

Monday, 28 October 2019 Psalm 73:1-14 A Psalm of Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment. Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies. They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression. They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth. Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them. And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?" Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches. All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.

Lord, our feet stumble over our pride and need a for recognition. Our steps slip on the slope of covetousness. We trip over the urge to repeat a bit of gossip. Keep clearing the path and sharpening our sense of obedience to You.

*Tuesday, 29 October 2019 Psalm 73:15
If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed the generation of your children.*

We need to remember that we have professed to be Your disciples, and therefore, we serve as role models to many, our children and grandchildren, our friends and neighbors, those we worship with, those we minister to, and to the many casual acquaintances. Your image is reflected through we, however, distorted by our weaknesses.

*Wednesday, 30 October 2019 Psalm 73:16-17
But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.*

Lord, it is Your gift of the Holy Spirit that convicts us of our sins and shortfalls, that calls to our consciences to change our ways of living. It is the illumination of your holiness

that exposes our failings and brings awareness of the need for repentance.

*Thursday, 31 October 2019 Psalm 73:18-20
Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors! Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.*

These sins, Lord, start as a simple little pleasure, almost innocent with just a touch of off-color and then, look out! It quickly becomes a full-blown problem as all the unintended consequences come roaring in. All the Evil One needs is a toehold, a finger crack, and he begins his insidious work to separate us from the enjoyment of Your presence.

*Friday, 1 November 2019 Psalm 73:21-24
When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.*

It grieves us, Lord, that the old man is still active and kicking. He will not give up and realize that we are Yours, that You walk with us and never leave us nor forsake us. You are ours, and we are Yours.

*Saturday, 2 November 2019 Psalm 73:25-28
Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.*

We were arrogant and embittered, brutish and ignorant, as a beast towards You, but You drew us in, pulled us into a closeness with You that defies all description. It is good to be near You and to know that You are our refuge at all times and in all circumstances. You are the strength of our hearts and our portions forever; why would we not be

willing to "keep smiling and sharing the Love of Jesus" with all. Praise You, our Lord, Master, and Savior.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



Lord's Day, 3 November 2019 Exodus 20:1-3

And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

Or "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of sin through My sacrifice for you on the Cross of Calvary." I can reject that gift or accept it, but if I accept it, I also accept that You are Lord and Master of my life. I am to live in obedience to You; there are no half measures. I am to have NO other gods before you.

A simple concept to state, but without the Helper in our lives, We are doomed to fail. We need the constant teaching of the Holy Spirit to guide us into a life of obedience to Your Word. This has to be a personal decision. I must choose.

Voices Together is available as two annual volumes of meditations based on Psalm 1 through 75 and Psalm 76 through 150. A companion book, *The Love Story*, is a 22 week series of meditations based on Psalm 119. They are available through the Fellowship of Ailbe book store at www.ailbe.org/bookstore/christian-discipline

October 28-November 3, 2019

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Colossians 1:3-8

We always thank God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints—the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

LORD, thank You for the {congregation} and the calling you have given to us to be beacons of hope through the word of truth. Continue to use us so that the Gospel will bear fruit throughout the world. We pray for each of our brothers and sisters who serve You in hostile environments, whether in foreign lands or in the secular culture around us.

We pray for our leaders and shepherds, the ones who have been so faithful in encouraging us to understand Your grace in all its truth and to carry that understanding into our Personal Mission Fields. Continue to provide for them and their families. Amen

To fear or not to fear, that is the question.

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. All Scripture is from the ESV unless otherwise noted. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc.

PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to prior@ailbe.org

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