

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of January 22, 2023

THEME: "Letters of John"

VICTORIOUS LIFE

Sunday Read I John 5:4-14

"This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." Without God's holy Word, the world would be in spiritual darkness, totally ignorant of the work and plans of God. The Bible gives the answers to the key questions about life: how life began, what is its purpose, and where life is headed. Without the Bible, humans would be groping in darkness, at the mercy of the devil, the enemy of God. Believers have the answers to all those questions, and are protected from the fabrications concocted by the human mind. With this God-given knowledge, believers are able to live victorious and meaningful lives with eternal purpose. What a blessing! That is so important because we all are eternal beings with an eternal destination: heaven or hell. All those who have become followers of the Lord Jesus have eternal life; but those who have never made the all-important decision to receive Christ are headed for a lost eternity in the hell that was prepared for the devil and his demons. The only way to have eternal life is to be in conformity with the plans of our Creator. That is receiving the gift of eternal life offered by God and detailed in Romans 6:23: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Monday Read I John 1:7-10

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." God intends for His people to have fellowship with each other, especially with those who are in His family by their faith in Christ. The only people who can enjoy fellowship with their Creator are those who have made the decision to receive Jesus, the Savior of the world, into their hearts. These children of God live in the light of the Word of God. By living in conformity with the instructions given to us in the Bible, Christians are empowered to live in the light provided by God in His Word to combat spiritual darkness propagated by the devil, the enemy of God. By receiving Jesus as Savior places people in God's family. This means we are brothers and sisters in God's eternal family. That opens the door for truly meaningful relationships in our times of worship and fellowship!

LOCAL CHURCHES

Tuesday Read Revelation 1:18-20

"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." God has arranged the universal church, made up of all believers around the world, into local churches. That is God's plan for all believers so they can work together with others in accomplishing the work of the Lord Jesus in building His Church to completion. By having a local body of believers in communities in all the countries in the world, Christians are able to fulfill the command of our Lord in Mark 16:15, where He said this: *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* To do this effectively, each individual has a responsibility to be a light in the community where God has placed them. A simple invitation to a neighbor to come out to a worship service may be the first step in bringing them into the family of God. That neighbor or colleague is in the world of which Jesus spoke when He gave that important command. The disciples were obedient and faithful in doing as Jesus said and the church had a strong

foundation. Maybe it is our high privilege to put on the finishing touches to set the stage for the return of Christ!

CHRISTIAN HOPE

Wednesday Read I John 2:25-28

"And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." To live every day with the anticipation of the return of Christ gives a compelling purpose for all believers. It provides an incentive to live clean lives and to be a witness so the Holy Spirit can open doors of opportunity to witness to others in the area of contacts. To start a day with the thought that Jesus may come that very day sets the stage to live with excitement. It is our blessed hope that causes us to live our lives in a way that would please God and bring satisfaction to our Lord. Our Father in heaven is watching; our Savior and Lord is coming. Maybe today! Will they be pleased with what they see? *Think about the truth of Titus 2:12-13: "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."*

FRIENDS OF CHRIST

Thursday Read John 15:13-16

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." What a thoughtful and meaningful statement of our Lord this is about His followers! It is an honor above all else to be considered one of His servants, but it is even better than that! Jesus wants us to know that He considers us His friends! That is an honor beyond description! To be a servant of God is life's highest privilege; to be a friend of God is beyond words to describe! Jesus is the fulfillment of what we are told in Proverbs 18:24: "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

CHRISTIAN LOVE

Friday Read I John 4:9-11

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." The binding power in Christian fellowship is love, a brotherly love. That love for fellow believers compels us to want to worship our Lord together. Christians who are sensitive to the indwelling Holy Spirit are compelled to seek opportunities to be with other believers. It is no mistake that the first attribute mentioned in the lists of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 is love: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* *The truth is that our worship services are a time of family fellowship when we think of John 1:12-13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*

LOVE FOR THE LOST

Saturday Read John 20:19-21

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." That love that binds believers together also compels us to be a witness to the

lost. As our Heavenly Father, God has a special place in His heart for His sons and daughters in His family by virtue of their faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus. God also has a love for those who are outside of His family. Think about the depth of God's love mentioned in John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* What Jesus is telling us in today's Bible reading is the love His Father had for the world caused Him to send His Son into the world is the love our Savior has for all the people in the world. He is sending us into our part of the world to share the love of God.