



TLM Daily Devotions

June 2019





Intro to the month of Pentecost

Spirit of God,
Please, fill me now to overflowing.

Spirit of God,
Give me the words you want me to say.

Spirit of God,
release my tongue
To praise the Holy Son.

Spirit of God, fill this spirit of mine!

Blow, Spirit, blow!



Psalm 119 – Part 6

Waw

⁴¹May your unfailing love come to me, LORD,
your salvation, according to your promise;

⁴²then I can answer anyone who taunts me,
for I trust in your word.

⁴³Never take your word of truth from my mouth,
for I have put my hope in your laws.

⁴⁴I will always obey your law,
for ever and ever.

⁴⁵I will walk about in freedom,
for I have sought out your precepts.

⁴⁶I will speak of your statutes before kings
and will not be put to shame,

⁴⁷for I delight in your commands
because I love them.

⁴⁸I reach out for your commands, which I love,
that I may meditate on your decrees.



Psalm 119 – Part 7

r Zayin

⁴⁹Remember your word to your servant,
for you have given me hope.

⁵⁰My comfort in my suffering is this:
Your promise preserves my life.

⁵¹The arrogant mock me unmercifully,
but I do not turn from your law.

⁵²I remember, LORD, your ancient laws,
and I find comfort in them.

⁵³Indignation grips me because of the wicked,
who have forsaken your law.

⁵⁴Your decrees are the theme of my song
wherever I lodge.

⁵⁵In the night, LORD, I remember your name,
that I may keep your law.

⁵⁶This has been my practice:
I obey your precepts.



A small gesture of love and compassion can go long way

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "if you are willing, you can make me clean". Jesus was indignant. He reached out His hand and touched the man. "I am willing", He said. "Be clean".
 Mark 1: 40 - 41

There were many miracles which Jesus Christ had performed in the Bible, but His healing of leprosy persons is always touching my heart. When I read the leprosy healing in the Gospel of Mark, I can see that leprosy person was an outcast from the community and city, could be rejected by family, friends, and community, no one would have touched him for days. He needed physical, emotional and spiritual healing. He would have tried everything to cure his decaying body. But he would have failed. It was out of such state of helplessness and self-pity, that he cried out, *"If you are willing, you can make me clean!"* His lack of confidence in himself is evident from his request.

In Jesus, he saw the healer and the Savior who can help him out of this condition. And so, he came to Jesus, begging him on his knees. Jesus was moved by pity and filled with compassion. He stretched out his hands and touched him! People around him would have been shocked to see that!

"How can Jesus touch an unclean? He would also become 'unclean'." Some might have whispered! But there was a reverse phenomenon at work, Jesus' touch could cleanse the "unclean". Even Jesus' touch would have healed his soul. For what seems like a simple gesture was a great expression of love and care, as if Jesus was saying, "I love you in spite of your wounds and disrupted body and soul."

A simple act of love can have a deep impact on those who are suffering. Just as Jesus touched the leprosy person and healed his emotional wounds, He can touch the areas of our life which are most painful and hurting. Because Jesus is ready to offer wholesome healing, be it spiritual, physical, emotion healing, if we come to him.

A small gesture of love and compassion can go long way. What kind words and acts can I offer to those who are suffering around me?

I remember many leprosy persons would like me to touch them and hold their hands to walk side by side. They want me to be their friends, not only as a nurse to serve them with medical care. Recently a newly diagnosed woman admitted to our hospital, she is so depressed to have this disease, one day she came to me and touch my hair, she was so happy that my hair has the same colour as her hair - "black". That was the first time I saw her smile and started talking to me.

God gave me a special calling to show Christ's love and compassion to them through my medical care. However, many of my friends and supporters still worry about me to catch this disease, and wonder I may become unclean by leprosy one day.

*I know my touch cannot heal their wounds,
 but I do believe my simple act of love can touch their hearts with Jesus' love.*

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Refocus to Rejoice!

The Word

Philippians 4:1-9

Digging into the Word

The Philippi Church was very dear to Paul; as one who had started it. He was very happy with its continued commitment to the gospel of Jesus. He calls it his “crown” (a wreath given to an athlete, honouring the person’s victory). But the church was facing internal conflicts and challenges. Paul specifically refers to two believers who were the source of conflict. It was not a general advice, but a humble plea to two significant members in the church. The exact nature differences is not mentioned; could have been organizational, interpretation of the gospel, method of propagating the gospel etc.. The conflict had adversely affected the church. Yet, the two members were strongly commitment to the gospel and its advance along with Paul.

Greater is one’s zeal for the gospel, greater will be Satan’s deception and attacks. Growing in faith in the Lord is a threat to Satan’s strategy of deceiving men and women. It’s not always perfect bonhomie in the Church. When the Church grows, conflicts can be expected. At times we are over-zealous in interpreting and propagating the gospel. Our personal preferences/biases creep into the church, through the deception created by Satan. Many Churches fail due to internal friction. Address the conflicts truthfully in love rather than allowing them to prolong. Face the reality and find the solution by refocussing the minds on Jesus and magnifying Him. It’s His Gospel, He is the Saviour. We are only the carriers of His gospel. Jesus comes first and us, next; not the other way around. He is the Lord and we, the servants. The church is His bride, not our fiefdom.

In the midst of discordance in Philippi Church, Paul exhorts the believers to rejoice in every circumstance, because the Lord is near. Rather strange by human standards. How can one be joyful when things are falling apart? The way out is to realize that Jesus speaks to us through the Holy Spirit (John 16: 14-15). Jesus is still with us through the Holy Spirit. We rejoice because in Jesus we have our identity, purpose, provision, protection, and peace. His nature gives us great joy – one who always loves sacrificially, counsels wisely, forgives unconditionally, intercedes for us continuously with God, protects from Satan and provides for our needs so that we can serve Him. We are victors over Satan in Jesus. Rejoicing is more than merely being happy. It’s not about material possessions. It is experiencing the presence of Jesus in one’s soul. Rejoicing is a matter of the heart. It is a conscious choice/decision we make, to be joyful or mournful. A grateful heart always rejoices in the Lord for the free and precious gift of salvation.

Anxiety kills. It’s at the root of most illnesses. Anxiety arising out of difficulties takes away the joy of salvation. The antidote that Paul prescribes is to take our every concern prayerfully to God with thanksgiving. Not an easy task, when circumstances repeatedly turn out not what we want them to be. But Jesus invites us to come to Him when we are weary in this world: *Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest”*. It’s His invitation. Jesus wants to get involved in our life’s challenges. Go to God first; not others. Submitting our situation to Jesus for His wise counsel is an act of obedience to His commands. The Holy Spirit then counsels. Only such a relationship with Jesus gives us perfect peace in this world. God knows what is best for us; every time. Present the requests in faith; but not tell God how He must accede to our demands.

Pauls does not stop at exhorting the Philippi church (then and us, now) to settle their differences, rejoice in the Lord and not be anxious. The joy in the heart has to manifest in our behaviour/actions in the world we live in. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Pauls directs us to do whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely and admirable. What does God want us to desist/hate so that He is pleased with us?

Proverbs 6:16-19 says that God hates/detests “haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.” So, God is pleased with our behavioural expressions, on the contra, such as humility, honesty, love, solemnity, being sensible, being truthful and being factual. Standards for Christian walk of life are high. These are “absolutes” in a world where we make everything for our convenience “relative”. A very tough ask. Christian thought and behaviour are counter cultural in this world.

Wrap up

Resolve conflicts through the understanding of serving a living God in unity, the only true binding force. **Refocus the thinking away from inter-personal relationship issues to relationship with Jesus; to have true joy and peace in one’s heart.** Rejoice in every situation in faith that God is in control. Let the joy in the heart manifest in behaviour that pleases God. Let’s be God pleasers.

Keep your heart, soul and mind focused on Jesus for true peace & joy in this world.

For His glory, in gratitude.

Dr PLN Raju - Former Director (Resource Mobilization) The Leprosy Mission Trust India New Delhi



Don't lose heart – pray

Luke 18

We are living in most challenging times.....

We can so easily lose heart, but from this chapter, Jesus counsels us to pray!

PRAYER is the remedy for all situations – therefore "Pray without ceasing!"

1. Ongoing prayer keeps us IN A FAVOURABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER GOD! (vv1-8) The parable of the persistent widow and the mean judge is presented. What wins the day for the widow, is the fact, that she trusts resolutely in a/her Heavenly Father!

We too need to remember: 'Life is fragile – handle with prayer!'

2. Ongoing prayer keeps us REPENTANT! (vv9-14) The proud Pharisee and the contrite Tax Collector face-off in the temple. Here repugnant self-righteousness loses out to true repentance and renewed faith

Please work at keeping short accounts with God regarding your sin.

3. Ongoing prayer keeps us APPRECIATIVE OF LIFE'S MANY "SMALL BLESSINGS"! (vv15-17) Jesus requested children to come to Him: He prayed for them!

Do you still give thanks for your wife, children, food, home, clothes, job, friends?

4. Ongoing prayer keeps us ON THE 'NARROW ROAD'! (vv18-30) The Rich Young Ruler (so near, yet so far) he loved the 'broad road' more!

"What is impossible with man, is possible with God! "Eternal Life is in Jesus alone!"

5. Ongoing prayer kept JESUS ON HIS 'JUGGERNAUT-PATH' TO CALVARY! (vv31-34) Here Jesus tells of His imminent suffering, death and resurrection..... Even though this affirms OT prophecy, His disciples can't grasp it.

We need to prayerfully pursue God's perfect will for our own lives too!

6. Ongoing prayer keeps us 'CRYING OUT' FOR GOD! (vv35-43) Here a blind beggar teaches us about a desperateness we all need!

We must 'ask, seek, knock' until Jesus responds with His "What do you want?"

Conclusion: *2 Corinthians 4:7-9,16a – "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...so we do not lose heart." - Amen.*



Appreciate what you have

“Jesus, like Elijah and Elisha, was not sent only to the Jews.” Luke 4:21-30

“Familiarity breeds contempt.” That is what Jesus experienced when he paid a visit to His hometown, Nazareth. His townspeople knew Him very well. He had grown up among them. They knew His mother and foster father. Both were simple, maybe even rather poor people. While growing up, Jesus had learnt the carpenter’s trade. Then He left home about the age of 30, only to now return trying to teach people about God and claiming to be able to perform miraculous feats. They people were not impressed. They must have wondered what Jesus, the carpenter, was trying to prove. “Who does He think he is? Bo! Let Him go sit down.”

Jesus must have been upset with their attitude. Everywhere He had been before then Capernaum, Cana, Bethsaida, even Jerusalem..... people had accepted Him... most people, at least. But here in His own hometown, among His own people, His kith and kin, hardly anybody would take Him seriously. He expressed His disappointment with His country; or, in the more common version, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country”.

Familiarity can indeed breed contempt. That is true of persons (“prophets”). It is also true of institutions, customs and traditions. Take the church for instance, the Catholic Church. Some people have been Catholics all their lives. They were born into Catholic families, baptized, confirmed, married in church, and so on. If they are careful, their very familiarity can lead to contempt. They can begin to take them for granted, not seriously anymore. They will be in church and receive Holy Communion out of sheer routine, without adequately preparing themselves and no thanksgiving afterwards. They go to confession without real repentance and resolve to quit sinning. The result is that none of these exercises will bring them any spiritual benefits. That is the extreme of familiarity breeding contempt.

But familiarity need not breed contempt. It can and should rather breed better appreciation and love of what is ours. Familiarity between husband and wife should not breed contempt; neither should familiarity between parents and their children, between bosom friends, even between an employer and his employee. That is what should happen among us all, the children of God. We should appreciate, cherish and treasure what brings us together. Seek to know and understand God’s will in all that He teaches and directs us about. These has nourished the spiritual lives of countless generations of Christians for two millennia. They can still do the same for countless more generations for all the millennia yet to come.

We could pray thus: Lord, I seek to revere and learn from Your Church and Your servants whom you have so provided to guide me into everlasting salvation. Jesus, I trust in You.

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Do not let your hearts be troubled

John 14:1-3, 26-27

Have you ever really noticed that these words of Jesus, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled”* occur twice in John 14? The first time, in verse 1, they are followed by the exhortation *“Trust in God, trust also in me”* (NIV) or *“Believe in God, believe also in me”* (NRSV)

The second time, in verse 27, they follow Jesus’ promise of his peace and are followed by the exhortation, *“do not be afraid”*

The words, “Do not let”, show that we have a choice. When we encounter difficult situations or relationships or circumstances we can choose anxiety or peace; fear or faith; being troubled or trusting. Often we cannot choose our circumstances but we can choose our attitude to them. Will we allow them to trouble and disturb us or will we choose to trust God with them and look for the positives even in difficult situations?

Jesus gave us the key to overcoming anxiety and fear when he said, “Trust in me.” To trust someone we need to know them. The more we know Jesus and stay close to him the more we are able to trust that he has our best interests at heart and will not let us face anything that he will not enable us to cope with.

In addition to the exhortation to trust Jesus gives us the promise of his peace. *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*

Are you facing a troubling or difficult situation? What attitude are you choosing?
Today set your heart to choose peace and trust, then watch to see what God will do.

A quote from St Teresa of Avilla:

*Let nothing disturb you
Let nothing frighten you
All things are passing
God never changes
Patience obtains all things
Those who have God lack nothing
God alone is enough.*

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Psalm 119 – Part 8

Heth

⁵⁷You are my portion, LORD;
I have promised to obey your words.

⁵⁸I have sought your face with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.

⁵⁹I have considered my ways
and have turned my steps to your statutes.

⁶⁰I will hasten and not delay
to obey your commands.

⁶¹Though the wicked bind me with ropes,
I will not forget your law.

⁶²At midnight I rise to give you thanks
for your righteous laws.

⁶³I am a friend to all who fear you,
to all who follow your precepts.

⁶⁴The earth is filled with your love, LORD;
teach me your decrees.



The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

Acts 2 New International Version (NIV)

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ *“In the last days, God says,*

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ *Even on my servants, both men and women,*

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ *I will show wonders in the heavens above*

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ *The sun will be turned to darkness*

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ *And everyone who calls*

on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him:

“I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

²⁶ *Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;*

my body also will rest in hope,

²⁷ *because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,*

you will not let your holy one see decay.

²⁸ *You have made known to me the paths of life;*

you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

³⁵ *until I make your enemies*

a footstool for your feet”]

³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



Life with Holy Spirit – Part 1

There are two things I'd like to deal with:

The Fruit of the Spirit & The Gifts of the Spirit. The difference between **Being & Doing!**

Part 1

The Fruit of The Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance or patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

The **Greek word** used in Galatians 5:23 is "egkrateia", meaning "strong, having mastery, able to control one's thoughts and actions." The word "fruit" refers to the natural product of a living thing.

- Paul used "fruit" to help us understand the product of the work & effect of Holy Spirit, who lives inside every believer. *"Holy Spirit is in me for my sake, but He comes upon me for yours."* Bill Johnson

Definition

The "**Fruit of the Spirit**" is a result of, a natural byproduct of spending quality time with God. Becoming more like Him!

2

- The fruit of the Spirit is produced by Holy Spirit, not by the Christian believer. There is a difference between gifts and fruit. This may be illustrated by comparing a Christmas tree with an apple tree.

- A Christmas tree carries gifts. Each gift is attached to it by a single act and received from someone. No time or effort is required by the Christmas tree receiving the gift.

- On the other hand, there is **both time and hard work required to cultivate an apple tree**. To produce fruit, it must go through a series of stages that takes several years.

An apple tree

First, the seed must be placed in the earth.

Often after growth it's grafted onto another plant that provides strong roots

Over a period of years, the sprout grows into a tree.

In due course blossoms appear on the tree. Then these fall off and fruit begins to develop.

But if the tree is to become strong, the blossoms or the young fruit must be plucked off in the first years so that the tree's root system will develop to support a strong tree. Several years may pass before the apples are fit to eat.

At various stages in its growth an apple tree is very fragile. Strong winds may uproot the young tree, or at a later stage frost may destroy either the blossoms or the fruit.

In this process seed and fruit are inseparably linked to each other. Fruit must grow from a seed, but on the other hand it takes fruit to produce further seeds. The Greek word is singular, showing that "fruit" is a unified whole, not independent characteristics.

As we grow, all the characteristics of Christ will be manifested in our lives.

Dan Izzett - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



Life with Holy Spirit – Part 2

Just like physical fruit needs time to grow, the fruit of the Spirit will not ripen in our lives overnight. Like a successful gardener must battle against weeds & adverse weather to enjoy the sweet fruit they desire, we must constantly work to rid our lives of the “**weeds & adverse life situations**” of our old sin natures that want to choke out the work of the Spirit.

We can say “**no**” to sin and accept the “**way out**” that God faithfully provides by following Holy Spirit’s leading. *1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

As we give Holy Spirit more control of our lives, He begins to do in and through us what only He can do - **to shape us and grow us to look like Jesus**

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Since God’s goal for all His children is for us to be like Jesus

*Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined **to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*

This can only be achieved by the **consistent continued work of Holy Spirit** to rid our lives of the “acts of the sinful nature” and **display His fruit instead**.

Holy Spirit gives us the power we need to reject those old sinful desires.

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Life with Holy Spirit – Part 3

Therefore, the presence of the “fruit of the Spirit” is evidence that our character is becoming more like Christ’s. *Galatians 5.19-21 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Paul uses 9 characteristics to describe the fruit of the Spirit in the book of Galatians.

Galatians 5.22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

1 Love

☩ True, biblical love is a choice, not a feeling.

☩ It deliberately expresses itself in loving ways and always seeks the welfare of others.

☩ Biblical love is dependent on the giver’s character, not emotion.

For instance, a mature believer demonstrating love will not exercise his or her freedom if that action might harm another Christian in some way.

Definition The primary form of fruit! All the other fruit that follow must be understood as different ways in which **the fruit of love manifests itself.**

5

Romans 14.1 Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarrelling over disputable matters.

Love chooses to set aside one’s own preferences, desires, and sometimes even needs to put the other person first

Philippians 2.1-4 Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

2 Joy

Sometimes we Christians tend to downplay the meaning of joy. The Greek word translated as “joy” in Galatians 5 means “gladness and delight” – basically the same thing the world means when it talks about joy.

- It is a feeling of gladness based on our circumstances.

Sadly, the world’s joy cannot last because it is based on fleeting, physical circumstances.

☩ But the joy of the Lord is established in our spiritual, eternal circumstances.

☩ As we cling tight to Jesus, abiding daily in our saving relationship with Him, we will experience the fullness of joy He promised

John 15:4-11 ...vs:11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

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Life with Holy Spirit – Part 4

3 Peace

Definition The God-kind of joy is: Gladness and delight in knowing and serving God!

6

☒☒ The world doesn't offer much peace.

☒☒ The world cannot give genuine peace because the world doesn't know the One who is The Prince of peace.

☒☒ But for those who have the **Spirit of peace** within us, the peace of Christ is possible, no matter our circumstances.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

☺ We can reject the chaos of the world and embrace God's peace.

Philippians 4:4-9 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

A few steps to embrace the God-kind of peace

1. First, **choose** to rejoice in God and who He is.
2. Second, **bring** all your worries, fears, and concerns to God in prayer.
3. Third, **fill** your mind with God's truth.
4. Fourth, **choose** to think about the things of God.

Definition God's peace removes the desire to become anxious about anything, every situation in life.

7

4 Patience

We see very little patience in the world today, this is true even in the church.

☒ Maybe part of the reason is our fast-paced, want-it-now culture.

➤ As Christians we have everything we need to be patient because we have Holy Spirit living in us longing to **display His character** to those around us.

➤ Patient people **put up** with circumstances and other people, even when severely tried.

➤ Patient people **display** endurance, longsuffering, and perseverance.

Dan Izzett - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



Life with Holy Spirit – Part 5

5 & 6 Kindness and Goodness

The characteristics of “kindness” and “goodness” are closely related. This “**goodness in action**” reflects **God’s kindness and goodness** toward us. God demonstrated His kindness and goodness to us in our salvation and will continue to “show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us” for all eternity *Titus 3:3-7*

Definition Is the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry, frustrated or upset.

Definition Together they present the picture of one who not only possesses moral goodness and integrity, but also generously expresses it **in the way they act toward others**

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

7 Faithfulness

☐ We as Christians, experience the faithfulness of our Saviour Jesus who has redeemed us.

☐ Christian faithfulness therefore, is continued and consistent submission and obedience to the same Spirit **who provides** the **ability** for us to be faithful. Faithfulness is what God is & He expects the same from us!

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True

*To be **faithful** is to be Christ-like!*

Dan Izzett - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



Life with Holy Spirit – Part 6

8 Gentleness or Meekness

Definition The fruit of being faithful” is to be reliable or trustworthy all the time.

2 Timothy 2:25 Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, And in Paul’s letter to the church in Galatia, he wrote that those who have been caught in sin should be restored in a “spirit of gentleness”

*Galatians 6.1-6 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person **gently**. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and **in this way, you will fulfil the law of Christ**. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load. Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.*

There is warning sounded by Paul:

- In our desire to be gentle towards others we may have to compromise our personal convictions

Gentleness is the opposite of **self-assertiveness** and **self-interest**, key ingredient in unity and peace within the body of Christ *Ephesians 4.1-6 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one*

Definition

Is not weakness, but instead it is **strength under control**. Demonstrated by a life controlled by Holy Spirit.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

9 Self-Control

The last characteristic in Paul’s description of the fruit of the Spirit points us back to his list of the “*works of the flesh*” in *Galatians 5:19-21*.

This establishes an important spiritual principle:

✠ Christians who do not allow Holy Spirit to grow spiritual fruit in their own lives have no seed to sow into the lives of others.

The other fruit that follows must be understood as different ways in which **the fruit of love manifests itself**.

- Joy is love rejoicing
- Peace is love resting
- Longsuffering is love
- Gentleness or forbearing and kindness is love serving others
- Goodness is love seeking the best for others
- Faithfulness is love keeping its promises gentleness is love ministering to the hurts of others

Definition Those of us with the indwelling Holy Spirit have the strength to control our sinful desires, to be able to produce “**The Fruit Holy Spirit is wanting us to grow & display**”

Love: Is the primary form of all the fruit of the Spirit!

Self-control is love in control

Dan Izzett - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



Psalm 119 – Part 9

U Teth

⁶⁵ Do good to your servant
according to your word, LORD.

⁶⁶ Teach me knowledge and good judgment,
for I trust your commands.

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I obey your word.

⁶⁸ You are good, and what you do is good;
teach me your decrees.

⁶⁹ Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies,
I keep your precepts with all my heart.

⁷⁰ Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,
but I delight in your law.

⁷¹ It was good for me to be afflicted
so that I might learn your decrees.

⁷² The law from your mouth is more precious to me
than thousands of pieces of silver and gold



Partners in Christ

Many years ago I helped lead my churches Kindy to Year 3 Sunday morning program. I learnt many wonderful things, from how to be patient, how to let go and be in the moment, and sweets are excellent bribes for children. Especially if you return the children to their parents after a couple of hours, and they deal with the sugar crash!

We had a team which was blessed at providing engaging, Spirit led scripture lessons. Our team was so good at creating games which engaged the children. But there was an area where we all weak. None of us was especially good at craft. My idea of a successful children's craft is to hand them a piece of paper and a pen. But then two new people joined our team. And they were fantastic at craft. So now the children were able to do crafts which better engaged them with the story. Crafts which were fun.

This story reminds me as Christians, as followers of Jesus, we don't just do this alone. While Jesus calls us individually he calls us into community. I was reflecting on this as I read *Romans 16*. I think it can be easy to think of the Apostle Paul who wrote it as this Colossus who strides across the Roman world planting churches left and right.

The problem with this, is that it isn't true. Paul didn't do things alone. In the first fifteen verses of Romans 16 we see Paul mention by name or implication around 30 people and churches who he is greeting. Who are already doing gospel work in Rome. And Paul mentions people throughout his letter.

God used Paul fantastically. But Paul was never alone. Paul had people around him who were good at things he wasn't. And what they all had in common was their establishment in the knowledge of the Gospel. Their love for Jesus, and their desire that all would know Jesus (*Romans 16:25ff*). And God gave them different gifts to do this.

We see some examples in Paul's list of greetings. There is Phoebe, a financial benefactor. Priscilla and Aquillus who are also teachers of the gospel. Mary, who works hard for the church. Rufus' mother who loves deeply and well. And many more.

In the same way Paul's ministry was done in partnership with others who set their eyes on Jesus, so is ours. In the same way our children's leadership team was improved by having people who could do craft, The Leprosy Mission is improved by having people with different skill sets. As people who know Jesus, we are not alone. We are a team.

Tim Collison – Engagement Coordinator, TLM Australia



"Your right hand sustains me"

Psalm 18:35

She was 3 years old and had plenty of character and an independent spirit. The path they walked on was uneven and strewn with stones, broken glass, roots. Her father, concerned that she might fall and hurt herself said: "Let me hold your hand". The response was an emphatic "No".

They walked on side by side until the inevitable happened - she tripped and fell. As she picked herself up and dusted her knees, the offer was repeated and met with the same determined answer.

The journey continued. Once again her foot caught something and she went sprawling. This fall was worse, small traces of blood appeared on the scratches of hands and knees and her eyes filled with tears.

Dad looked at her with concern and lovingly said: "Do let me hold your hand". The reply was significant. "No, but let me hold yours". She realised she needed help, but she wanted to be in control. Father knew that it was not good enough but as she was adamant he let her take his hand and they walked on.

A little later she once again tripped and she immediately let go of his hand to try and protect herself. The fall was hard and painful and resulted in profuse bleeding and a flood of tears.

"Daddy, please hold my hand". Father happily took up the invitation and enveloped her trembling hand in his. So they walked on. Many times she tripped but each time he tightened his grip and kept her from falling. He was in control and able to protect her.

We don't know what all lies ahead of us as we embark on the journey of a new year. One thing is certain, there will be many dangers and challenges. Our loving Father offers us His strong hand to lead us, guide us and protect us.

What is our response?

*"Father, I know that without you I cannot handle life. Please take my hand and lead me.
With you in control I need not fear."*

Silvano Perotti - Secretary for Europe then Deputy International Director and Director for Support and Development TLMI
Born in Italy - retired in Switzerland.
Worked with TLMI until 1990.



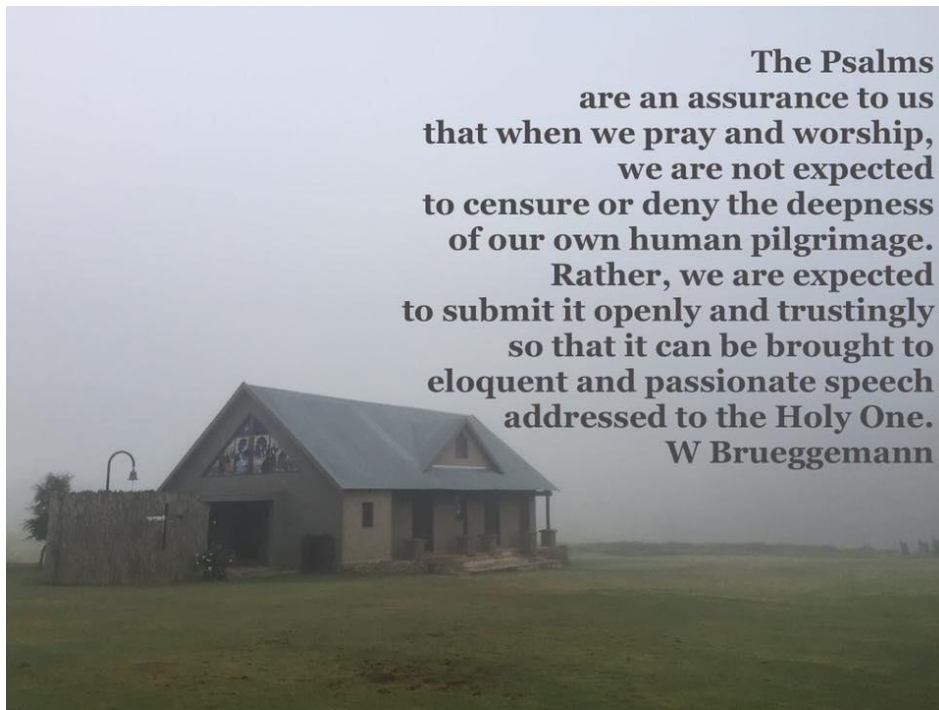
Keep praying the Psalms

Psalm 27: 1- 2 The Living Bible

The Lord is my light and my salvation; he protects me from danger—whom shall I fear?

² When evil men come to destroy me, they will stumble and fall!

³ Yes, though a mighty army marches against me, my heart shall know no fear!
I am confident that God will save me.



There is a place where I don't possess anything,
But it is also a place where I don't lack anything,
Because God is there.

WALTER BRUEGGEMANN

Erna Möller is a social worker with TLM Southern Africa since 1987.



Flawed tools

I bought a new cordless drill a while ago to replace the drill that was stolen at Christmas. It's a cheap, unknown brand, but it has been a joy to use it in recent weeks whilst fixing our home. It's light, compact and powerful with a battery that lasts for ever. It works far better than the expensive drill that was stolen from me. It has a feature missing from my previous drill, and that is a tiny, but intense white light which is supposed to illuminate the point at which the drill-bit bores into the wood. The problem is that the light shines on a spot a few centimetres below the point of contact. This is a pity, because I've been replacing hinges on the inside of cupboards and the light would have helped me greatly, if only it had shone in the right direction. Sadly, there's no way to fix it and so what would have been a great finishing touch goes unused – I suspect that the people who

We're all used to working with flawed tools, be they blunt chisels, skittish hard-drives or reports that omit vital information needed by our supporters. Sometimes even brand new equipment simply is not up to the task.

When things get really tough, we may feel that we are being expected to make "bricks without straw" [Exodus Ch 5]. [As an aside, isn't this chapter so remarkably contemporary – it could be a case study from a modern management book: labour disputes, productivity, targets, deadlines, ultimatums, communication, religious holidays, demographics, accountability ...]

Wouldn't it be amazing if we had access to an infallible tool, a tool that always gets to the heart of the matter? That's how the author of the Letter to the Hebrews describes the Bible *Hebrews 4: 12 – 13: For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

Unlike my drill, the Bible doesn't shine its light to the side. Those things that I'd love to hide from others and from God are fully illuminated in painful detail. Unlike the saws and planes in my workshop, the blade of this double-edged sword never dulls. Unlike my drill-bits, there is no substance which is too hard for this sword to penetrate. As a friend of mine said during a Bible study many years ago, "It's not the parts of the Bible I don't understand that worry me, it's the parts of the Bible I do understand that terrify me!"

We are blessed beyond measure to have access to this tool. Let us use it to shape "the thoughts and attributes of our hearts" for "by constant use" we train ourselves to "distinguish good from evil". [Hebrews 5:14]. If we want to be truly "alive and active" we can only be so if His word is at work in us.

"Lord, I get so intensely frustrated when trying to work with a blunt saw and I know that gives me a glimpse of how disappointed you are with me when I allow my edge to become dull through disobedience and laziness. Help me to allow the sword of your Word to excise the evil within so that I might be your worthy servant."

Peter Laubscher - Country Leader, Southern Africa. Peter and Elizabeth Laubscher have worked with the Leprosy Mission since 1981. They are blessed with three children. Peter cruises the waters of False Bay when he's not trying to polish scratches out of telescope mirrors.



Bypass

On May 9, 1967, the thoracic surgeon René Favaloro washes and scrubs his hands at the Cleveland Clinic in the United States for a historic operation. He intends to lead the blood past a narrowing in one of the coronary arteries of a patient. Favaloro takes a piece of a superficial vein on the 51-year-old woman's legs and attaches it to the right coronary artery. A few weeks later, a coronary artery X-ray shows that the operation has succeeded.

The Argentine surgeon Favaloro was not the first to try to replace a clogged coronary artery. But he was the first to succeed and has therefore gone to the medical history as the father of the bypass operations.

One of the greatest gift given by God to us is our intellect. God expect us to use it also in spiritual matters. But sometimes our intellect is a problem for us because God is bigger than our intellect and he can do things far beyond our thinking and imagination. So then God needs to bypass our intellect to fulfill his purpose. The challenge for us it let him do that and not only trust our own experience or limited understanding. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts”.* Isaiah 55:8-9

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” Eph 3:20

“Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.” Proverbs 28:26

In this spiritual bypass process made by God in his wisdom we will need:

The peace of God: *“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* Phil 4:7

Faith in God: *“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”* Hebr. 11:3

Trust in God: *“You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”* Psalm 139:5-6

Worshipping: *“So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.”* 1 Cor 14:15

Love: *“...and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”* Eph 3:19 *“Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”* 1 Cor13:7

Let us use the God-given gift of intellect but also be ready to lose control and hand over it to him who always is in control. When he wishes, let him bypass our limited understanding to fulfill his great and wonderful plans for us. It’s not always easy but it’s always the best for us.



Psalm 119 – Part 10

Yodh

- ⁷³Your hands made me and formed me;
give me understanding to learn your commands.
- ⁷⁴May those who fear you rejoice when they see me,
for I have put my hope in your word.
- ⁷⁵I know, LORD, that your laws are righteous,
and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.
- ⁷⁶May your unfailing love be my comfort,
according to your promise to your servant.
- ⁷⁷Let your compassion come to me that I may live,
for your law is my delight.
- ⁷⁸May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause;
but I will meditate on your precepts.
- ⁷⁹May those who fear you turn to me,
those who understand your statutes.
- ⁸⁰May I wholeheartedly follow your decrees,
that I may not be put to shame.



Psalm 119 – Part 11

⌋ Kaph

- ⁸¹ My soul faints with longing for your salvation,
but I have put my hope in your word.
- ⁸² My eyes fail, looking for your promise;
I say, “When will you comfort me?”
- ⁸³ Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke,
I do not forget your decrees.
- ⁸⁴ How long must your servant wait?
When will you punish my persecutors?
- ⁸⁵ The arrogant dig pits to trap me,
contrary to your law.
- ⁸⁶ All your commands are trustworthy;
help me, for I am being persecuted without cause.
- ⁸⁷ They almost wiped me from the earth,
but I have not forsaken your precepts.
- ⁸⁸ In your unfailing love preserve my life,
that I may obey the statutes of your mouth.



REST beyond the River

There are some songs that move me to tears and Fanny Crosby's 'In the Cross' is one of them. It's the memory of my father singing lustily albeit out of tune, the solemn Good Friday readings followed by the congregational song, and later when I gave my life to Jesus, the lyrics started to take a new meaning, all this leads up to the story of the song of my life.

The Cross has always moved me, its pain and suffering becoming much real as I grow older. Lately, it's the Rest that has captivated me ... *"Till my raptured soul shall find . Rest Beyond the river".*

"I am the Lord your God that has brought you out of slavery - Exodus 20:2.

Let us ask ourselves this question – "Am I a slave of my work, my deadlines, my laptop, my cellphone, my messages, my notifications? Unfortunately my response is "Yes" as probably for some of you too! When the Israelites were asked to make bricks, it was more, more, more ...faster, faster, faster.

Isn't the situation similarmore patients, more proposals, more finding, more emails, more meetings....the list is endless. God says 'I have brought you out, Do you want to be shackled again? The world says 'run faster, work harder, buy bigger and trade better.

Genesis 2: 2 says – God rested.

The world says doGod says stop.

The world says be BusyGod says Trust me Rest.

What prevents us to stop? Let's understand that in quietness....

Isaiah 30: 15. This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.

Joydepa Darlong Dr is a Family Physician, working as Consultant and Deputy Superintendent. For the past 15 years at The Leprosy Mission Hospital, Purulia, West Bengal, India.



Daniel- role model for Christian leadership

There are good numbers of God's men in the Bible who have been influencing me from last many years, especially when I was working for TLM. As a Christian leader I was greatly impressed by the personality and qualities of Daniel. I learned from other people also about his character. I learn the qualities of Daniel and tried to practice them in my personal and profession life. Daniel sets very good examples of Christian leadership which are very important for the management of the organization and also our personal life.

Daniel 6 (1-9) We come to know that Daniel was a young man from a noble family of Jerusalem. He was captured when Nebuchadnezzar took over Jerusalem and was taken to Babylon. He was chosen to serve in the palace of the king in a senior position. Then many thing changed as new king was appointed. But Daniel's conviction and courage to serve God remained strong and constant. We also learn that this conviction of Daniel to serve his master did not always gave him comfortable times and situations. Daniel had to face furnace and also the lions in the den. Sometimes God sends uncomfortable circumstances to us, to only to test our trust on Him but also make us strong in our faith. Three words to describe Daniel:

Verse -3, Daniel was Exceptional: Among all the administrators of the palace, Daniel stood outshined out and impressed the king. He was distinguished among other officers. His other colleagues were not happy and jealous when King Darius decided to make him responsible for the entire kingdom. The other officers of the palace decided to get rid of Daniel and they started plotting against him to find a way to bring shame to Daniel and to convict him. So the king would remove him from this very prestigious position. Many spies were sent out to find the weaknesses and faults to Daniel but they could not find any fault in Daniel. He had extra ordinary personality as administrator.

Verse 4 – Daniel was Trustworthy: Daniel was an honest man as an administrator. He was neither corrupt, nor negligent. His enemies made many efforts to catch Daniel but they could not find anything against him. He was hard working and diligent. He was excellent in his work. Integrity was one of the main qualities of his character. He was honest in his dealing and relationship. His enemies could not find him dishonest. He never misused his power of senior position.

Verse 4 – Daniel was Godly: Daniel had fear of God and also had great in Him. He was righteous in all his dealings. Daniel has regular habit to pray to God. We learn that he used to pray to God in all situations. Daniel still manifested the uncompromising faithfulness to God. He did not obey the Decree of King Darius but prayed to God. He never compromised his conviction to God and not wavered in his loyalty to God.

This brings to us following reminders as Christian administrator.

1. We have to be Exceptional in our personal and professional life, like Daniel. We have to shine out in the crowd.
2. Be Trustworthy and diligent – not negligent and corrupt.
3. Be Godly – do everything for God and by taking His help. Talk to God in all matters.

This will not give us guarantee for an easy life. But there is guarantee that God will help us through our difficult situations.

Questions: a.) Do we have these qualities in our life – family and work place?

b.) Do people say about us.....? We behave or work like this because we are Christian or they say..... We behave like this despite being Christian.

Daniel was man of high wisdom and piety.....like Noah and Job. (Ezekiel 28:3, 14: 14, 20)

Pradeep & Sarah Failbus Worked for 39 years and 29 years with TLM(most at Anandaban,Nepal) Now retired and settled at: Kathgodam, District Nainital Uttarakhand, India



Naaman healed of leprosy

2 Kings Chapter 5

The account of Naaman's healing from leprosy is well known and often quoted in Leprosy Mission circles. However I was greatly helped in my understanding of it while reading a recent contribution from Penny Boshoff in the Scripture Union publication Daily Bread.

We usually concentrate on the larger than life characters in the story – the prophet Elisha and General Naaman – the head of the army of Aram. After all, this happened as part of Elisha's amazing ministry in Israel, and Naaman's senior status brought low with leprosy draws all our attention. But when we look a little closer we, find God working through people who we may not have noticed or think of as insignificant.

This whole thing would not have happened if it hadn't been for a young Jewish girl taken into captivity by the army of Aram who ends up working in Naaman's household. She is the one who shows a full measure of faith by commending God's prophet servant – Elisha. Just imagine if Naaman's costly mission to seek healing had failed and he returned unchanged. This servant girl would surely have been the subject or much ridicule and heavy punishment. And did you notice we're never even told her name? Unfortunately, in those days servant girls were held in very low esteem and this omission by whoever first wrote this story down is not surprising. It is quite amazing that Naaman takes her advice, and the King of Aram gives his approval to the plan – so God's plan is fulfilled.

Now the scene changes and we are outside Elisha's house somewhere in Israel. But much to Naaman's annoyance, Elisha stays inside and sends his servant Gehazi with a very welcome message – just go and wash in the local river and you'll be fine! General Naaman had come all this way; he had secured letters from his own king; he had just met with the king of Israel, and he had brought with him a large sum of money (check out how much ten talents of silver is worth) to reward the prophet. We can imagine the anger boiling up inside him when Elisha wouldn't come out to personally meet such an important, wealthy and well-connected person.

But who saves the day? Again it's the insignificant and un-named servants of Naaman who very carefully and tactfully suggest he should follow Elisha's simple instructions. At least Naaman does get to meet Elisha face to face in the end when he sees that he is fully cured.

I think this story illustrates our fallen human nature so well. We all tend to give attention to the important people of this world, often rightly so if they are guiding or leading us. But unfortunately we also tend to ignore or discount those whom our societies so often see as unimportant.

One of the great joys very early on during my time in the mission was to see the start and the rise of IDEA together with national or local organisations. These were set up and run by people affected by leprosy enabling them to have a voice and to use it (see <https://www.idealeprosydignity.org/>). Somehow we had missed this need for so long in our ministry. So it's worth asking ourselves, who else are we missing? Are there people that we should be listening to more – people whose lives God is working through just as he did through the servant girl and Naaman's servants.



“Who do you say that I AM?”

A great question, from a great person.

Notice in *Matthew 16,15*, when Jesus asked “*Who do you say that I am?*” some of the disciples kind of avoided the focus of the question. They answered, “Well some say you are this and others say you are that...”

Who do YOU say God/Jesus is?

If you ask God or Jesus who they are, they are not ‘backward in coming forward’. God says “I AM, that I AM”, “I AM God Almighty”, I the Lord who heals you” “I AM merciful” Jesus says, “I AM The Light of The World ”I AM The Good Shepherd” (and much more!)

So who do you say “I am” when it comes to yourself? What are the “I am” stories you tell yourself? (Or you tell others about you?)

Is your version of “Well, some say...” like this?:

“Like, my dad says...I’ll always ...or I’ll never...”

“My teacher always told me...”

“An old boyfriend once said...”

Or do you say to yourself:

“I am scared... I am lacking... I am not good enough...”

That’s not what God would say about YOU...

In Proverbs we read “As a man thinkth...so is he”, so we need to truly believe Him in our hearts and instead say:

I AM STRONG
I AM COURAGEOUS
I AM RICH
I AM A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN
I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Because The Great I AM is all of those things (and so much more!) and He reckons if we want to Glorify His Name, it would be great for you to start with:

“I am”



On which path are you my friend?!

1) THE PATH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TOOK - (Philippians 2:8,9)

“And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the Name that is above every name...”
 -“Thank You God for sending Jesus, thank You Jesus that You came..”

2) THE PATH SINNERS-CUM-SAINTS MUST TAKE – (Ephesians 2:8,9)

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

-“Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me,
 I once was lost but now I’m found, I once was blind but now I see...”

3) THE PATH CHURCH HISTORY HAS TAKEN – (Galatians 2:8,9)

“For He Who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the Jews worked also through me, Paul, for mine to the Gentiles, and when James and Peter and John who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the Jews.” And thus in history, the restoration of Israel and the restoration of the Church began!

4) THE PATH OUR FORLORN WORLD IS TAKING - (Colossians 2:8,9)

“See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to the elementary spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells in bodily form.”
 - ‘Vanity fair’ continues to vaunt itself against the invincible Christ!

5) THE PATH THE ENEMY IS TAKING – (2 Thessalonians 2:8,9)

“Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of His mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is by activity of satan with all power, false signs and wonders” -Satan and his cohorts are on a slippery slope to Hell !

6) THE PATH CHRISTIAN MEN AND WOMEN TAKE – (1 Timothy 2:8,9)

“...men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control.....”

Thank You Lord for helping us men become more like You, and thank You Lord for my wife Iris, who mostly is modest and self-controlled!

CONCLUSION: Revelation 3:8 – “I know your ‘ways’.

Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept My Word and have not denied My Name.” - Amen.

Otto Kingsley is the Cape Regional Director of TLM(SA), operating from Cape Town, RSA.



Psalm 119 – Part 12

↳ Lamedh

⁸⁹Your word, LORD, is eternal;
it stands firm in the heavens.

⁹⁰Your faithfulness continues through all generations;
you established the earth, and it endures.

⁹¹Your laws endure to this day,
for all things serve you.

⁹²If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.

⁹³I will never forget your precepts,
for by them you have preserved my life.

⁹⁴Save me, for I am yours;
I have sought out your precepts.

⁹⁵The wicked are waiting to destroy me,
but I will ponder your statutes.

⁹⁶To all perfection I see a limit,
but your commands are boundless.



Psalm 119 – Part 13

n Mem

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love your law!

I meditate on it all day long.

⁹⁸ Your commands are always with me
and make me wiser than my enemies.

⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers,
for I meditate on your statutes.

¹⁰⁰ I have more understanding than the elders,
for I obey your precepts.

¹⁰¹ I have kept my feet from every evil path
so that I might obey your word.

¹⁰² I have not departed from your laws,
for you yourself have taught me.

¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!

¹⁰⁴ I gain understanding from your precepts;
therefore I hate every wrong path

Authors in Alphabetical Order

Textuarium

Allan Ekstedt	21 June		Exodus 20,2	24 June
Belinda Pettman	27 June		2 Kings 5	26 June
Dan Izzett	10 – 15 June		Psalm 18,35	18 June
Erna Möller	19 June		Psalm 27	19 June
Joydeepa Darlong MD	24 June		Psalm 119	1, 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30 June
Kathleen Gavin	7 June		Daniel 6	25 June
Moses Onoh MD	6 June		Matthew 16,15	27 June
Otto Kingsley	5, 28 June		Mark 1,40-41	3 June
Peter Laubscher	20 June		Luke 4,21-30	6 June
Pradeep and Sarah Failbus	25 June		Luke 18	5 June
Raju, PLN Dr	4 June		John 14,1—3, 26-27	7 June
Silvano Perotti	18 June		John 15,4-11	12 June
Tim Collison	17 June		Acts 2	9 June
Trevor Durston	26 June		Romans 16	17 June
Yuek Ming Poon	3 June		2 Cor 3,17-18	11 June
			Galatians 5,22-23	10 June
			Ephesians 4,1-6	15 June
			Philippians 4,7	10 June
			Philippians 4,4-9	13 June
			Philippians 4,1-9	4 June
			Titus 3,3-7	14 June
			Hebrews 4,12-13	20 June
			Revelation 3,8	28 June

The Bridge - TLM Daily Devotions

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