

Good News Daily

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Sunday, March 7

Psalm 93 *The LORD reigns.... The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.... Your statutes stand firm....* (vv.1, 5 NIV)

It is dark and cold this New England December morning just before dawn. I have no doubt in my mind that the sun will rise in a few minutes and bring light to this day and the next and the next. I have no doubt that by the time these words are read the days will be longer, the sun higher in the sky, and early spring flowers will be poking through the melting snow. “The LORD reigns... The world is firmly established”—we have security and stability in an otherwise insecure and unstable world.

With erratic stock markets and governments toppling around the world, with uncertainty of what drivers on the road around us will do next or even our safety strolling through the park, we could easily despair and be forever looking behind us. Thanks be to God we have a Lord who is “from all eternity” (v.2) and “mightier than the breakers of the sea” (v.4) whose “statutes stand firm.”

Where are you seeking stability? Is it in the world or is your hand firmly in the grasp of the Creator of the universe?

Jeremiah 6:9-15; Psalm 96; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Mark 5:1-20

Monday, March 8

Romans 4:1-12 *What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”* (v.3)

We live in a performance driven society. Look at the magazine covers in the supermarket and you can find all the answers for success: “Ten Easy Steps to Remain Young Forever.” “Five Actions You Can Take to Achieve Total Financial Security.” “Seven Secrets to Lose Weight and Gain a Beautiful Body.” All you have to do is buy the magazine and do exactly what is prescribed, and you will achieve “success.” It is all in your hands—perform and you will be rewarded.

The Lord offers something very different: a relationship with Him that is not based on performance, or “works,” but on faith. Paul reminds the Romans how Abraham came to faith. Was it by doing something (circumcision)? No, “Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). Thanks be to God that “by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Jeremiah 7:1-15; Psalm 80; John 7:14-36

Tuesday, March 9

Romans 4:13-25 *The words, “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.* (vv.23-24)

Abraham believed and was declared righteous. Everything Jesus claimed—including the justification of all who receive him—was guaranteed by his Resurrection. The Resurrection is crucial because it accomplishes our salvation. Later in Romans Paul writes, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). The Bible is trustworthy and contains all things necessary for our salvation. Do you think God would mislead us on such an important point as the Resurrection?

If you hear people raise questions about whether Jesus actually rose from the dead, remember the consequences if he did not. The Resurrection is the heart of our faith; take it away and faith is destroyed. We can trust God’s word when it proclaims, “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:20), and all who believe in Jesus are declared righteous by what he has done.

Praise God!

Jeremiah 7:21-34; Psalm 78:1-39; John 7:37-52

Wednesday, March 10

Romans 5:1-11 *For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!* (v.10)

How should we respond if we have been reconciled to God? We should act like we believe it. Paul urged the Romans to “rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation” (v.11). The word he uses for rejoice means to express great confidence in something that is vitally important, to boast. He tells the Romans to boast, not about themselves, but about what God has done. Christians today need to rejoice—to boast—continuously in the fact that we have been reconciled by God’s grace.

Not only are we to rejoice, but we are to tell others about God’s love and grace and to treat every person we meet with the realization that Jesus died for them as well. “Not yet” Christians, especially, should be able to hear from us that Christ came “at just the right time, when we were still powerless” (v.6) to make ourselves whole in God’s love.

Jeremiah 8:18—9:6; Psalm 119:97-120; John 8:12-20

Thursday, March 11

Romans 5:12-21 *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.* (v.19)

As much as we might like to believe that people are getting better and better because of what we have achieved—instant world-wide communication, sophisticated educational systems, and modern technology—the reality is we are not exempt from the rule of sin and death inherited from Adam. If you believe this an overstatement, turn on the television news, read some newspapers and magazines, or examine your own life and how you relate to the people around you. If we were honest, we could see much that confirms Paul’s assessment.

The “bad news” continues, but the “good news” is much more powerful. Through God’s abundance of grace in the once for all sacrifice on the cross, our sinful, rebellious nature is transformed. As we repent and turn from our sinfulness and acknowledge the ways in which God reveals Himself in His Son, we are changed from Adam’s sinful nature into the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And that’s Good News!

Jeremiah 10:11-24; Psalms 83, 42, 43; John 8:21-32

Friday, March 12

Romans 6:1-11 *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?* (v.3)

There is a union created between the believer and his or her Lord: if anyone is “in Christ” by faith, they die with Christ. When God the Father beheld the cross of Calvary, He saw his Son dying for our sins; but He also saw all believers dying in Christ to their sins as well. The sins of all people were placed on Jesus and all who believe are united with him in his death. His death for sin is our death to sin.

Jesus came into the world not only to deliver us from the penalty of sin and death, but to give us victory over the daily, hourly living of our lives, the joys and the troubles, the good times and the bad. As we let go and permit his death and Resurrection to become a reality in our lives, we lose our life for his sake and we receive a rebirth—so that “we too may live a new life” (v.4).

Jeremiah 11:1-8, 14-20; Psalm 88; John 8:33-47

Saturday, March 13

John 8:47-59 *Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing."* (v.54a)

The first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, “What is the chief end of man?” followed by the answer, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.” I struggle with priorities and all too often make decisions based on what brings glory to me, rather than glory to God.

As we struggle with both the big and small decisions in our lives, it's easy to lose focus on what glorifies God. Can a cleaner house wait a few extra moments while I visit a lonely, elderly person with lots of time on her hands? Glory to God!

Can I add a few extra items of groceries to my shopping basket so a family in a homeless shelter can have a special meal? Glory to God!

Can I sit and listen to a friend who is hurting and not think of a thousand other things I could be doing? Glory to God!

As we struggle with the priorities and distractions in our lives, we need to pause and ask whether our actions glorify God or ourselves. Walk with the King today, be a blessing, bring glory to God, and enjoy Him forever.

Jeremiah 13:1-11; Psalms 87, 90; Romans 6:12-23

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