphorism:Listen to God before you speak for God.

***August 29(Wednesday),2012**{[Psalm 146](#)}Key: While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. ([Psalm 146:2](#))“**How Can We Keep**

From Singing?” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 126~128; 1 Corinthians 10:19~33](#)

Robert Lowry felt that preaching would be his greatest contribution in life. However, this 19th-century pastor is best remembered for his gospel music and hymns. Lowry composed words or music for more than 500 songs, including “Christ Arose,” “I Need Thee Every Hour,” and “Shall We Gather at the River?”

In 1860, as the United States teetered on the brink of civil war, Lowry wrote these enduring words that focus not on threatening circumstances but on the unchanging Christ:

What though my joys and comforts die? The LORD my Savior liveth; What though the darkness gather round! Songs in the night He giveth: No storm can shake my inmost calm While to that refuge clinging; Since Christ is LORD of Heav'n and earth, How can I keep from singing?

Lowry’s confidence in God during difficult times echoes the psalmist’s words: “Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. . . . Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God” ([Ps. 146:3~5](#)).

Meditate: Whether we react to life with faith or fear depends on our focus. Knowing that “the LORD shall reign forever” (v.10), how can we keep from singing?

Aphorism: If you keep in tune with Christ, you can sing even in the dark.

***August 30(Thursday),2012{[Acts 17:22~32](#)}**Key: As I was . . . considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To The Unknown God. ([Acts 17:23](#))“**Common Language**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 129~131; 1 Corinthians 11:1~16](#)

During the high schoolers’ spring ministry trip to Jamaica, they visited a home for troubled teens who had run afoul of the law or whose families could not handle them. This was not a comfortable situation for the kids from either culture. What would they say? How would they connect?

It didn’t take long to find out. Minutes after they arrived, a soccer match began as a number of the US students engaged some of the Jamaican teens in spirited competition.

The soccer match was a great icebreaker as the kids kicked the ball around and got to know each other. After the game, conversation was easier and friendships were established more quickly because of a common interest.

In Acts 17, the apostle Paul demonstrated how to break through barriers and establish dialogue. He talked with the Athenians about something of common interest— worship. In a similar way, we can use sports talk with a co-worker or lawn conversation with a neighbor. The possibilities are endless.

To reach out to people who need to hear about God’s love, look for common language—and watch the barriers fall.

Meditate: The Spirit of God can reach my neighbor, Providing the gift of salvation, If I am ready to open the way By starting a good conversation.

Aphorism: God’s love can break down barriers.

***August 31(Friday),2012{[Ephesians 2:1~10](#)}**Key: God, who is rich in mercy, . . . made us alive together with Christ. ([Ephesians 2:4~5](#))“**Rescued**” Bible In One Year: [Psalms 132~134; 1 Corinthians 11:17~34](#)

Lauren nervously yet excitedly hopped into a one-person kayak for a white-water rafting experience. After strapping herself in, she headed down the river with a group of kayakers and guides.

Lauren became even more nervous when she laid eyes on the falls ahead. Suddenly, as

the kayak tossed and turned in the white water, it flipped over. She had been instructed on how to get out quickly if this were to happen. But she became disoriented as she hung upside-down in the water and couldn't find the release bar to get out. She knew she couldn't hold her breath much longer and thought she would soon be in the Lord's presence. Then help came just in time and she was saved. Lauren was very grateful for her rescue from physical death.

An even greater rescue has been provided for us—rescue from spiritual death has come in the Person of Jesus Christ. While we were drowning in sin, God sent His Son Jesus to bring life through His own death and resurrection ([Rom. 5:8](#); [Eph. 2:5](#)). He did so because He is “rich in mercy” and because of “His great love” ([Eph. 2:4](#)).

Out of gratefulness, we can help others by telling them of the Rescuer they so desperately need.

Meditate: Rescue the perishing, care for the dying, Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave; Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen, Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

Aphorism: Those who've been rescued should be ready and willing to help in the rescue of others.

***September 01(Saturday),2012{ [John 5:31~40](#) }** Key: You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ([John 5:39](#))“**The Person Of The Bible**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 135~136](#); [1 Corinthians 12](#)

During a church leaders' conference at Seattle Pacific University, noted pastor Earl Palmer recalled an experience that shaped his teaching and preaching for half a century.

As a seminary student, he led a Bible study where he encouraged the participants to consider the words of Scripture. “I became convinced,” Palmer said, “that if I could get someone to look at the text, sooner or later the text would win their respect, and it would always point them to its living center: Jesus Christ. And when Jesus Christ has your respect, that's not very many inches away from faith.”

Jesus told a group of religious leaders, who were well acquainted with the Old Testament but violently opposed to Him, “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life” ([John 5:39~40](#)).

It requires an open heart as well as an inquiring mind to study the Bible. When we discover Jesus as the Person to whom the entire Bible points, we must then decide how to respond to Him.

There is great joy for all who will open their hearts to Christ and find life in Him.

Meditate: God's Word is like refreshing rain That waters crops and seed; It brings new life to open hearts, And meets us in our need.

Aphorism: The written Word leads us to Christ the living Word.

***September 02(Sunday),2012{ [Psalm 46](#) }** Key: Be still, and know that I am God. ([Psalm 46:10](#))“**Silence, Please!**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 137~139](#); [1 Corinthians 13](#)

Our world has become increasingly noisy. But according to a news report, science has found a way to achieve absolute silence: “Scientists have shown off the blueprint for an ‘acoustic cloak,’ which could make objects impervious to sound waves. The technology, outlined in the *New Journal of Physics*, could be used to build sound-proof homes, advanced concert halls, or stealth warships.”

When we seek out a quiet place for devotional time with God, we may wish we had an “acoustic cloak.” But even if we could silence all external sound, the internal noises of

worry would still reverberate in our minds. We are told: “Be still, and know that I am God” ([Ps. 46:10](#)). But how do we calm our hearts in practical terms?

God understands our dilemma and has provided His own “acoustic cloak” to quiet our hearts. It involves exchanging our cares for His peace. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” ([Phil. 4:6~7](#)).

As we place our concerns in God’s capable hands, we find a quietness that only He can provide.

Meditate: Be still and know that He is God For pathways steep and rough; Not what He brings but what He is Will always be enough.

Aphorism: God gives peace to those who are quiet before Him.