



Monday, October 8, 2012

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 22:1-15

Words of desperation, suffering and lament begin this plea to God. In the final week of his life, Jesus knew the terrible things that awaited him in Jerusalem; yet he went, bowing his will to his Father's. Yet, like the psalmist, he also was confident that God would sustain him and would be glorified through his suffering.

**REFLECT-**

- Mark this psalm in your Bible so that you may turn to it when suffering touches your life and remember that Jesus drew from it for comfort when he hung on the cross (vs. 1), suffering so that your sins might be taken away forever.

**PRAY-**

Loving Father, help me to have faith that you are always with me and will never leave me without your comfort and strength. Amen.

Tuesday, October 9, 2012

**READ-** The Epistle: Hebrews 4:12-16

One of the most beautiful and comforting passages in the bible affirms that because of Jesus' saving work, we can now face our time of judgment before God's throne with assurance of mercy. God's "word" – embodied in Jesus, communicated through the scripture, and empowered through the Holy Spirit – IS living and active through each of us.

**REFLECT-**

- Each day as we pray, we can be encouraged by verse 16 that we can come to God boldly with confidence that he will provide everything we need. Thanks be to God for that assurance!

**PRAY-**

O God, I claim that promise of scripture today that as your beloved child, I can come to you simple trust, knowing that your goodness is bigger than my badness and your power to forgive is greater than my power to sin. Thank you for your abundant mercy and blessing! Amen.

Wednesday, October 10, 2012

**READ-** The Old Testament: Job 23:1-9, 16-17

In the midst of his suffering, Job cries out for God to give him a hearing in which he can prove his innocence. In preceding passages, his "friends" have assured him that the tragedy that happened to him is a result of his own sins. Job rejects that argument; yet God seems curiously absent and unresponsive.

**REFLECT-**

- The question of why God permits innocents to suffer is one with which faithful people have struggled throughout the ages. As if to add insult to injury, Job feels that God has abandoned him. Yet he continues to cry out to God. Perseverance in prayer is an important faith skill for us to learn.

**PRAY-**

Lord, we do not understand why good people suffer; yet we know that Jesus told us that you are with us at all times and your love will sustain us in all circumstances. Amen.

Thursday, October 11, 2012

**READ-** The Gospel: Mark 10:17-31

Jesus taught in this passage that great wealth and possessions can be a tremendous stumbling block to our faith. Our society encourages us to seek many material things as a route to happiness. We feel they give us ease, pleasure and security; God wants us to depend completely upon him for our needs, not on things of this world.

**REFLECT-**

- You may not consider yourself rich financially, but by the standards of most of the world, you ARE rich. In what ways may concern about your possessions keep you from doing God's will fully? Giving sacrificially to help someone in need is really about how much we trust God to take care of us. How much do you trust?

**PRAY-**

Father, show me a way today that I can give from my abundance to help someone in need so that I may learn to trust you more. Amen.

Friday, October 12, 2012

**ACT-**

Focus Verse: Mark 10:27b

"For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

Is there a situation on your heart today which feels overwhelming or impossible to you? It might be the state of our nation and world, a dire health situation, a badly broken relationship, an addiction, or some other trial. Throughout the day today, lift that situation to God in prayer, asking for healing, wholeness, justice, strength and peace. Pray as Job did, persevering even if you do not receive immediate resolution or the outcome you had hoped. Continue to lift your concern to God's attention, trusting that he CAN and WILL work for his good purpose.