

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of January 14, 2024

THEME: "Gifts of the Spirit"

PERSONAL GIFTS

Sunday.. Read I Corinthians 12:1-10

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Every human being is a unique person created by God. When God was forming the individual in the mother's womb, He gave that person a special talent, sometimes more than one. With His perfect foreknowledge, God knew whether or not that individual would sometime in his or her life make the decision to receive Jesus as his or her personal Savior. If so, we are told in I Corinthians 12:18 that God would place that person in a church where that talent would be needed in working together with the other believers to accomplish God's purpose for that church. Those personalized gifts are necessary for conducting the worship services as well as the outreach ministry in the community where God has placed them. God refers to a local church as a body of believers. We know from our own bodies that a healthy body is one in which all the parts are in working order. Some parts of a church body are visible with many working behind the scenes, If any body part is not functioning, the body is handicapped. There is no unimportant or insignificant part of a body. Each believer is very important to the local church in the exercise of his or her personal gift with which God has provided them!

SANCTIFICATION

Monday Read II Thessalonians 2:13-17

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." To become part of God's family and admitted to heaven after completing life on earth, a person must be sanctified, or made holy. That eternal sanctification occurs the moment a person repents of sin and receives the Lord Jesus as personal Savior. Not to make that decision to receive Jesus means an individual is still victimized by the contamination of sin regardless of any and all the religious activities in which they are involved. To think one can be made righteous in any way other than by the blood of Jesus is being led astray by tricks of the devil as warned in II Corinthians 11:14: *"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."* Jesus warns of false teaching in Matthew 15:13-14: *"But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."* Religious talk does not negate God's truth!

BLOOD OF JESUS

Tuesday..... Read Hebrews 13:12-15

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." The only way to be cleansed from sin is by the blood of Jesus. That truth is the point of emphasis of I John 1:7: *"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."* Many people try to win God's favor through religious activities and noble deeds. As honorable as that is, it all falls short of total cleansing as noted in Titus 3:5-7: *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior."* Hebrews 9:22: *"Without shedding of blood is no remission."*

WORD OF GOD

WednesdayRead John 17:15-18

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Eternal sanctification is becoming a member of the family of God by inviting Jesus, the Savior of the world into your heart! All Christians, however, still have the old nature that battles our new divine nature as children of God. No human, except the Lord Himself, lives a sinless life. We all need a daily cleansing. One thing that is important in this daily sanctification is the reading of God's Word as noted in today's Bible reading. With all the deception and falsehood being propagated on an ever increasing basis through the media, it is vital to have a daily feasting on God's Word. God's Word is truth; totally trustworthy! Knowing God's Word gives the believer a very important resource as emphasized in Hebrews 4:12: *"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

GOOD WORKS

ThursdayRead II Timothy 2:19-24

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." The Christian is mentioned in today's Bible reading as a vessel carrying God's truth and God's life with the presence of the Holy Spirit. If the believer yields to the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, he or she is a vessel unto honor, a real light to their world! If not, that individual believer is a sinking vessel that needs to be put upright. Daily spiritual cleansing is as vital to the spirit as physical cleansing to keep the body healthy. That spiritual purging by confession of sins prepares a believer to bring honor to our Lord. Confession of sin brings consecration of the spirit!

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

FridayRead Galatians 5:20-25

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." These nine personal qualities will describe the Christian who yields to the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. God wants His people to show love toward others, as Jesus did. Believers should be people who exude joy, not misery. Peace, not worry, should characterize the believer's life. Philippians 4:4-6 gives us God's strategy for our having an ever-abiding peace: *"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*

INDIVIDUAL TALENT

Saturday.....Romans 12:10-19

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." The gift of hospitality is unique to some individual Christians. There are those who gain real joy in opening their homes to others on a consistent basis. All the gifts mentioned in today's Bible reading are vital to God's plans for His people! A lot of God's people are given gifts that are public, to be witnessed by many people; others are given personal gifts that are less public, but equally important! The truth is that those with more public gifts would probably not be effective except for the faithfulness of those who are not in

the public eye. There may be many surprises at the Judgment Seat of Christ when believers will receive rewards for their faithful service in the work of God! God takes notice of how all His children are using the personal gifts with which He has blessed them! The local church in which each member is putting into action his or her personal gift is the church which is effective and God-honoring in their community.