

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of February 24, 2019**

**THEME: "Jesus, on Loyalty"  
THE QUESTION**

**Sunday .....Read John 6:59-60**

*"Will ye go away also?"* This question Jesus asked may well be the saddest and most tragic statements in all of the Bible. It is hard to imagine that people would be leaving Jesus when He was on earth. Was He doing something wrong that caused them to leave? Should He change His message? Should He have altered the way He was doing things? Obviously not! Jesus was perfect! The fact that people were leaving Jesus was because of their own problems. It was those leaving who had to make changes in their thinking to get it right. It would be interesting to see what those leaving Jesus would give as the specifics of their decision to leave Him. The truth is that the people leaving Jesus had a problem, not our Savior. The same is true today; I imagine those leaving today would give similar criticisms. The force behind people leaving Christ is still another indication that we are engaged in spiritual warfare, with the devil trying to counteract the efforts of Christians to honor God. People are blinded to spiritual truth and the devil wants to keep them blinded and prevent them from becoming followers of the Light of the world and to enjoy the light in God's holy Word. Those who may be leaving churches today may be the problem. Now if a church has deviated from the teaching of God's Word for whatever their reasons, then they are the problem; but if a church is staying true to God and yielding to the Spirit, then the problem lies with those leaving, not the church. We should not allow the departure of some to cause us to cater to them rather than be led by the Spirit. Jesus understands the sadness of some leaving, but He did stay true to the mission for which God had sent Him to earth.

**CONSCIOUS DECISION**

**Monday .....Read Revelation 3:20-22**

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in."* It is God's desire that all people choose to have eternal life by entering into a relationship with the Lord Jesus as their personal Savior. We know that from the truth of II Peter 3:9: *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* There is no person who has a legitimate excuse for failing to come to know Jesus. In today's Bible reading, we see that God makes an effort to get everyone's attention: a spiritual knock on their door. He does it in different ways for different people, but we can be sure that God tries to get everyone's personal attention. The psalmist pointed out in the 19<sup>th</sup> Psalm that the *"heavens declare the glory of God...there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."* Looking at the heavens is a knock on the door! God has placed in every person an awareness of Himself, and that the creation is His handiwork. We know that from what God tells us in Romans 1:19-20. *"The truth of God is manifest in them: for He hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal Godhead: so they are without excuse."* You can better believe that God, with His perfect foreknowledge, will send one of His ambassadors to share the gospel if He knows that heart will respond to the specific details of the blood of Christ. One look at the eunuch in Acts 8, the persecutor in Acts 9, and the Romans centurion in Acts 10 confirms that. God sent a messenger to them to share the gospel account of Jesus to bring them into the family of God. Jesus knocks on the door of hearts with a desire that people will receive Him into their lives!

**CONSISTENT DEVOTION**

**Tuesday .....Read Luke 9:23-26**

*"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."* Jesus does not present a rose-colored picture about the decision to follow Him. He makes it very clear that to become one of His means there will be some sacrifice and suffering. There is a spiritual war going on here on God's earth, a war between God and the devil that had its beginning in the Garden of Eden when the devil attacked Adam and Eve. That war will continue until the Lord Jesus comes back to earth to establish His kingdom. For now, Christians can expect opposition, and Jesus forewarns us by telling us that to live for the glory of God means to be willing to deny ourselves some of those things that would get in the way of being His servant. Jesus mentions that there would be a cross to bear implying that we would face some of the same opposition from those who are still in the camp of the devil because of their unbelief. God, however, remains faithful, and

our loyalty will be rewarded at the final judgment. Our devotion to our Lord will be worth it all. Could there possibly be any greater blessing than to some day hear Jesus say: *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant?"*

### **PERSONAL COMMITMENT**

**Wednesday .....Read Philippians 1:21-26**

*"For me to live is Christ."* This comment of Paul ought to be the claim of every Christian! Really, once we have accepted Christ as Savior, our whole purpose in life has taken on new meaning; we are now living to bring glory to God, to be the light of the world around us. Everything we now do should be with the mind set mentioned in Colossians 3:23: *"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men."* Indeed we should do all that we do for the glory of God. In order to do that, it is necessary to make a daily commitment to God every morning. That is best done by starting a day with prayer and Bible reading. Schedules may dictate the amount of time spent. If it seems too short, there is still the whole day to come back. If schedules allow more time, it is time worth spending! Yes, it is a good thing to make a total commitment of our lives at some turning point: an evangelistic meeting, a summer retreat, or alone somewhere at some time; but it is important to make that same commitment every day of our lives. To meet with God in the morning brings our relationship into the conscious level. Reading the word is feeding our spirit, the part of us that is in fellowship with God. That is as vital, if not moreso, than feeding our bodies so they have the nourishment necessary for what lies ahead on that day. Remember the words of Jesus cited yesterday in Luke 9:23: *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross DAILY, and follow me."*

### **GODLY WISDOM**

**Thursday .....Read Luke 12:8-12**

*"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."* The moment that people receive Jesus by asking Him to forgive their sin and to be their Savior, they are considered the recipients of a new birth, a spiritual birth. The dead spirit, with which our babies are born because of their inherited sin nature, is regenerated by the presence and power of the Spirit. Our bodies are the dwelling place of God the Holy Spirit from the moment of that decision on. With that presence of the Holy Spirit, believers have the power and wisdom to live for the glory of God. It is the Holy Spirit within us who gives us the words to say insofar as we keep ourselves in fellowship with Him. That means we must not grieve or quench the Spirit, the warnings given to us in Ephesians 4:30 and I Thessalonians 5:19: *"Grieve not the Spirit...Quench not the Spirit."* Some of the details in those passages tell us that things that hinder the Spirit's power in us are such things as anger and bitterness, unkindness and an unthankful and unforgiving spirit. Evidences of a Spirit-filled life are a heart of rejoicing, a consistent prayer life, and abstaining from all appearances of evil. The benefit is God-given wisdom.

### **GOD'S HANDIWORK**

**Friday ..... Read Ephesians 2:8-10**

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* When I think of this statement of fact to describe all believers, I think of the teaching in Isaiah 64:8 and Romans 9:21: *"But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are the work of thy hand...Hath not the potter power over the clay?"* Each and every believer is a special project of God to make of them what He had planned for them to be and to do. He will use everything to mold us into the image of Christ: whether it be what we consider to be good or bad. That is the assurance we have in the truth of Romans 8:28-29. *"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose...to be conformed to the image of His Son."* God uses everything to make us more Christlike.

### **PERFECTION**

**Saturday .....Read Jude 1:24-25**

*"Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."* Imagine that: imagine being presented faultless at the throne of God! How can that be? We all have faults! Only the Lord Jesus is perfect! That is why the truth of II Corinthians 5:21 is so precious: *"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."* When Christ shed His blood and

went to the cross, He took upon Himself the sins of the world and paid the penalty with His death. Since He was sinless, His death was counted for our righteousness and restoration to fellowship with a Holy and righteous God. The only requirement on our part is to acknowledge and repent of sin and receive Jesus into our lives to be our Savior. Nothing else can satisfy God's holy law. If a person, no matter how good it may seem that he or she lives his or her life, they fall short of God's perfection. That is what God tells us in Romans 3:23: "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*" At the final judgment, all who have received Christ will be presented faultless on the merits of the blood of Jesus.