

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of April 7, 2019

### THEME: "Relationships" RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

**Sunday** .....**Read John 15:8-17**

*"You are my friends, if you do whatsoever I have commanded you."* More than anything else, life is made up of relationships. The life of every human being begins with a relationship; a baby has a mother and a father to be part of a family. The truth is that God began the human race with a relationship: a man and a woman, whom He instructed and empowered to replenish the earth with more humans. Actually, it is important to note that the man did have a relationship before his wife. He had a relationship with God! God gave Adam a wife because *"It was not good that man should be alone!"* He empowered them to have children to establish a family, the most fundamental human relationship there is, and the most essential on a human plain. It is the family that is the most coveted target of the enemy of God. The truth is that before Satan attacked Adam's family, he successfully ruined a relationship that is even more important than the family relationship, our relationship with our Creator, with God! Remember how the devil convinced Eve not to trust God, and duped her into doing the very thing that would cause Adam and Eve to destroy their fellowship with God. Not only did eating of the forbidden ruin their communion and fellowship with God, it meant that their offspring, the entire human race, would be brought into this world out of fellowship with God. Praise God that He so loved the people in the world that He made a way for us to have a renewed fellowship with our Creator. That is why Jesus became a human being, so He could pay the penalty of sin on our behalf. Since Jesus successfully defeated the devil in his attempts to offend His Heavenly Father, and then with His blood pay the penalty for our sin on the cross at Calvary, we can have a renewed fellowship with God in the merits of His death. Our relationship with Christ by responding to His attempts to get our attention by whatever means is the beginning of an eternal relationship with God. There is no better way to go through life than to have a relationship with Christ and spiritual life!

#### SALVATION

**Monday** ..... **Read Romans 10:9-13**

*"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* Just how do people regain fellowship with God? Man is sinful, and God is holy. Man must be made holy to be able to have communion with a holy God! The penalty of sin is death, the loss of life, spiritual and physical. God is on the spiritual plane, and so the spirit of man must be regenerated to be saved from the penalty of sin, which is death. Well, God the Father sent His Son Jesus into the world as a human being to enable Him to pay the penalty of sin on behalf of all humans. God's law of forgiveness of sinners is to have a sinless substitute pay the penalty for them. Jesus, born of a virgin to avoid inheriting man's sinful nature and having lived a sinless life, was that perfect Lamb of God whose blood was the payment for all sinners. All who accept Jesus as personal Savior are granted a Divine eternal pardon. By receiving Christ, a person attains salvation by faith in the Savior of the world. True faith is in the heart; words can be deceiving. Man can say convenient things that sometimes are not really the heart attitude. Jesus stated that in Matthew 15:8: *"These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips; but their hearts are from me."* God sees the heart and can discern sincerity. We are told that in I Samuel 16:7: *"Man looks on the outward appearance, but God sees the heart."* Accepting the facts of the crucifixion and accepting Christ are two different things! There must be a conscious decision to invite Jesus into the heart to be saved. The prayer of a sinner calling out to God for forgiveness by faith in the blood of Jesus is true salvation! It is the act of opening the door of our lives and asking Jesus to come in! Jesus said that in Revelation 3:20: *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hear my voice and open the door, I will come in."* The verbal testimony of those who've done that is true salvation!

#### SURRENDER

**Tuesday** ..... **Read Luke 9:22-23**

*"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* The decision to receive Christ as Savior ought to be a commitment to make Him the Lord of our lives, a commitment to follow Him in obedience to the law of God as revealed in Holy Scriptures. In His Word, God gives us the mandates for behavior in the home, as citizens of a nation, as member of a work force, and as a part of a body of believers. To do as Jesus said means self-denial, self-sacrifice, and total commitment. That will result in God's guidance and God's blessing. It is a total, not partial,

commitment to seek and to do the will of God. Christianity is not meant to be a turn it on and turn it off life depending on the day of the week or the time and the place. The true Christian is a child of God and an ambassador of the kingdom of heaven seven days a week and twenty four hours a day. We surely should act that way!

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRISTIANS**

**Wednesday .....Read Galatians 6:10**

*"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."* The greatest blessing in life may well be those times when we have done good to others to enrich their lives. It may be a simple act of kindness. That is the real demonstration of the love of Christ, the very things that Jesus expected of His followers and set the example for so doing. Jesus sought ways to help others, and often went out of His way to do so. Throughout the gospel accounts of His life on earth, we read of many lives who were personally touched. Yes, Jesus spoke before great crowds, but He always had time to do good for individuals. One of His most important instructions to His people is that command in John 13:35: *"By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, because of your love one for another."* This search to do good to others is particularly important among a church family, but is not limited to just that. I think of the example of Jesus going out of His way to minister to the woman at the well recorded in John 4. Perhaps our best witness is to show love to others!

### **TIMES OF FELLOWSHIP**

**Thursday ..... Read I John 1:1-6**

*"That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son the Lord Jesus Christ."* God intends for His people to get together systematically for worship and fellowship. For us to do so not only results in our lives being enriched, it brings pleasure to our Heavenly Father and is a way we can honor Him. Notice what the apostle said in today's Bible reading: our fellowship is with the Father. Yes, God takes special notice when His family gets together, whether in worship or some other meaningful activity. I find what I read in Malachi 3:16 intriguing: *"Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him."* Does that not mean that God has records of the times His people get together in the same way we take pictures and keep albums for future reference. Have we not all enjoyed looking back to remember the good times of the past? Is this one of the ways we will spend our time in the eternal ages: looking at the journals God has kept? That we should not neglect these gatherings of God's people is the clear command in Hebrews 10:25: *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, especially as you see the day approaching."* Getting together is essential for our spiritual growth and maturity.

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-CHRISTIANS**

**Friday .....Read II Corinthians 3:1-2**

*"You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."* Whereas Christians are instructed to be separated from the darkness of the world, our Savior commanded in Mark 16:15 that we *"go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."* The most effective preaching may well be our behavior! People read our lives, perhaps more than they read books. Many people will never take time to read the Bible, but they will read the lives of Christians. And they should, by reading the lives of Christians, gain an understanding of the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. They should witness a surprising calm in the midst of troubling times. They should see a display of composure when mistreated by other people. They should see a genuine love for sinners while communicating a strong hatred for sin. Opposing sin is not hatred; it is a display of love for those who commit sin and the trouble it brings to those who engage in sinful behavior. Doctors have a hatred for disease because of a love for their patients. Statesmen must hate crime to be of any value in promoting safety. Hating wrong is more a display of love than those who tolerate wrong. What is right and wrong? The Bible speaks a great deal about human behavior and practices that are appropriate and those that are sin in the sight of God!

### **REFLECTING CHRIST**

**Saturday .....Read Matthew 5:14-16**

*"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden...Let your light so shine so men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* Jesus made a

strong point about the conduct of our lives! He advises His people to be a light displaying God's glory and what He can do in people. He placed an emphasis on actions when He said that our "*good works should bring glory to God.*" A Christian's life should be a reflection of the life Christ lived on planet earth. Now that can be done only in the power of the Holy Spirit, the part of the Godhead that took up occupancy in the bodies of all believers the moment they invited Jesus into their hearts. If a Christian does not quench the Spirit, his light will shine. It becomes dimmed if he engages in those things that would be contrary to how the Spirit leads. The more we know of Biblical principles and the stronger conviction we have in living according to God's teachings, the more powerful our light becomes for those around us to see. They should see Christ!