



Monday, September 30, 2013

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 137

The psalmist is writing from captivity in Babylonia. Jerusalem has been destroyed and many of the Israelites have been taken away to be slaves. Their captors ridicule them and demand they sing their holy songs for their entertainment. They must remember the stories and heritage of their people so they can survive this time of trouble.

**REFLECT-**

- Have you ever felt surrounded by people and circumstances that are totally opposed to your moral, ethical and spiritual beliefs? Have you ever been ridiculed for your beliefs and actions? How do you hold fast to your faith in that kind of situation? What gives you hope, strength and courage?

**PRAY-**

Lord, each day we live in a culture that does not support our Christian values. Help me to be an example of Christ's love to those around me, in spite of resistance or difficulty. Amen.

Tuesday, October 1, 2013

**READ-** Old Testament: Lamentations 1:1-6

Written during the same period as the Psalm, the whole book of Lamentations is an expression of grief over the fall of Jerusalem from those who were left behind after many of the people were taken into captivity in Babylon. They are clear that God is punishing them for their disobedience and faithlessness.

**REFLECT-**

- Have you ever felt that your life was in ruins – that everything you valued has been suddenly taken away? We can feel free to openly express our pain, frustration, anger, bitterness or fear to God and ask for comfort and strength.

**PRAY-**

Lord, I thank you that you are strong enough and loving enough to handle any crisis that may come in my life. Help me to trust you. Amen.

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

**READ-** The Epistle: II Timothy 1:1-14

Timothy was highly regarded by the Apostle Paul and appears in many of his letters to the churches Paul founded. Paul makes the point that Timothy had strong Christian teaching and upbringing through his Jewish grandmother and mother and now it is his duty to carry that torch of faith to others in the same faithful, courageous way.

**REFLECT-**

- Who are the people in your life who have helped to nurture and shape your faith? Who do you now have the opportunity to influence to be Christian believers? You are a torchbearer for Christ. Are you bearing that torch openly or keeping it hidden?

**PRAY-**

Father, thank you for those who made it possible for me to know the gospel of Jesus Christ. Help me to be a faithful witness so that others may hear the good news as well. Amen.

Thursday, October 3, 2013

**READ-** The Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

Jesus tells his disciples in this parable that even the tiniest bit of faith can do huge things through the power of the Holy Spirit. But, we must remember that we are servants of Christ; our work will not always be easy, nor will there always be praise or thanks for doing God's will.

**REFLECT-**

- Is there something you feel God calling you to do that you have resisted because you think you are not up to the task? Take your "mustard seed" of faith and God can use you in ways you cannot yet imagine. Risk it – go for it. Step out in faith and prayer.

**PRAY-**

O God, take my feeble efforts and multiply them for your glory. You're your servant – use me to do your will today. Amen.

Friday, October 4, 2013

**ACT-**

**Focus Verse:** II Timothy 1:8-9

**Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord... but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace.**

Paul cautioned Timothy not to be "ashamed of the testimony about our Lord". Each time we have a real opportunity to share our faith with someone and fail to do so, we are in effect "ashamed" of the gospel of Christ. Look for chances you may have today to speak up for Christ, to let someone else know how important your faith is in your life, what God's grace has done for you, and how their life might change for the better by opening their heart to the power of the Holy Spirit. You are "saved" and "called" to do this by God.