

A Verse to Live by

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”

1 Peter 3:15

April Prayer Focus

Let's pray this pandemic ends soon and a hedge of protection around those vulnerable to getting infected.. We also need to remember those being affected financially. Let's pray that the church wisely uses this as an opportunity to serve the community and for the courage to boldly share the Gospel - the reason for our hope.

Life Application Challenge

A good challenge for each of us this month would be to share the Gospel with one person. This is a wonderful opportunity to share with others where your peace and hope come from. Let's each try to live out these verses from Colossians 4:5-6: “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone,” .

Recommended Scripture Reading

Matthew 26-28

Romans 5 Paul wrote the book of Romans with the theme largely throughout is the salvation offered through Jesus Christ. In chapter 5 he explains the peace and hope we get from being a child of God, as well as the justification (making us righteous in the sight of God) and grace offered through Jesus. This is where our hope comes from!

Good Good
Father
Psalm 34:8

Church On Fire!

Eleventh Street Church of God | April 2020 Prayer Newsletter

Easter is one of the most meaningful holidays for Christians. Indeed, Jesus Christ's whole life was important! His birth was important to bring hope and fulfill the prophecies written about Him. His life was important because it revealed who He is and His power, and His death and resurrection made it possible for us to have eternal life with God. Sin separates us from God, which is why we needed the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. His resurrection destroyed the power death and Hell have over us and we no longer have to live in fear of the afterlife - Romans 8:38-39 "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." And now in light of the current global pandemic, the promise of eternal life with God means even more. That is too great not to share! I pray that the fear of this pandemic does not overshadow the joy we have in the resurrected Savior. It will be on all our minds but it does not have to dominate our thoughts.

This pandemic is a crucial time to share the hope of the Easter story with a world lost and hurting. People are scared, and for good reason. If they do not have a Savior, death is terrifying and this pandemic has all of us thinking about our own mortality. But sharing the Gospel message can be quite intimidating. The story of Esther's bravery facing a life and death situation is a great example for us now in the midst of a global crisis. Her husband, King Ahasuerus, had planned the destruction of all the Jews. Mordecai, her uncle, implored her to beg the king for mercy. She was fearful to approach the king; but Mordecai's advice to her: "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14) Though the situations are different, facing possible death is the common factor. Just as Esther overcame her fear of asking the king for mercy, we need to overcome our intimidation or fear of sharing the Gospel with others. Esther's bravery to speak up meant the salvation of the Jews from physical death, and our speaking up can mean eternal life for others. If we pass up opportunities to do this, God will send others to share the Gospel message. Tragically though, that may mean those individuals will live longer without hope; they will have to deal with fear and the trials in this life on their own. Even worse, they may die never giving their hearts to Jesus. If God has put someone on your heart and in your life, please don't pass that up. They need you - God placed you there for that person, "for such a time as this". It is not a coincidence God put them in your life; you have something that will resonate with that person. We all at one time lived without hope and I wish that on no one. Do not be concerned about how they will respond, that is between them and God. We are reassured "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28) Despite their reaction, you will be blessed. We simply cannot go wrong obeying God! He has our backs in every situation,

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (Matt. 5:11) Even if we face rejection and persecution we still have the hope of these promises. We have so much to gain by sharing the Gospel, helping those in need and showing love - "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38) Just as Esther approached the king only after prayer and fasting; pray that God gives you the words to say and that their hearts are receptive.

There is no better gift you can give a person than to share about Jesus. If no one shared about Jesus with you where would you be today? I know I would still be consumed in darkness and self destruction. I thank God for the Christians that were brave enough to reach out to me. I was angry at God, mean to Christians, active in the occult - just a mess. I was the type of person that reviled and persecuted Christians. Yet God, in His infinite love sent several good hearted Christians willing to obey His call and talk to me. Eventually that led me to pray the sinner's prayer. Anyone is a potential Christian!

I implore you, now more than ever, not to let fear keep you from sharing the Gospel. There are so many broken people who need Jesus. "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7) If you are saved and still living in fear and doubt -- it's because you don't really know who you are! In 1 Peter 2:9 we are reminded of our true identity, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." You are a child of the Almighty God and Creator of this universe. You are His planned creation; He wanted you! You are not here by accident, you were born within this generation to contribute something significant. Jesus did not die and rise again for you to live in fear and doubt. He wants you freed from that. He proved that nothing, not fear, death, starvation or anything can separate us from God's unfailing love. Don't let the concern of messing up hold you back from doing God's will, just ask for His guidance and wisdom in all things. We have this guarantee, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32) Our limitations cannot limit a limitless God. "But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" (Matt. 19:26) So no longer listen to the counsel of fear and go forth boldly proclaiming the Good News!

I will end with this prayer for each of you from 3 John 1:2, "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."

Watching God Work,
Carolyn Abel