

"Voices Together" for the week of 11/6-12//2017

Monday, 6 November 2017

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—**unless you believed in vain**. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, **that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures**, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

I have not believed in vain for He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and He appeared to ... A simple statement of verifiable facts; each of which could and would have been denied by those cited as witnesses. Plus 11 of the 12 died as martyrs for their conviction that they served a risen Christ. No one is willing to die for something that they know to be untrue.

*"I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him, He's always near. "*

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 52

Mid-day: 119:105-112

Evening: Psalm 128

Please address comments to voices@ailbe.org

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Tuesday, 7 November 2017

1 Corinthians 15:9-11

For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Each of us joins with Paul in declaring that it is by the grace of God we are what we are and that His grace towards us was not in vain. Therefore we are called to preach a risen Savior and

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to live out that belief in every aspect of our lives.

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 53

Mid-day: 119:113-120

Evening: Psalm 129

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Wednesday, 8 November 2017

2 Corinthians 2:5-9

Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.

Paul is checking up on the saints in Corinth. Were they obedient to his instructions regarding the restoration of the errant member of the local church? Not was the punishment sufficiently severe, but was the process of restoration at work and active.

We often forget that we are all recovering sinners and take a superior attitude towards the fallen one. It is love that restores. We must never forget that is to be our goal.

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 54

Mid-day: 119:121-128

Evening: Psalm 130

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Thursday, 9 November 2017

2 Corinthians 4:2-4

But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper

with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

I need to focus on a plainly presented, clearly stated, Biblically accurate Gospel message. A simple invitation to join in drawing closer to the LORD, God the Almighty and seeking to glorify Him in every aspect of my life. Anything more or less than that is not the Gospel given once for all; it is a tool of the god of this world blinding the lost.

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 55

Mid-day: 119:129-136

Evening: Psalm 131

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Friday, 10 November 2017

2 Corinthians 4:13-18

*Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "**I believed, and so I spoke,**" we also believe, and so we also speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

I see an implied progression in this passage. Belief leads to speaking of that belief and speaking of that belief leads entry into the presence of the Lord. The presence of the Lord, in turn, enables us to bear the light and momentary affliction that prepares us for an eternal weight of glory by focusing our vision on that which is unseen but eternal rather than that which is seen and transient.

Or---as I speak of my belief, I grow in my ability to overcome the afflictions of this life and grow in my appreciation of that which is to come.

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 56

Mid-day: 119:137-144

Evening: Psalm 132

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Saturday, 11 November 2017

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **entrusting** to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

I am called to trust God who made His Son be a sin-bearer so that I will become the righteousness of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. In turn, He appoints me as one of His Ambassadors of Reconciliation. Far, far better than a posting as Ambassador to the Court of Saint James.

I must never forget that as one of the LORD, God, the Almighty's ambassadors, I am subject to the Word of God in all aspects of my life; I am not accountable to the god of this world. I have diplomatic immunity!

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 57

Mid-day: 119:145-152

Evening: Psalm 133

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Lord's Day, 12 November 2017 Psalm 119:39

Turn away the reproach that I dread, for your rules are good.

The reproach that I dread is the loss of my children. Lord, overcome my reluctance to speak to them of Your love and mercy.

Today's readings in the Psalms:

Morning: Psalm 58

Mid-day: 119:153-160

Evening: Psalm 134

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