

Thank You, Lord, for Paul and all the great men of God who contributed to the Bible, giving generation after generation access to You and Your word.

Isaiah 7:10-25; Psalm 31; Luke 22:14-30

Birthdays: Diane Foley, Emily Von Aldenbruck, Becca Bassion

Friday's Calendar:
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Life Group
10:00 a.m. Bible Study
12:00 p.m. A Way Out
8:00 p.m. AA Friday Nite Young People

Today's Ministry: Choir

Saturday, December 10

Psalm 32 *Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.* (vv.1-2)

Wow, it is such an incredible blessing that the Lord forgives my sins, covers my sins, and doesn't count my sins against me. I am also blessed when there is no deceitfulness in my heart or spirit. Just considering the Lord's willingness and capacity for forgiving sin is, in and of itself, a monumental blessing. Then there are all the other things as well.

Paul, in the fourth chapter of his letter to the Romans, quotes these two verses. Paul is writing about Abraham's faith and how, because of his faith, it was credited to him as righteousness. In Romans 4:6, the verse before the psalm is quoted, Paul writes, "David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works." I love seeing the New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament. For me, this ties the two together.

Thank You, Lord, for all of the Bible, and for Your many blessings.

Isaiah 8:1-15; Psalm 30; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18; Luke 22:31-38

Birthdays: Harriet Stone, Shawn Wyder, David Seidel, Laura McKinney, Christian Gerbino, Joan Haddad,

Saturday's Calendar:
10:00 a.m. Bible Study ONLINE
8:30 p.m. Not Alone Group
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Today's Ministry: Coffee Hour Ministry

by Anna Cash

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"Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love"

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Sunday, December 4

2 Peter 3:11-18 *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be sound spotless, blameless and at peace with him.* (v.14 NIV)

Peter is referencing the second coming of Jesus, which he has just been describing in verses 1-13. The thing about the second coming is that absolutely no one knows when that day will be, not even Jesus himself, but only God the Father. So, Peter is saying here that we need to be ready. This is actually a great way to live. Each day, if we made every effort to be without sin and to be at peace with the Lord, we would be ready. My problem is not just that I do not live every day in the "ready" mode, it's also that I don't think about the possibility of Jesus' return each day of my life. Perhaps if I did, I would be more likely to be ready for it.

Also, I find that I am too often "earthbound" in my thinking. If I could be more "heaven-bound" I would be more likely to be ready for Jesus' return. What I do know for sure is that heaven will be unbelievably and unimaginably wonderful, and we will see Jesus face to face as well as our friends and relatives who are already there. There will be no crying or sadness there, only joy and happiness with the complete absence of evil.

Help me to be found ready at your return, precious Lord.
Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalms 148, 149, 150; Luke 7:28-35

Birthdays: Tom Gilson, Martha Tuthill, Juri Krumins

Sunday's Calendar :

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Today's Ministry: Altar Guild

Monday, December 5

Psalm 25 *Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD.* (v.7)

I am so grateful that the Lord doesn't hold the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways in His memory. Oh, my goodness, when I think back to those days when I didn't know Jesus, I am horrified at some of

the things I did, said, and thought. For a long time, I thought I was a pretty good person because I hadn't (or at least I thought I hadn't) broken any of the Ten Commandments! Also, I went to church fairly regularly with my parents and then, later on, with my husband and children. But as someone once famously said, sitting in church doesn't make you a Christian any more than sitting in a garage makes you a car.

But thanks be to God, He chose me to be His daughter and revealed Himself to me. He gave me a faith which continues to grow deeper and richer. He fills my heart with His love and enables me to love others with that love. He forgives not only the sins of my youth, but the sins of every age. He forgives me when I rebel against Him because that is how much He loves me. Truly, as the psalmist says, "...you are good, O Lord." I have done nothing to deserve such love, not could I ever earn it. It is a gift.

Thank You, Lord, for Your innumerable gifts to all believers.
Isaiah 5:8-12, 18-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Luke 21:20-28

Birthdays: Jessica Armstrong, Flip Stevens

Anniversaries: Jim & Cindy Ziemba

Monday's Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
10:00 a.m. Praying Hands (1st & 3rd Mondays)
3:00 p.m. Daughters of the King (2nd Mondays)
5:45 p.m. ACOA

Today's Ministry: AV Team

Tuesday, December 6

Luke 21:29-38 *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."* (v.33)

A Christian singer I like very much, named Fernando Ortega, has a song on one of his albums in which he sings repeatedly, "The word of the Lord endures forever." This verse in Luke immediately brought Ortega's song to mind. He sings these words quietly but strongly, to a lovely but simple melody.

In today's verse, Jesus is referencing the end times which he has just been speaking about in the preceding verses. Heaven and earth are physical entities that will have an end, whereas Jesus' words are not physical, but rather spiritual, and are eternal, just as Jesus, the Word, is.

I have a hard time wrapping my mind around the idea of the heaven and the earth, as I understand them today, not existing anymore, or coming to an end. But I know that if Jesus and the Bible say this will happen one day, I know it is the truth and that it *will* happen. This once again reminds me that it is spiritual matters that are of the greatest importance, especially the words of Jesus, and Jesus himself.

Lord, thank You for the enduring, eternal nature of Your precious Son, my Savior, and for his never-ending love and forgiveness.

Isaiah 5:13-17, 24-25; Psalms 26, 28; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Birthdays: Cathy Bell, Barb La Mirand, Grace Mack, Barbara Taft, Gary Bach, Jenny Martin

Anniversaries: Francis & Heloise Wu

Tuesday's Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Life Group ONLINE
12:10 p.m. Healing Service
7:00 p.m. Bonifantes Boys Choir in Ross Hall

Today's Ministry: Backpack Buddies

Wednesday, December 7

John 7:53—8:11 *Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."* (vv.10-11)

This woman had been caught in the act of adultery, and the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees had made her stand before the group when Jesus was present, and they said that they were commanded by Moses in the law to stone adulterous women. Then when Jesus told the men that if any of them were without sin, that man could throw the first stone. One by one, the men walked away and only Jesus was left with the woman. None of them condemned her and Jesus makes the wonderful statement that he doesn't condemn her either. Jesus does not stop with that; he tells her not to sin anymore.

It is so wonderful that Jesus is both merciful and just. He shows her mercy by not condemning her, but his justice demands that she not commit the sin anymore, or as he says, "Go now and leave your life of sin." That is the same way he deals with all of us—always with both mercy and justice. Because he is just, he cannot not recognize sin as sin but, instead of condemning us for our sin, he shows us mercy, forgiving us because he has already taken on the punishment we deserve for our sin.

Thank you, Jesus, that you died on the cross for my sin so that I can have forgiveness and salvation through your shed blood.

Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 38; 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Birthdays: Maggie Carpenter, Ginny Nutt, Pat Camper, Roger Phelps

Anniversaries: Steve & Jean Strickland, Geoff & Kaija Mayfield

Wednesday's Calendar:

6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m. Life Group
4:30 p.m. Mary's Kitchen
6:00 p.m. NAMI

Today's Ministry: Bible Study Groups

Thursday, December 8

Psalms 37:1-18 *Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.* (v.4)

This is a beautiful statement of how God blesses us when we do something that blesses Him. He is blessed and pleased when we delight in Him and so it is His great pleasure to then give us the desires of our hearts. It's sort of like a mutual admiration society where both parties love and admire each other and, because of that love and admiration, they are each made happy or joyful by so doing.

Another thought I had on this verse is that the desires of the heart in this person cannot be anything other than good and pleasing to the Lord if this person delights himself in the Lord. In other words, if I didn't love, revere, and cherish the Lord, the desires of my heart might be sinful or of an evil nature. Obviously, if that were the case, the Lord would not give them to me.

The word "delight" conjures up the idea of joy, of happiness, of smiling. This verse does, in fact, make me smile—and what a blessing that is. I have not always delighted myself in the Lord and certainly was not capable of it before I came to have a personal relationship with Him. And as my faith grows and I get closer to Jesus, I find that I delight myself in the Lord more and more often.

Thank You, Lord, for giving me the desires of my heart!
Isaiah 7:1-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Luke 22:1-13

Birthdays: David Ralicki

Anniversaries: Valentino & Laura Rangel

Thursday's Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
1:30 p.m. Grief Support Group
7:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Stepping Stones

Today's Ministry: Chalice Bearers

Friday, December 9

2 Thessalonians 2:13—3:5 *May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.* (vv.16-17)

I think these are two of the most beautiful verses in the Bible, and so much is contained in these words. At some point in time, I wrote next to these verses in my Bible, "a beautiful short prayer," and it truly is. Jesus and God do love us, and it is through God's grace that He sent Jesus as an "eternal encouragement and good hope." Jesus is the source of the hope that all believers have—he is, of course, "good." Jesus is eternal and his life and promises encourage us to walk with him and be filled with his Holy Spirit.

I cannot possibly say it any better nor as well as Paul does here. These two verses are just rich and full of things to thank God for. I have no doubt whatsoever that Paul penned these verses through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so beautiful and so full. I am grateful that I live in a country where I have the freedom to own, study, and learn from God's Holy Bible.