

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of April 28, 2019

THEME: "Jesus and Me" SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

Sunday **Read Luke 2:**

"Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." At the time of Jesus' birth, the angel announced the purpose of His coming to earth. God chose to make this all important announcement to shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem, the place where the virgin gave birth to the Christ child. What was this announcement that the messengers that God sent from heaven for all people in earth, what they called *"good tidings of great joy?"* Take notice that it is a message from God for everybody on earth. Now that is an important announcement! It was not for just a select group or a certain nation; it was for every human being of all time; that includes you and me! The announcement was that the Savior of the world was born! Take that personally! Some may ask: "Saved from what?" There are at least two things from which people need to be saved: from the penalty of sin and from the darkness of this world! First and foremost, Jesus is the Savior from the penalty of sin: eternal death in hell. We have just celebrated Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Jesus paying the penalty for sin and His victory over death. In so doing, the world has a Savior. Accepting Him provides eternal life in heaven; rejecting Him means hell. Secondly, believers are saved from the darkness of the world and human explanations on the origin of things, the meaning of things, and the future of things. Man can only speculate about these matters! People need light shed on what is beyond the wisdom of men. People need to be saved from worldly conjecture; the world needs absolute truth. Well, as Jesus later said in His earthly ministry, He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. On another occasion He said that He is the Light of the world. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

SOUGHT BY CHRIST

Monday **Read Revelation 3:20-21**

"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in." This verse of Scripture is vital and very moving. What we are told is the Savior of the world personally tries to get the attention of people. Is that not what we are told? Using an illustration from the physical world which we all understand to explain a truth about the unseen spiritual world, Jesus speaks of His trying to get people's attention by comparing it to a knock on the door with which we are all familiar. How does He knock? In many different ways! He could use the testimony of a friend who knows the Savior. He could use a radio or TV program. He could use a church service or activity. He could use an evangelistic rally. And there are countless other possible ways in which Jesus tries to get people's attention so they can have an eternity in heaven rather than hell. The big question is how people react to the Savior's efforts. While He was on earth, there were those who became His followers; there were many who rejected Him as hard as that may seem to imagine! The same is true today! Most people ignore or reject Christ. Many even scoff. The truth is that all people are made with a hunger for spiritual truth; that is how God made people: to have fellowship with them. Sadly, many people try to satisfy the spiritual hunger with anything from manmade religions inconsistent with Biblical truth or to use something or someone in the world as an idol. Obviously, that does not save them from the penalty of sin, because Jesus is the only one that satisfied God's holy Law for the forgiveness of sin. It was His blood on the cross; it was His substitutionary death! God accepts all who respond to the Savior's knock and ask Him into their heart and life. That is easily life's most important decision: how we respond to the Savior's knock on the door!

SEALED BY THE SPIRIT

Tuesday **Read Ephesians 1:9-14**

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation in whom also, after that you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." The role of the notary public in our culture is to place a seal on a document fixing it as a legal transaction. The one who possesses such a document has a legitimate claim. All people who have confessed themselves to be a sinner and have and have received the Lord Jesus as personal Savior on the merits of His shed blood on Calvary's cross have the seal of the Holy Spirit as the official spiritual document giving them absolute assurance of their eternal salvation and a home in heaven. Take to heart the truth of Hebrews 10:22: *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."* That statement is a follow up to what we are told in Hebrews 10:16-17: *"This is the covenant that I will make with them... Their sins and iniquities I will remember no more."* That is the covenant into which God has entered with all believers!

Praise God. The devil will try to cast doubts to rob the believer of the joy that is rightfully his, but God's promise is sure, sealed by the Spirit! That right to eternal life and a home in heaven is a sure thing. Nothing can take it away. God is true to His Word!

CARING FRIEND

Wednesday Read I Peter 5:6-11

"Casting all you cares upon Him, for He careth for you." In John 15:15, Jesus said this to His followers: *"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you."* Think of that: the Savior of the world wants to be my friend! A believer is just that if he or she is committed to doing what Jesus has commanded, if we put into practice the teachings of the Bible. There is no better offer! Not only do we have eternal life by our faith in Christ, we have a lifelong friend to be our companion here on earth. Hopefully, we all have people we can call our friends, and they surely enrich our lives! They may be the means by which Jesus is showing His friendship! One of the greatest joys of friendship is to know our friends deeply care about our well being, many go out of their way to show their concern. We have all benefitted by this demonstration of love by our friends. How many times have we called upon our friends to help us out in some way, many times in things that seem small; but they are actually big because there was someone there upon whom to call in a time of need. As good as that is, and it is beyond description, it is even better to have Jesus as a Friend, One on whom we can cast all our cares. That is the promise in today's Bible reading in Peter's Spirit-inspired letter! Isn't it good to know that *"God cares?"*

CORRECTING FRIEND

Thursday Read II Timothy 3:16-17

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for...correction, for instruction in righteousness." One of the real signs that a person is a true friend is their willingness to correct us when we are wrong. If we observe one we consider a friend doing something that is wrong, are we willing to bring that to their attention? That is a real demonstration of the love of a friend. One of the ways parents show their love to their children is their willingness to correct them when they are wrong. Not to do so is parental negligence for obvious reasons. A true friend will not overlook our faults. None of us is perfect! How vital it is to make the corrections to get things back on track! Tolerance is a wonderful thing in areas of disagreement, but tolerance of things harmful to those whom we say we love is not only unloving, it is cruelty! How do we know right from wrong when there is so much difference among people? Obviously, God is always right. That is the importance of saturating our minds with God's Word, the Holy Scriptures. Among the many benefits of knowing the Bible is that the Spirit uses them to correct the wrongs in our lives, a point in today's Bible reading from Paul's Spirit inspired letter to Timothy. Friends will use that in showing their love for us by having the courage and the love to point it out to us!

JOINT- HEIRS

Friday Read Romans 8:16-17

"The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Why is being a joint-heir with Jesus such a big thing? Just what does that mean? Well, being named as an heir in an estate can prove beneficial. When a person departs this life, a will kicks in as a benefit to those named. That proves the importance of having a will because not to means someone else will determine what goes where! Our Heavenly Father includes all in His family in His estate! When we received Christ as Savior, we became God's children, the truth of John 1:12: *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God."* Among the many other benefits, Paul, in his letter to the Roman believers, repeated the point that the apostle John had made. As a matter of fact, Jesus Himself underlined that family relationship when He responded to the disciples' request for Him to teach them to pray. We read His response in Matthew 6:9: *"After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven..."* Jesus acknowledged that His Father was *"Our Father."* What a blessing, underlined in I Peter 1:3-4: *"Blessed be the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."* Wow, the best is yet to come! Faith in Christ has made us rich, eternally!

MY KING

Saturday Read Ephesians 2:17-22

"Now ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with saints, and of the household of God." Accepting Christ has so many benefits, not the least of which is that we are instantly given citizenship rights, and responsibilities, in the Kingdom of God. Jesus, who will become the King of kings on planet earth in the future, perhaps in the very near future, is right now the King in the personal lives of believers. We read these words of Jesus in Matthew 10:7: *"And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* As citizens of the kingdom of heaven living on earth, God's people are ambassadors for the kingdom of God as instructed in II Corinthians 5:20: *"Now then, we are the ambassadors of Christ."* Our earthly homes are temporary, our eternal residence is heaven! Jesus is the King of our lives!