

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of June 3, 2018

**THEME: "Family of God"
HOUSEHOLD OF GOD**

Sunday Read Ephesians 2:12-22

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." There are four descriptions in that one verse: strangers, foreigners, citizens, and household. Two of them are not so comfortable; the other two are enviable. That is particularly true when it has eternal implications, as is the case when it concerns the kingdom of God! Being a stranger and foreigner to the kingdom of heaven are not attractive identifications! Actually, there is nothing worse. It means life on earth is reduced to temporal pursuits only, and an eternity in hell. The word strangers has the implication of not belonging; foreigners, from a different country. On the contrary, citizens have rights and responsibilities different from visitors and immigrants; household is the place of the most personal relationships. As enjoyable as it is to be in a happy home on earth in a land of freedom, it is far greater when the eternal home is as a citizen in God's Kingdom! That is the importance of entering into a relationship with the Lord Jesus. The greatest offer in life is that made in Revelation 3:20 where Jesus, the Savior of the world, says this: *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in."* Jesus uses our knowledge of the physical world to explain a spiritual truth. We all can identify with hearing a knock on the door; it demands a reaction. We can ignore the knock and hope it goes away; we can open the door and acknowledge the knocker, or we can open the door and invite the knocker in. Those are the options when Jesus tries to get our attention. Ignoring Him or acknowledging Him only is a mistake. Asking Him in means life abundant on earth and a home in heaven forever!

CHILDREN OF GOD

Monday Read John 1:12-13

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The benefits of placing our faith in the Lord Jesus to be our Savior are too numerous to count; but the one mentioned in this verse of Scripture must be near the top: a child of God. What could be better than having God as our Father in heaven? Being in an earthly family is the best of human relationships; and being in God's heavenly family makes everything even better! Our Heavenly Father is omnipotent; nothing is too hard for Him! Our Heavenly Father is omnipresent; we are never alone! Our Heavenly Father is omniscient; He knows everything we are experiencing! And He is there to provide help! Just knowing He is there is plenty! Being in the household of God brings all the comforts of a perfect home. There truly is no place like home! That is true about our earthly homes, and it is reassuring for us when life on earth is over. We live now for the glory of God with the anticipation of spending an eternity in His presence! Death is not so much a separation as a homegoing. Is there anything better than having the Almighty Creator, the Ruler of Nature and Nations, and the Supreme Judge of the world as a Father? That is the joy of having Christ as Lord!

JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST

Tuesday Read Romans 8:14-17

"And if children, then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ..." Being a child of God means that we are among the beneficiaries of the estate of God. Being named in the will of those on earth is a blessing; being a joint heir with Christ supersedes anything an earthly will can provide! No matter how wealthy may be the person making earthly wills, none can come close to providing what we gain by being joint-heirs with Christ. And unlike earthy wills, we do not have to be separated from the one making the will to gain the blessings, being joint heirs with Christ in the will of our Heavenly Father actually brings us in a closer relationship with God more and more after life on earth. That which we gain as joint heirs with Christ have eternal value never to

diminish! Jesus placed an emphasis on this relationship with God when He taught us to pray in Matthew 6:9. Remember how He taught us to address God: *"Our Father which art in heaven..."* Don't you love that Jesus said: *"OUR Father!"*

ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Wednesday Read I Corinthians 2:9-10

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." The biggest difference between people who have placed their faith in Christ and those who haven't is being in the family of God and spiritually alive with an eternal perspective in life or having a temporal perspective only. This gives believers, particularly if they read the Bible regularly, insight into what God is doing on His planet earth. It is what is referred to Biblically as living in the light as opposed to unbelievers who are living in spiritual darkness, blinded to what God is doing! It is not in the sinful heart of man to understand fully until his heart is cleansed by the blood of Christ upon accepting Him as Savior. That decision to receive Christ is what Jesus in John 3:3-7 calls being born again, a birth of the Spirit, which opens up the whole spiritual world to a person. And that is the only way to have an understanding of things that are beyond the mind of man. Unbelief leaves people wide open to human speculation as to the origin of things as well as to the absolutes of determining what is right and what is wrong in terms of human behaviors: very dangerous indeed!

ETERNAL GOALS

Thursday Read John 6:27-29

"Labor not for the meat that perishes, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life." This admonition of the Lord Jesus to His people is very important for believers to follow to assure them of life abundant. Obeying this command makes those things that seem only to have temporal value take on eternal meaning. Going on the job daily not only gives the satisfaction of doing a job to earn a living, it well could be a means of earning eternal reward by our approach to the work and the sensitivity toward our colleagues. Paul underlined this instruction of our Lord when He said this in Colossians 3:1-2: *"Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."* That seems to be a follow up of what our Lord told His people in Matthew 6:33 in establishing priorities in living: *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."* That is not only valuable advice for financial management, but is also great advice for life management!

LIVING LETTERS

Friday Read II Corinthians 3:2-3

"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." It may well be that the most effective witness is by being a shining light without even saying a word. The conduct of our lives will likely open the door to conversing with our lips. As a matter of fact, if the life does not live up to the testimony of our lips, the sharing may do more harm than good, because it comes across as hypocritical. Believers are instructed both to go into the world and come out of the world in Mark 16:15 and II Corinthians 6:17. What may appear to be contradictory commands are not at all; they simply express the fundamental two goals of the ministry of God's Church: edification of believers and evangelization of the lost. The lifestyle of believers in their associations with unbelievers should prompt questions that open the door for sharing a witness for our Lord! Let us be alert and ready!

LIVING LIGHTS

Saturday Read Matthew 5:14-16

"Ye are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven." Jesus instructed believers, in Acts 1:8, to

be *"His witnesses."* In I John 1:7, we are told to "walk in the light." Others read our lives, and if they see joy and peace exude from our lives, that may bring glory to God, as Jesus mentioned in today's Bible reading. Working in such a way that pleases God will certainly make the employer happy, giving a double reason for believers to enjoy life! Practicing a Biblical lifestyle will likely prompt questions from unbelievers, opening the door for a witness for which a believer should be ready as we are told in I Peter 3:15: *"Be ready to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason..."* That is real joy!