

Good News Daily

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Sunday, November 24

Romans 15:5-13 *May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.* (v.5 NLT)

God, in His grace, has given His Holy Spirit to each believer. The Holy Spirit gives us His patience and encourages us to live in complete harmony. What a wonderful solution to the friction, trivial upsets, anger, and unforgiving spirit that we sometimes allow to plague our lives! I do understand what God has provided, but it is easy to be distracted. It takes time in the process of growing up in Christ to come to a full understanding of the gifts of the Spirit and to fully accept them.

In a working relationship recently, I was withholding love and forgiveness because the other person had hurt my feelings. It was a difficult time, a learning time. I could not be one with her—could not work with her as I needed to—because I had cut myself off from the freedom of the Spirit. In trying to protect myself from being hurt, I forgot that God’s love is my protection, but for it to work, I had to share it.

God made it clear to me that He loved both of us the same, and that He loved us abundantly. I was able to forgive her through that love, and I confessed my sin and was forgiven. Only then could I join her with one voice, giving praise and glory to God.

Isaiah 19:19-25; Psalm 118; Luke 19:11-27

Monday, November 25

1 Peter 1:1-12 *God the Father chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy.* (v.2a)

Good News! We are chosen by God. His Spirit is making us holy. We respond to His gifts of life and holiness with obedience. God’s wisdom in His Word is clear. We only need to remain as seekers who want to know the truth. Then, as we seek His will, He will lead us, love us, challenge us, be a presence to us, and forgive us.

Some years ago, I was in a Bible study and someone asked a question about a passage. We were in an involved discussion that went on and on. A man spoke up and said, “Pardon me, the question was asked about these verses and I suggest that God meant exactly what He said.” We all laughed and thanked God for His love and patience with us.

Listen to this thought on being child-like from *God Calling* by A. J. Russell: “Seek in every way to become child-like. Seek, seek, seek until you find the years have added to your maturity, that of the trusting child. Not only

for the child's simple trust, must you copy the child-spirit, but for its joy in life, its ready laughter, its lack of criticism, its desire to share all with all men. Ask continually, that you may become as little children—friendly and loving towards all—not critical, not fearful.”

Joel 3:1-2, 9-17; Psalm 106:1-18; Matthew 19:1-12

Tuesday, November 26

1 Peter 1:13-25 *As the Scriptures say, “People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the word of the Lord remains forever.”* (v.24)

Shortly after we became believers, my husband, Howard, found a beautifully framed, antique embroidered sampler, done by Mary Todhunter and titled *On the Fading Nature of Youth* that I would like to share with you: “There is a likeness between us and the grass and the flowers of the field, because both are constantly fading away. The flowers which now appear in their greatest beauty, will soon lose their gay coloring, they will fall to the ground and merge with the dust from which they arose. Blooming youth will soon be changed from childhood to maturity.”

Thus, if we are not cut off in early life, our health will decline at the arrival of old age, we will die, and our bodies will be placed in the tomb. When this glorious era arrives, the Christian, like a beautiful flower, will be planted in the house of the Lord and flourish in the courts of our God; the soul will bloom in heavenly splendor, increasing glory, and everlasting felicity.

The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

Nahum 1:1-13; Psalms 102, 121, 122, 123; Matthew 19:13-22

Wednesday, November 27

1 Peter 2:1-10 *“Once you were not a people; now you are the people of God. Once you received none of God’s mercy; now you have received his mercy.”* (v.10)

Once upon a time, we were nothing, living as though dead, not real, in bondage to sin. No hope, no real joy; we were looking for meaning and purpose without any understanding of the real state of our being.

Then, once upon a time, we responded to God through Jesus Christ. We became alive, real! We were released from the bondage of sin to an understanding of His wonderful, sacrificial gifts of hope, love, joy, and peace. We became people of God and received His mercy. Never before had we known such satisfaction and peace.

Once upon a time and forever after, we knew we were His people. We enjoyed our gifts of favor with God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit as our comforter. We walked in His love. We realized that, as His people, we were not meant to keep, for ourselves, these treasures of hope, love, joy,

peace, the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the love of God and the forgiveness enabled by Jesus Christ. His gift of mercy is to be shared with others, that they also might become people of God and receive this wonderful and everlasting gift!

We thank God by sharing Him with others. God’s love for us is ours when we love others. God’s forgiveness of us is in direct proportion to our forgiveness of others. God’s mercy is upon us.

Obadiah 15-21; Psalm 119:145-176; Matthew 19:23-30

Thursday, November 28

1 Peter 2:11-25 *Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors.* (v.12a)

Basilea Schlink is one of my favorite authors. She says, in *When God Calls* (one of her many books), “I learned that the experience of salvation did not take place on a single hour during the actual conversion, but rather, it was a continual process in the Christian life. Every day, the Christian sins against God and man by thought, word, and deed. Therefore, every day the Christian stands under conviction because of his deed, but he also stands under grace every day. Every day he is convicted of his sin and receives forgiveness from Christ, through his faith.”

Only a life of daily repentance will keep us from legalism and hypocrisy, the two main sins of believers. Jesus speaks of these problems in the self-righteous again and again (see Luke 12:1).

So, among our neighbors, how then should we live? Walk in daily repentance, accepting his grace by faith. Then we will not be prone to legalism and hypocrisy but be alive, in Christ, with love, joy, peace and fun! Neighbors will want to join in! It’s not enough, you see, to talk the talk of faith. We must walk the walk of Jesus, every step along the way, every day in every way.

Zephaniah 3:1-13; Psalms 131, 132, 133; Matthew 20:1-16

Friday, November 29

1 Peter 3:13—4:6 *Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good?* (v.13)

Eager to do good? I enjoy doing good, don’t you? I used to try too hard to be a good girl. Now I know I am good and do good because of Jesus Christ and his life in me.

Recently, I was invited to a large party. The only parking was on a narrow, neighborhood street. I was late and pulled in, very close, behind a car at the curb. I knew it was too close, but I was late. I hurried to the party and had a great time for two hours. When I returned to my car, I saw a note on the windshield, that said, “Consider yourself lucky!” then related how I had placed her in great stress, because she could not get her car out. She almost called the police. In addition, there was a sign, nearby, that I had missed, that

said, No Parking. She informed me that I should be gracious and not assume that everyone was at the party. I had assumed that. Then she ended by saying, “Have a good day!” with a happy face added.

The following day I trekked back to that neighborhood. She was not at home. I left her an apologetic note, agreeing with her view of my parking and included my name and phone number. I have not heard from her, but I felt good about doing the right thing after doing the wrong.

Lord, thank You, that because of Your life in us, we are eager to do right.

Isaiah 24:14-23; Psalms 140, 142; Matthew 20:17-28

Saturday, November 30

1 Peter 4:7-19 *God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. (v.10)*

Each believer has a gift. As we seek the giver of the gifts, we become acquainted with more of His gracious plan for mankind. There is great variety in God’s gifts for His people.

In Romans 12:6-8 it says, “God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If your gift is to encourage others, do it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift of showing kindness to others, do it gladly.”

In a recent meeting with our women’s ministry, I observed how God’s gifts work in the body of Christ. The leader led with freedom. As a result, there was a flow of the Spirit as each shared generously with ideas, creativity, and wisdom. Each participated in planning a great program. There were changes, not all ideas were used, but we were all united in the Spirit. Each one felt fulfilled as we gave our ideas and enjoyed the outcome.

Thank You, Lord, for Your glorious plan which brings Your people together as one.

Micah 7:11-20; Psalms 137, 144; Matthew 20:29-34

by Barbara Ball

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