

Good News Daily

Volume XXI

September 5-11, 2021

Number 36

Sunday September 5

Psalm 63 *I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely.* (v.8 NLT)

When I was a little girl, I often wanted to walk by myself swinging my arms. I think, like most kids, I didn't always want to be held in my parents' grasp unable to roam to my heart's content. Yet, when my parents thought that we were entering a dangerous situation, they insisted that I hold onto their hand. No arguments.

I learned quickly that sometimes it was a good thing to be clinging to my parents' hands. I was safe as long as my hand was held securely in theirs. They kept me from being hit by vehicles. They pulled me out of the reach of overenthusiastic animals who thought I was a toy. And they guided me through the maze of people on sidewalks.

God wants to do the same thing for us. He wants to keep His children safe—our hands clinging to His. When we are holding His hand, we are held securely. He will never let go of us.

1 Kings 12:21-33; Psalm 98; Acts 4:18-31; John 10:31-42

Monday September 6

Psalm 52 *All day long you plot destruction. Your tongue cuts like a sharp razor; you're an expert at telling lies. You love to destroy others with your words, you liar!* (vv.2, 4)

When I was working on my Masters in Social Work, I did my internship at BETA House which is a home for unwed pregnant teenagers. The girls I worked with often came from environments where they had been verbally abused, physically abused, or both. Many of them had such low self-esteem that they didn't even know they were being verbally abused. They thought they deserved to be talked to that way.

Our words can be used as weapons or given as gifts. There is great power in the words we use with others. We can choose to use them to build someone up or tear them down. We learn how to use words by watching how our parents, neighbors, teachers, and others use them.

After working with these young women, I began to understand that my words can wound a person, or they can heal a wound. I realized that most days I needed God's help to control my tongue. So, I began praying, "Lord, guard my mouth. Help my words to build people up today, not tear them down."

1 Kings 13:1-10; Psalm 41; Philippians 1:1-11; Mark 15:40-47

Tuesday September 7

Philippians 1:12-30 *And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News.* (v.12)

When I first starting writing *Healing Thoughts*, for the All Saints Healing Ministry in 2008, I had many people ask me if I wished that I could change the things that had happened in my life. Granted, my teenage and young adult years were not filled with the best memories. I had dropped out of high school, become an alcoholic and drug addict, gotten pregnant out of wedlock—just to name a few.

But I always answer their question with an emphatic, "No!" To be honest, I wouldn't have had anything to write for *Healing Thoughts* if not for my testimony of how God had redeemed all those awful times.

Like Paul, every difficult thing that has happened in my life has helped to spread God's message of healing. I am here writing this devotion today because God took the mess that was my life and made it into a message of hope and healing. When we love God and give Him our lives, He works everything, all the messes and bad things, for good (see Romans 8:28).

1 Kings 16:23-34; Psalm 45; Mark 16:1-20

Wednesday September 8

Philippians 2:1-11 *Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.* (v.4)

Several years ago, I went from a role of leadership in my job to a lower position. It wasn't something I had chosen. And to be honest, at first it was a bitter pill to swallow. My pride fought the decision. I even debated leaving. I had to have several agitated conversations with God before I began the process of accepting my new role.

I can't pinpoint the exact time when there was a shift in my attitude towards my new position. But one day, I realized that the services we offered the community were way more important than my job title. I truly believed that we were making a difference in people's lives. I knew that I had to humble myself to embrace my new job position so that I could serve those people through my new role.

Once I stopped making it all about me, God showed me that my new position actually blessed me to get paid to do all the creative activities I loved. This was the job He'd created me to do!

1 Kings 17:1-24; Psalm 119:49-72; Matthew 2:1-12

Thursday September 9

Psalm 50 *"Make thankfulness your sacrifice to God, and keep the vows you made to the Most High. Then call on me when you are in trouble, and I will rescue you and you will give me glory."* (vv.14-15)

Oh, how easy it is to grumble and complain right now as we enter the fifth month of a pandemic. Let's be honest, it can be hard to take our eyes off the chaos.

Facebook can be the worst culprit for the spread of bad news. But one day in April, I got a request to join a group of people who were choosing to focus on the good things happening during these trying times. This group was to be an oasis from the Covid storm. The group went from about 50 people to 1000s overnight. People were starving for good news. Posts about people doing acts of kindness for their neighbors, co-workers, and strangers filled the feed. The entire atmosphere of that group was one of praise and thankfulness.

It can be hard to tear our eyes away from the bad news, but if we will choose to make thankfulness our sacrifice to God, He will honor that. And you will just plain feel better when you have a thankful heart!

1 Kings 18:1-19; Philippians 2:12-30; Matthew 2:13-23

Friday September 10

Psalm 40 *He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.* (v.2)

I began struggling with depression in 7th grade. It started out slowly, but began to intensify in 8th and 9th grade. By high school, fighting the depression seemed to be a constant battle.

I put on a "happy face" every day when I woke up. Most people didn't have a clue how the darkness threatened to consume me. I struggled to attend my classes. I just wanted to sit around completely zoning out from my life. This lack of motivation led to me to getting expelled from high school due to lack of attendance.

I tried battling the darkness by drinking and doing drugs. I thought they were lifting me out of the darkness, but in truth they sucked me even deeper into depression.

I continued to fight a losing battle with depression until I was in my early thirties and had a stroke. Through inner healing prayer at The Glennon House, Jesus lifted me out the dark pit of depression. He set me on solid ground and continues to steady me as I walk through my life with him.

1 Kings 18:20-40; Psalm 54; Philippians 3:1-16; Matthew 3:1-12

Saturday September 11

1 Kings 18:41—19:8 *Finally the seventh time, his servant told him, "I saw a little cloud about the size of a man's hand rising from the sea." Then Elijah shouted, "Hurry to Ahab and tell him, 'Climb into your chariot and go back home. If you don't hurry, the rain will stop you!'"* (v.44)

Have you ever been praying for something and desperately looking for a sign that God hears you? Were you persistent in praying until you caught even a glimpse of a sign?

Elijah prayed seven times. Finally, on the seventh time the servant saw a cloud the size of a man's hand rising up from the sea. That was all the proof Elijah needed to know that a strong rain was heading their way.

As I read this Scripture, I wondered how many times I had stopped praying because I didn't get an instant answer from God or missed seeing the small cloud on the horizon that was God's answer.

I think I sometimes get hung up on the timing of God's answers. Living in our instant gratification society, I forget that waiting is not a bad thing. God's timing is always perfect. I need to learn to live in God's timetable, not my own. And I also need to keep my eyes open for the "small clouds" on the horizon so I don't miss out on God's answer.

Psalm 55; Philippians 3:17—4:7; Matthew 3:13-17

by Kirsten Aufhammer

Used with permission from the BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP
PO Box 380, Winter Park, FL 32790
www.biblereading.org