

October 2021 Newsletter

From Heaven's Heart

I Need Constant Reminders! Perhaps you do too?

The purpose of this Newsletter is to remind us, we need constant reminders. Or at least I do! And lucky for us, God left us a Book to remind us of lots of important things. And He promised if we follow His reminders as best we can, life will turn out pretty good for us. Certainly a lot better than if we stumble through life without His good reminders to keep us from stumbling...sometimes having a major crash.

Christ followers learned so much from Him. He loved them more than we love our kids and best friends and wanted them to experience the best of life. So He reminded them how to love, forgive, pray, comfort others, give, share, when to be quiet and when to speak up...etc. He also warned them of the dangers they would face being His followers and of the evil around every corner. Nothing much has changed, has it! We don't need a reminder of the dangers all around us.

The Book of James reminds us of something important. He said, "Happy is the person who doesn't give in and do wrong when he or she is tempted, for afterwards, they will get their reward, the crown of life that God has promised those who love Him. Remember, when someone wants to do wrong it is never God who is tempting them, for God never wants us to do wrong and never tempts anyone else to do it. Temptation is the pull of a person's own evil thoughts and wishes. These evil thoughts can lead to evil actions and afterwards to the death penalty from God". Strong yet true words!!!

I can honestly say, I don't want to do evil, say hurtful things. I don't. I'm sure you don't either. Then I remember what Paul said. "Why do I do the things I don't want to do and don't do the things I know I should"? Paul was not giving us an excuse to be disobedient. He was not saying that doing what we know is wrong or not doing what is right is acceptable. He was reminding us that only Jesus is perfect and as hard as we try, we will sometimes make mistakes. And Paul often reminds us that Jesus paid for our mistakes on the cross, setting us free from the guilt and pain that comes from poor decisions. His grace provides the forgiveness we need, a recovery plan of reminders, and a fresh start.

Please take a few minutes and read the book of James. It's a short book and it offers us a dose of truth that can lead us to freedom. I'm talking about real freedom. James said this about our Heavenly Father, perhaps as a healthy warning. "You will be judged on

whether or not you are doing what Christ wants you to. So watch what you say and do, for there will be **NO MERCY**, to those who have shown no mercy. Did you get that? He didn't say there will be no mercy but there will be No Mercy for those who have shown no mercy. But if you have been merciful, then God's mercy toward you will win out over his judgment against you". I'm most positive **this defines the GRACE of God** and we all need His grace. Show mercy and you will receive God's mercy. But James offers us a stern warning if we show no mercy toward others. How much mercy has God shown to you...and to me?

Here's another reminder. James continues: "It isn't enough just to have faith. You must also do good to prove that you have it. Faith that doesn't show itself by good works is not faith at all...it is dead and useless".

It is not our good works that earn our salvation. It is our faith in Jesus Christ, believing He died for our sins and rose from death...and by believing, we receive forgiveness and eternal life...but it is our faith in Jesus that proves itself by bringing about good and healthy change in our behavior, what we think, say, and do. And we show that we care by caring for others. We show that we love by loving others with our words, but more important, by the way we treat them.

Do you want all the blessings God has promised all believers? That's a silly question isn't it! I know you do. We all do. God wants to open His storehouses of abundance upon your life but if you and I are selfishly holding back from others and from God Himself, what He expects from us, don't expect His blessings. Countless scriptures confirm God's promise for blessings that will flow from Heaven to all who love Him and try their best to live by His standards established for our very best. We can have peace, joy, forgiveness, eternal life and the abundant life He promises when our lives belong to Christ...And the proof of His ownership of our lives is written in the blood of Christ...and Heaven's legal documents with our names written in the Book of Life were executed by our act of faith. And according to James, a reminder that it is our deeds that prove our faith in Jesus.

May the peace and joy God promises fill you up completely today because of your deep love for Him and for others,

Pastor Steve .