

## *Good News Daily*

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### **Sunday, April 21**

Mark 6:30-44 “*Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.*” (v.31b NIV).

I don’t know about you, but that kind of an invitation, and especially from Jesus, would be very welcome. How often he extends this kind of invitation is hard to say because we are usually so *busy* we can’t hear ourselves think, let alone hear that still small voice offering us “some rest.”

I can remember when I was a young mother with three children under the age of three and a husband in the Navy often away for 6-8 months at a time. Older women would encourage me to have “me” time. I would usually get angry or defensive and say that I was just fine, doing exactly what God was calling me to do, thank you very much, *you* might need some “me” time, but I don’t. Jesus needed a quiet place and rest, who did I think I was?

Fortunately, God didn’t give up on me but continued to encourage me to find “a quiet place and get some rest.” During those times of rest I find myself listening for that still small voice, looking for God’s fingerprints all around me and being fed by His word. Very often following these times of refreshment God gets very busy using us.

Exodus 28:1-4, 30-38; Psalms 63, 98; 1 John 2:18-29

Include in your prayers: Our country; for wisdom and guidance for our leaders and the leaders of all nations; for our armed forces and their families, especially Kyle Irving, Dylan Jenkins, Nick Layden and Rhett Price, and those now in danger and any continuing to struggle; for our enemies; for peace – especially in Ukraine, justice and reconciliation in all places where there is conflict, especially among the peoples of the Middle East; for Haiti and Bondeau; and for Todd and Patsy McGregor and their work with SAMS training missionaries.

### **Monday, April 22**

Colossians 3:18—4:18 *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.* (vv.23-24).

Brother Lawrence wrote a wonderful little classic called, *The Practice of the Presence of God*. In it he describes how he discovered that the art of living a joyful life lies not necessarily in *what* we do but with what kind of an attitude we do it. If we regard our work as an act of service to God, regardless of what that work is, it can take some of the drudgery and boredom out of it.

What freedom there is in offering your day, your work, your rest, your everything to God. Knowing that you are working for God first, not for men, can put a joy in your heart that some cannot comprehend. It is a freedom to accept whatever situation God has for you knowing that it is for Him that you are serving.

This concept makes me think about jobs such as teachers and healthcare workers, two very important services, and yet often low paying jobs. People I know in these professions have a love for mankind and a desire to care for God’s people.

Exodus 32:1-20; Psalms 41, 52; Matthew 5:1-10

Include in your prayers: Ricardo Acuña, Rick Anderson, Ann Ballard, Kay Bailey, Elizabeth Bastion, June Baxter,

the family of Elizabeth C. “Liz” Bardin, Paul Beresford, Christopher Brassington, Ray Browne, Bill and Barbara Buttner, Barbara Carlson, Laurie Caudle, Linton and Gloria Chung, Nancy H. Cole, and Leslie Cook.

## **Tuesday, April 23**

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 *We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (v.3).*

Wouldn't you love to have people say verse 3 about you? My husband's mother demonstrates these ingredients of the Christian life, work produced (inspired) by faith, labor prompted by love, and endurance inspired by (founded on) hope. My father-in-law has had Parkinson's disease for years and it is compounded by Post-polio syndrome, blindness due to glaucoma, and a war injury that has left his left hand virtually useless.

My mother-in-law is a Christian who I look up to. Her faith has sustained her over the years and spills over to all who come in contact with her. She never complains to those around her. Her labor, all the big and little things she does, is prompted by her great love. She is selfless, always looking out for others. But for me, the ingredient that I try to emulate is her endurance which is inspired by (founded on) hope in Jesus. Regardless of how bleak things appear, and believe me some days they seem *very bleak*, she knows who she belongs to and who is walking each and every step with her. She is the model for Romans 5:5, "And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit." During our times of trials may we be "inspired by hope."

Exodus 32:21-34; Psalm 45; Matthew 5:11-16

Include in your prayers: Our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Margaret Dunstan, Celeste Dysard, Joan Engskow, family of Gil Evans, Dee Garafano, Charlie Gasperino, Jerry Hardin, Pam Heatley, and Tom Henry.

## **Wednesday, April 24**

Psalm 119:49-72 *You have given me hope. My comfort in my suffering is this; Your promise preserves my life. (vv.49b-50).*

Can you imagine saying, "My comfort in my suffering is..."? To my way of thinking, how can there be any comfort in suffering? But God—oh, how I love that phrase—has given us hope, to desire something confidently expecting its fulfillment. My comfort comes from His promises. If that is true, and I believe it is, then I need to know what those promises are so that I can claim them as my own.

The following are a few examples:

Psalm 73:26 "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." He has promised me eternity.

Isaiah 25:8 "He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces." God comforts us.

John 3:15 "Everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life." If we believe, God promises us eternal life.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." God strengthens me for what He calls me to do.

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear) but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline (a sound mind)." Fear is not from God.

Scripture is full of God's promises. Find them and claim them.

Exodus 33:1-23; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:17-20

Include in your prayers: Vicki Huber, Mary Imle, Cindy Islip, Jacqui and Harry Kapinowski, Nick Layden, Tom Lefevre, Taylor Lunn, Elias Mansour, Elaine Mariggio, Emily Mather, and the McGrath-Burnett family.

## **Thursday, April 25**

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the work of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (v.13).*

When at the age of 29 I finally accepted Christ into my life as Savior and Lord, God was very gracious with me. I knew that I knew that I knew. Sure, I had and have a lot to learn. But there is no doubt

in my mind that “Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.” It’s like when I quit smoking. God knew that it couldn’t be gradually. The day I found out I was pregnant with our first child, I quit and have never looked back.

For some people there must be a time of wrestling and questioning. My husband had many preconceived ideas about what would happen if he turned his life over to God and became a Christian. Things like he would never have any more fun, life would be serious all the time, no more wine. After wrestling with Scripture and praying for discernment and receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, he came to understand that the word of God was for him as well as for the original hearers and that it was and is very important not only to study Scripture but to believe it and share it.

Exodus 34:1-17; Psalm 50; Matthew 5:21-26

Include in your prayers: Bob Montheard and Pam DeFelice, Marilyn Pariseleti, Peter Pawlikowski, Jim and Jerre Rannie, Charles and Kathy Sakin, Dona Scoville, and Elizabeth Sibley.

### **Friday, April 26**

Psalm 40 *I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly.* (v.10).

If you were arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you? When I first heard that question I laughed. “I’m a Christian, of course there would be enough evidence.” And then I thought about it. Do people see me as someone who is different? Is there anything in my life that labels me as a nonconformist? Do I participate in gossip? Am I kind? Do people know I pray? How do I handle difficult circumstances and difficult people?

If I expect Jesus to escort me to the Father, I must acknowledge who Jesus is and what he does and has done for me. I must tell my story. And when times get tough I must remember all the ways God was with me in the past and expect Him to be with me now and in the future.

I must walk my talk, “Not everyone who says, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). I can say anything I want, but if my actions don’t match my words, I am a hypocrite and in the end a big loser.

Be ready at all times not only to speak of God’s love and faithfulness but to show it so that there would be enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian.

Exodus 34:18-35; Psalm 54; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13; Matthew 5:27-37

Include in your prayers: Sean Simon, Howard Smith, Paul Smith, Allison Spencer, Rob Steiner, Carolyn Tefft, Phil Toren, Ed Traver, Mary Ella Turner, Bob Vail, Keith van Cleave, Mary Jean Wampler, George Whitely, Peter and Mirabelle Wrist, and Bunny Wullschleger.

### **Saturday, April 27**

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 *Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that You will not be dependent on anybody.* (vv.11-12).

In today’s fast-paced world the idea of leading a quiet life seems impossible. Actually, without God’s help, lots of prayer, and a conscious effort to choose such a lifestyle, it *would* be impossible. Families are now too busy to eat dinner together. Everyone has a different activity causing them to be like ships passing in the night. Our children must be kept busy after school, no down-time allowed. We have taken playtime out of our vocabulary. Mom and Dad are busy with their own activities, which includes overworking, and times of playing catch in the front yard or baking cookies from scratch are considered old fashioned and outdated.

When our personal lives are so cluttered with *busyness* we damage our witness. If we don’t have time for those who are nearest and dearest to us, how can we have time for anything else?

As we approach summer, often a more relaxed time of year, I challenge you to look ahead and pray and choose to simplify your life.

Exodus 40:18-38; Psalm 55; Matthew 5:38-48

Include in your prayers: Ali, Andie S., Camilo, Chris K., Clay, Diana, Jacob, Marguerite, Marty, Peter, for caregivers and receivers, those in recovery, and St. Raphael's Episcopal Church.

*by Cathy Curran*

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