



Monday, August 19, 2013

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 71:1-6

This is a wonderful passage to mark in your Bible as a source of strength in difficult times. Using images of God's strength – a rock and fortress – the psalmist emphasizes that God is always there for us; God is trustworthy and will never leave us alone to face our trials.

**REFLECT-**

- The psalmist writing this passage says God has been his hope "from his youth". His confidence and reliance upon God has come through years of experience in God's gracious love and care. Think about a time in your life where God took care of you in ways you never expected or perhaps even understood at the time. This is your assurance of God's care for you in times to come.

**PRAY-**

Thank you, O God, for your steadfast love and that I can always trust you in good times and in times of sorrow and difficulty. Amen.

Tuesday, August 20, 2013

**READ-** Old Testament: Jeremiah 1:4-10

God called the prophet Jeremiah to speak for him when he was very young. God responds to Jeremiah's protest about his youth that he will be with him, give him the words to speak and that he should not be intimidated.

**REFLECT-**

- God gives each of us gifts and abilities to be used in his service. We may sometimes feel reluctant or inadequate but with God's guidance and the power of the Holy Spirit, we – like Jeremiah – are often able to do many things we would not have expected. What is God calling you to do today? How will you respond?

**PRAY-**

Lord, help me to be aware of the ways in which you have gifted me for your service and give me the courage to respond to your call. Amen.

Wednesday, August 21, 2013

**READ-** The Epistle: Hebrews 12:18-29

Paul reminds his readers here that the old way of worship under Jewish law going through a priest was replaced with us having direct access to God because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. He warns them of the danger of rejection this amazing gift of salvation and that the new kingdom of God is coming soon – and we must be ready.

**REFLECT-**

- What are the things that distract you and tempt you to turn away from focusing your attention on God and his will for your life? If that new kingdom of which Paul speaks came to pass today, would you be ready?

**PRAY-**

Father, teach me how to clear away the things that prevent me from doing your will. Give me the insight, strength and courage to let them go. Amen.

Thursday, August 22, 2013

**READ-** The Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

Once again, we find Jesus in conflict with the religious authorities over doing something on the Sabbath. The Pharisees had developed very stringent rules about what was acceptable on the Sabbath and expected other Jews to adhere to them. Jesus makes it clear here that compassion trumps any rule or law since that is God's priority.

**REFLECT-**

- Jesus emphasizes here the extreme importance which God places on taking care of those who are hurting or in need. Keeping Sabbath is one of God's commandments to us; yet Jesus shows us what is most important. Is showing care and compassion for others a priority in your life?

**PRAY-**

O God, help me to make your priorities my priorities. Help me to live into Jesus' commands to love one another with my time and resources. Amen.

Friday, August 23, 2013

**ACT-**

**Focus Verse:** Psalm 71:8

**My mouth is filled with your praise, and with your glory all day long.**

Many days we are so preoccupied with the details of our lives – all the many things we must get done in the course of a day – that we fail to be aware of all the glorious works of God all around us. The beauty of trees, flowers, sky; the song of the birds and the breeze that cools us; the love of family and friends; the roof over our head and the food on our table – all good gifts from God. As you go about your day, take the time to notice all the ways God has blessed you today and let your mouth be filled with his praise!