
Cedar Springs Mission Devotionals & Prayer Guide

June 2018



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FRIDAY, JUNE 1

“He will make her wilderness like Eden.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Isaiah 51:3

Methinks, I see in vision a howling wilderness, a great and terrible desert, like to the Sahara. I perceive nothing in it to relieve the eye, all around I am wearied with a vision of hot and arid sand, strewn with ten thousand bleaching skeletons of wretched men who have expired in anguish, having lost their way in the pitiless waste. What an appalling sight! How horrible! a sea of sand without a bound, and without an oasis, a cheerless graveyard for a race forlorn! But behold and wonder! Upon a sudden, upspringing from the scorching sand I see a plant of renown; and as it grows it buds, the bud expands - it is a rose, and at its side a lily bows its modest head; and, miracle of miracles! as the fragrance of those flowers is diffused the wilderness is transformed into a fruitful field, and all around it blossoms exceedingly, the glory of Lebanon is given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon. Call it not Sahara, call it Paradise. Speak not of it any longer as the valley of deathshade, for where the skeletons lay bleaching in the sun, behold a resurrection is proclaimed, and up spring the dead, a mighty army, full of life immortal. Jesus is that plant of renown, and his presence makes all things new. Nor is the wonder less in each individual’s salvation. Yonder I behold you, dear reader, cast out, an infant, unswathed, unwashed, defiled with your own blood, left to be food for beasts of prey. But lo, a jewel has been thrown into your bosom by a divine hand, and for its sake you have been pitied and tended by divine providence, you are washed and cleansed from your defilement, you are adopted into heaven’s family, the fair seal of love is upon your forehead, and the ring of faithfulness is on your hand - you are now a prince unto God, though once an orphan, cast away. O prize exceedingly the matchless power and grace which changes deserts into gardens, and makes the barren heart to sing for joy. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Africa

Tom and Juanita Matthews serve in Tanzania and Kenya. Tom is a translation consultant to Bible translation teams from multiple people groups. Some of the groups are minimally reached for Christ and some are dominated by Islam. Pray today for God to grant favor toward SIL missionaries in Kenya in the eyes of their national tax agency over confusion about their status that could result in high taxes.

Joni and Friends Knoxville ministers to families and individuals affected by disabilities in Knoxville and Tennessee as well as in Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi and in Guatemala. The vision of Joni and Friends is to accelerate Christian ministry in the disability community by communicating the gospel and equipping Christ-honoring churches worldwide to evangelize and disciple people affected by disability. Pray today for the Knoxville staff of Joni and Friends as they prepare for this summer’s Family Retreat July 22-26 at Fort Bluff in Dayton, TN.

Notes.

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

“Good master.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Matthew 19:16

In every believer’s heart there is a constant struggle between the old nature and the new. The old nature is very active, and loses no opportunity of plying all the weapons of its deadly armory against newborn grace; while on the other hand, the new nature is ever on the watch to resist and destroy its enemy. Grace within us will employ prayer, and faith, and hope, and love, to cast out the evil; it takes unto it the “whole armor of God,” and wrestles earnestly. These two opposing natures will never cease to struggle so long as we are in this world. The battle of “Christian” with “Apollyon” lasted three hours, but the battle of Christian with himself lasted all the way from the Wicket Gate in the river Jordan. The enemy is so securely entrenched within us that he can never be driven out while we are in this body: but although we are closely beset, and often in sore conflict, we have an Almighty helper, even Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, who is ever with us, and who assures us that we shall eventually come off more than conquerors through Him. With such assistance the new-born nature is more than a match for its foes. Are you fighting with the adversary to-day? Are Satan, the world, and the flesh, all against you? Be not discouraged nor dismayed. Fight on! For God Himself is with you; Jehovah Nissi is your banner, and Jehovah Rophi is the healer of your wounds. Fear not, you shall overcome, for who can defeat Omnipotence? Fight on, “looking unto Jesus”; and though long and stern be the conflict, sweet will be the victory, and glorious the promised reward. “From strength to strength go on; Wrestle, and fight, and pray, tread all the powers of darkness down, and win the well-fought day.” - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Africa

Lucky and Sonnet Mnisi are South African and serve in Mozambique. Lucky has pastored the Reformed Church in Mucatine and has helped plant other churches in Gaza Province, including Tchake. Pray today for wisdom and God’s guidance as they help the church, so that they can fulfill God’s purposes.

World Horizons is a network of people, joined together by relationship and a common goal of reaching the unreached. Pray today for the work of all the people partnering with World Horizons around the world.

Notes.

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

“He humbled himself.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Philippians 2:8

Jesus is the great teacher of lowliness of heart. We need daily to learn of him. See the Master taking a towel and washing his disciples’ feet! Follower of Christ, wilt thou not humble thyself? See him as the Servant of servants, and surely thou canst not be proud! Is not this sentence the compendium of his biography, “He humbled himself”? Was he not on earth always stripping off first one robe of honor and then another, till, naked, he was fastened to the cross, and there did he not empty out his inmost self, pouring out his life-blood, giving up for all of us, till they laid him penniless in a borrowed grave? How low was our dear Redeemer brought! How then can we be proud? Stand at the foot of the cross, and count the purple drops by which you have been cleansed; see the thorn-crown; mark his scourged shoulders, still gushing with encrimsoned rills; see hands and feet given up to the rough iron, and his whole self to mockery and scorn; see the bitterness, and the pangs, and the throes of inward grief, showing themselves in his outward frame; hear the thrilling shriek, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” And if you do not lie prostrate on the ground before that cross, you have never seen it: if you are not humbled in the presence of Jesus, you do not know him. You were so lost that nothing could save you but the sacrifice of God’s only begotten. Think of that, and as Jesus stooped for you, bow yourself in lowliness at his feet. A sense of Christ’s amazing love to us has a greater tendency to humble us than even a consciousness of our own guilt. May the Lord bring us in contemplation to Calvary, then our position will no longer be that of the pompous man of pride, but we shall take the humble place of one who loves much because much has been forgiven him. Pride cannot live beneath the cross. Let us sit there and learn our lesson, and then rise and carry it into practice. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Africa

Andy and Bev Warren serve with an MTW team that is involved in HIV/AIDS work and church planting through the Ethiopia Aids Care and Treatment (ACT) Project. The project targets slum communities in Addis Ababa which contain the neediest people in the community - large percentages of women with small children. In recent years, the project has served more than 500 AIDS-affected families, reaching more than 1,200 people. Pray today for a new family sponsorship program, Family to Family. It is a way for a family in the U.S. to connect with one of their project families.

Wycliffe Associates (India, Kenya, Nepal) accelerates Bible translation around the world by empowering national translators and equipping the local church to translate God’s Word into every language. Wycliffe Bible Translators (China) has Bible translators located in China translating the Bible into local dialects. Pray today for these translators and their work.

Notes.

MONDAY, JUNE 4

“Received up into glory.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

1 Timothy 3:16

We have seen our well-beloved Lord in the days of his flesh, humiliated and sore vexed; for he was “despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” He whose brightness is as the morning, wore the sackcloth of sorrow as his daily dress: shame was his mantle, and reproach was his vesture. Yet now, inasmuch as he has triumphed over all the powers of darkness upon the bloody tree, our faith beholds our King returning with dyed garments from Edom, robed in the splendor of victory. How glorious must he have been in the eyes of seraphs, when a cloud received him out of mortal sight, and he ascended up to heaven! Now he wears the glory which he had with God or ever the earth was, and yet another glory above all - that which he has well earned in the fight against sin, death, and hell. As victor he wears the illustrious crown. Hark how the song swells high! It is a new and sweeter song: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, for he hath redeemed us unto God by his blood!” He wears the glory of an Intercessor who can never fail, of a Prince who can never be defeated, of a Conqueror who has vanquished every foe, of a Lord who has the heart’s allegiance of every subject. Jesus wears all the glory which the pomp of heaven can bestow upon him, which ten thousand times ten thousand angels can minister to him. You cannot with your utmost stretch of imagination conceive his exceeding greatness; yet there will be a further revelation of it when he shall descend from heaven in great power, with all the holy angels - “Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.” Oh, the splendor of that glory! It will ravish his people’s hearts. Nor is this the close, for eternity shall sound his praise, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever!” Reader, if you would joy in Christ’s glory hereafter, he must be glorious in your sight now. *Is he so?* - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Phil has been serving in Eurasia for over 10 years. His focus has been the Tatar people, a largely Muslim people group. Phil has worked with others in launching a local organization that provides language instruction with the goal of helping to equip believers to bring the light of the gospel to the least-reached in their own language. Pray today for God to send students who will stay at the task of language learning until they can minister in Tatar and see Tatars trust Christ, grow in Christ, and further the good news of Christ amongst their own people.

YOKE mentors middle school children by building friendships with Christian adults through clubs, camps, and Kid Time (hanging out with kids in their world). Currently YOKE reaches out to nearly 20,000 students at 26 middle schools located in Anderson, Blount, Grainger, Jefferson, and Knox counties. Pray today for the Yoke volunteers as they connect with middle schoolers at camps this summer.

Notes.

TUESDAY, JUNE 5

“He that loveth not, knoweth not God.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

1 John 4:8

The distinguishing mark of a Christian is his confidence in the love of Christ, and the yielding of his affections to Christ in return. First, faith sets her seal upon the man by enabling the soul to say with the apostle, “Christ loved me and gave himself for me.” Then love gives the countersign, and stamps upon the heart gratitude and love to Jesus in return. “We love him because he first loved us.” In those grand old ages, which are the heroic period of the Christian religion, this double mark was clearly to be seen in all believers in Jesus; they were men who knew the love of Christ, and rested upon it as a man leaneth upon a staff whose trustiness he has tried. The love which they felt towards the Lord was not a quiet emotion which they hid within themselves in the secret chamber of their souls, and which they only spake of in their private assemblies when they met on the first day of the week, and sang hymns in honor of Christ Jesus the crucified, but it was a passion with them of such a vehement and all-consuming energy, that it was visible in all their actions, spoke in their common talk, and looked out of their eyes even in their commonest glances. Love to Jesus was a flame which fed upon the core and heart of their being; and, therefore, from its own force burned its way into the outer man, and shone there. Zeal for the glory of King Jesus was the seal and mark of all genuine Christians. Because of their dependence upon Christ’s love they *dared* much, and because of their love to Christ they *did* much, and it is the same now. The children of God are ruled in their inmost powers by love - the love of Christ constraineth them; they rejoice that divine love is set upon them, they feel it shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them, and then by force of gratitude they love the Savior with a pure heart, fervently. My reader, do you love him? Ere you sleep give an honest answer to a weighty question! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Paul and Karan Davis have been working with TEAM in France since 1978 in church-planting ministries. In 2010, they moved to the city of Pontcharra, strategically located at the junction of the valleys, major highways, and railways that link the cities of Albertville, Chambéry, and Grenoble. Pray today for the new merger of their partner ministry, France Mission, with Vision France to become “Perspectives - des Eglises, une Mission” (In English: Perspectives — Many Churches, one Mission).

Young Life Europe is an organization that pursues and befriends teenagers to introduce them to Jesus. Jim and Barbara McNamee are working with Young Life Europe as Regional Developers. They are developing a new area for YL - the Basque Country - and serving as Life and Ministry Coaches for YL staff across the region. Pray today for Jim and Barbara as they recruit and train Basque adult committee and volunteer leaders.

Notes.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6

“Are they Israelites? So am I.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

2 Corinthians 11:22

We have here a personal claim, and one that needs proof. The apostle knew that *his* claim was indisputable, but there are many persons who have no right to the title who yet claim to belong to the Israel of God. If we are with confidence declaring, “So am I also an Israelite,” let us only say it after having searched our heart as in the presence of God. But if we can give proof that we are following Jesus, if we can from the heart say, “I trust him wholly, trust him only, trust him simply, trust him now, and trust him ever,” then the position which the saints of God hold belongs to us - all their enjoyments are our possessions; we may be the very least in Israel, “less than the least of all saints,” yet since the mercies of God belong to the saints as saints, and not as advanced saints, or well-taught saints, we may put in our plea, and say, “Are they Israelites? so am I; therefore the promises are mine, grace is mine, glory will be mine.” The claim, rightfully made, is one which will yield untold comfort. When God’s people are rejoicing that they are his, what a happiness if they can say, “So am I!” When they speak of being pardoned, and justified, and accepted in the Beloved, how joyful to respond, “Through the grace of God, so am I.” But this claim not only has its enjoyments and privileges, but also its conditions and duties. We must share with God’s people in cloud as well as in sunshine. When we hear them spoken of with contempt and ridicule for being Christians, we must come boldly forward and say, “So am I.” When we see them working for Christ, giving their time, their talent, their whole heart to Jesus, we must be able to say, “So do I.” O let us prove our gratitude by our devotion, and live as those who, having claimed a privilege, are willing to take the responsibility connected with it. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Pastor of the First Greek Evangelical Church, a historic Presbyterian church in the center of Athens, [Giotis Kantartzis](#) leads a church planting movement called “Polis” (or, “city” in Ancient Greek). Giotis’ church is largely responsible for a significant amount of outreach to the thousands of refugees who have landed in Greece. He spearheaded the Houses of Hope project in which several apartments were purchased and converted into refugee housing (with up to two families per apartment). Pray today for concerns about a new building for the Integration House in Exarcheia. There are stumbling blocks with the Greek government. Please pray for open doors.

Beatriz and Gustavo Fuentes lead the work of [Young Life in Mozambique](#). Beatriz first encountered Young Life in Brazil and became a Christian through that encounter. The Fuentes moved to Beira, Mozambique in 2010 and began building relationships with teenagers there to introduce them to Jesus. Pray today for the Fuentes and the students they are reaching through Young Life.

Notes:

THURSDAY, JUNE 7

“Be zealous.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Revelation 3:19

If you would see souls converted, if you would hear the cry that “the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord;” if you would place crowns upon the head of the Savior, and his throne lifted high, then be filled with zeal. For, under God, the way of the world’s conversion must be by the zeal of the church. Every grace shall do exploits, but this shall be first; prudence, knowledge, patience, and courage will follow in their places, but zeal must lead the van. It is not the extent of your knowledge, though that is useful; it is not the extent of your talent, though that is not to be despised; it is your zeal that shall do great exploits. This zeal is the fruit of the Holy Spirit: it draws its vital force from *the continued operations* of the Holy Ghost in the soul. If our inner life dwindles, if our heart beats slowly before God, we shall not know zeal; but if all be strong and vigorous within, then we cannot but feel a loving anxiety to see the kingdom of Christ come, and his will done on earth, even as it is in heaven. A deep *sense of gratitude* will nourish Christian zeal. Looking to the hole of the pit whence we were digged, we find abundant reason why we should spend and be spent for God. And zeal is also stimulated by *the thought of the eternal future*. It looks with tearful eyes down to the flames of hell, and it cannot slumber: it looks up with anxious gaze to the glories of heaven, and it cannot but bestir itself. It feels that time is short compared with the work to be done, and therefore it devotes all that it has to the cause of its Lord. And it is ever strengthened by *the remembrance of Christ’s example*. He was clothed with zeal as with a cloak. How swift the chariot-wheels of duty went with him! He knew no loitering by the way. Let us prove that we are his disciples by manifesting the same spirit of zeal. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Bobby and Teresa LaDage are working with Redeemer City to City (the church planting arm of Redeemer Church in NYC) envisioning, equipping, and mentoring church planters and their wives in order to see gospel-centered churches reach the major cities of Eastern and Central Europe. They are also now serving as European Regional Leaders for United World Mission. Pray today for an upcoming move for one year to another country in October to fulfill an agreement between Germany and the U.S. government. Pray for wisdom to know the right country to move to.

Young Life Tennessee seeks to pursue and befriend lost or disinterested teenagers to introduce them to Jesus, share the gospel, and help them grow in their faith. Pray today for the staff and volunteers with Young Life Knoxville as they connect with students at camps this summer.

Notes.

FRIDAY, JUNE 8

“Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.”

Today's Devotional Reading

Number 11:23

God had made a positive promise to Moses that for the space of a whole month he would feed the vast host in the wilderness with flesh. Moses, being overtaken by a fit of unbelief, looks to the outward means, and is at a loss to know how the promise can be fulfilled. He looked to the creature instead of the Creator. But doth the Creator expect the creature to fulfil his promise for him? No; he who makes the promise ever fulfils it by his own unaided omnipotence. If he speaks, it is done - done by himself. His promises do not depend for their fulfilment upon the co-operation of the puny strength of man. We can at once perceive the mistake which Moses made. And yet how commonly we do the same! God has promised to supply our needs, and we look to the creature to do what God has promised to do; and then, because we perceive the creature to be weak and feeble, we indulge in unbelief. Why look we to that quarter at all? Will you look to the north pole to gather fruits ripened in the sun? Verily, you would act no more foolishly if ye did this than when you look to the weak for strength, and to the creature to do the Creator's work. Let us, then, put the question on the right footing. The ground of faith is not the sufficiency of the visible means for the performance of the promise, but the all-sufficiency of the invisible God, who will most surely do as he hath said. If after clearly seeing that the onus lies with the Lord and not with the creature, we dare to indulge in mistrust, the question of God comes home mightily to us: "Has the Lord's hand waxed short?" May it happen, too, in his mercy, that with the question there may flash upon our souls that blessed declaration, "Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not." - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

John and Kathy Lesondak are church planters who work across denominational lines in Slovakia to encourage and enable pastors in their work. The Lesondaks utilize various opportunities to engage with local residents, including classes in pottery and sewing. Pray today for completion of the paperwork necessary to finalize the purchase of a house to be used for the Roma community Church in Vitkovce. This house will allow the community to have a place of their own for the first time.

A Hand Up For Women, Knox County Christian Women's Job Corps, strives to be a source of hope to women with the desire and motivation to lead a more self-sufficient life. Pray for the women reached by this ministry that they may know the love of Jesus.

Notes:

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

“Search the Scriptures.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

John 5:39

The Greek word here rendered *search* signifies a strict, close, diligent, curious search, such as men make when they are seeking gold, or hunters when they are in earnest after game. We must not rest content with having given a superficial reading to a chapter or two, but with the candle of the Spirit we must deliberately seek out the hidden meaning of the word. Holy Scripture *requires searching* - much of it can only be learned by careful study. There is milk for babes, but also meat for strong men. The rabbis wisely say that a mountain of matter hangs upon every word, yea, upon every title of Scripture. Tertullian exclaims, “I adore the fulness of the Scriptures.” No man who merely skims the book of God can profit thereby; we must dig and mine until we obtain the hid treasure. The door of the word only opens to the key of diligence. The Scriptures *claim searching*. They are the writings of God, bearing the divine stamp and imprimatur - who shall dare to treat them with levity? He who despises them despises the God who wrote them. God forbid that any of us should leave our Bibles to become swift witnesses against us in the great day of account. The word of God *will repay searching*. God does not bid us sift a mountain of chaff with here and there a grain of wheat in it, but the Bible is winnowed corn - we have but to open the granary door and find it. Scripture grows upon the student. It is full of surprises. Under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to the searching eye it glows with splendor of revelation, like a vast temple paved with wrought gold, and roofed with rubies, emeralds, and all manner of gems. No merchandise like the merchandise of Scripture truth. Lastly, *the Scriptures reveal Jesus*: “They are they which testify of me.” No more powerful motive can be urged upon Bible readers than this: he who finds Jesus finds life, heaven, all things. Happy he who, searching his Bible, discovers his Savior. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

After years of leading Young Life Spain and Young Life Western Europe, [Jim and Barbara McNamee](#) are now developing new areas as part of the regional staff. They are working to start new ministries in the five countries of Western Europe, including Luxembourg, Andorra, and Italy. Their primary focus at this time is starting a new YL area in the Basque Country of Spain. Pray today for Jim and Barbara as they lead their staff through the summer months.

[Al Massira](#) is an online course for groups to use that presents the Christian faith through a chronological overview of the Bible. It centers the Christian faith in its original Middle Eastern context and includes a variety of integrated activities: viewing the films, open discussion, prayer, food and companionship. Pray today for those just starting the course, that they will find Jesus through it and begin a new life with him.

Notes.

SUNDAY, JUNE 10

“They are they which testify of me.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

John 5:39

Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the Bible. He is the constant theme of its sacred pages; from first to last they testify of him. At the creation we at once discern him as one of the sacred Trinity; we catch a glimpse of him in the promise of the woman’s seed; we see him typified in the ark of Noah; we walk with Abraham, as he sees Messiah’s day; we dwell in the tents of Isaac and Jacob, feeding upon the gracious promise; we hear the venerable Israel talking of Shiloh; and in the numerous types of the law, we find the Redeemer abundantly foreshadowed. Prophets and kings, priests and preachers, all look one way - they all stand as the cherubs did over the ark, desiring to look within, and to read the mystery of God’s great propitiation. Still more manifestly in the New Testament we find our Lord the one pervading subject. It is not an ingot here and there, or dust of gold thinly scattered, but here you stand upon a solid floor of gold; for the whole substance of the New Testament is Jesus crucified, and even its closing sentence is jewelled with the Redeemer’s name. We should always read Scripture in this light; we should consider the word to be as a mirror into which Christ looks down from heaven; and then we, looking into it, see his face reflected as in a glass - darkly, it is true, but still in such a way as to be a blessed preparation for seeing him as we shall see him face to face. This volume contains Jesus Christ’s letters to us, perfumed by his love. These pages are the garments of our King, and they all smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia. Scripture is the royal chariot in which Jesus rides, and it is paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. The Scriptures are the swaddling bands of the holy child Jesus; unroll them and you find your Savior. The quintessence of the word of God is Christ. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Neil and Louise MacMillan have planted three churches in Scotland, the latest of which is Cornerstone, Edinburgh. Neil is also Director of Church Planting for the Free Church of Scotland which is an evangelical Presbyterian denomination. Pray today for Morningside – the neighborhood where they believe they are called to make Jesus famous and loved. Pray that they would be a great blessing to their city as they learn what it looks like to love their neighbors in the day to day of life.

Arab Baptist Theological Seminary’s mission is serve the church in their region. They offer specialized learning resources and equips faithful men and women for effective service. Pray today for the faculty and students.

Notes:

MONDAY, JUNE 11

“There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Psalm 76:3

Our Redeemer’s glorious cry of “It is finished,” was the death-knell of all the adversaries of his people, the breaking of “the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle.” Behold the hero of Golgotha using his cross as an anvil, and his woes as a hammer, dashing to shivers bundle after bundle of our sins, those poisoned “arrows of the bow;” trampling on every indictment, and destroying every accusation. What glorious blows the mighty Breaker gives with a hammer far more ponderous than the fabled weapon of Thor! How the diabolical darts fly to fragments, and the infernal bucklers are broken like potters’ vessels! Behold, he draws from its sheath of hellish workmanship the dread sword of Satanic power! He snaps it across his knee, as a man breaks the dry wood of a fagot, and casts it into the fire. Beloved, no sin of a believer can now be an arrow mortally to wound him, no condemnation can now be a sword to kill him, for the punishment of our sin was borne by Christ, a full atonement was made for all our iniquities by our blessed Substitute and Surety. Who now accuseth? Who now condemneth? Christ hath died, yea rather, hath risen again. Jesus has emptied the quivers of hell, has quenched every fiery dart, and broken off the head of every arrow of wrath; the ground is strewn with the splinters and relics of the weapons of hell’s warfare, which are only visible to us to remind us of our former danger, and of our great deliverance. Sin hath no more dominion over us. Jesus has made an end of it, and put it away forever. O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end. Talk ye of all the wondrous works of the Lord, ye who make mention of his name, keep not silence, neither by day, nor when the sun goeth to his rest. Bless the Lord, O my soul. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Pete and Ruth Mitchell are church planters in France with Mission to the World (MTW) and in collaboration with the Eglise Réformée Evangélique de France (French Reformed Evangelical Church). Pete’s role is that of team leader. The Mitchells are living in Toulouse planting a new church in Tournefeuille. Pray today for wisdom on whether to take advantage of an opportunity to expand the worship space for the church in west Toulouse.

Located in South Knoxville and led by Milad and Theresa Guirguis, who are displaced from Egypt, the Arabic Church is spreading the word of God and hope by embracing Christians and Muslims from all Arabic countries. Most of the members of the congregation are from Iraq, Egypt, and Syria, and many are refugees. Pray today for Milad and Theresa and the members of their church.

Notes:

TUESDAY, JUNE 12

“Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

2 Timothy 1:9

The apostle uses the perfect tense and says, “Who *hath* saved us.” Believers in Christ Jesus *are* saved. They are not looked upon as persons who are in a hopeful state, and may ultimately be saved, but they *are* already saved. Salvation is not a blessing to be enjoyed upon the dying bed, and to be sung of in a future state above, but a matter to be obtained, received, promised, and enjoyed now. The Christian is perfectly saved *in God’s purpose*; God has ordained him unto salvation, and that purpose is complete. He is saved also as to the *price which has been paid for him*: “It is finished” was the cry of the Savior ere he died. The believer is also perfectly saved *in his covenant head*, for as he fell in Adam, so he lives in Christ. This complete salvation is accompanied by *a holy calling*. Those whom the Savior saved upon the cross are in due time effectually called by the power of God the Holy Spirit unto holiness: they leave their sins; they endeavor to be like Christ; they choose holiness, not out of any compulsion, but from the stress of a new nature, which leads them to rejoice in holiness just as naturally as aforesaid they delighted in sin. God neither chose them nor called them because they were holy, but he called them that they might be holy, and holiness is the beauty produced by his workmanship in them. The excellencies which we see in a believer are as much the work of God as the atonement itself. Thus is brought out very sweetly the fulness of the grace of God. Salvation must be of grace, because the Lord is the author of it: and what motive but grace could move him to save the guilty? Salvation must be of grace, because the Lord works in such a manner that our righteousness is forever excluded. Such is the believer’s privilege - *a present salvation*; such is the evidence that he is called to it - *a holy life*. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Joe and Cindy Platillero proclaim the transforming presence of Jesus Christ through Biblical teaching and practical training to all who come through their doors. Their main ministry is through the Torchbearer Center where they have camps, conferences, and a small Bible School during the winter. Pray today for Spanish youth to truly seek Christ with their lives which feels impossible in this aggressively secular society.

Athletes in Action, the sports ministry of Cru, is ministering to college athletes at the University of Tennessee. Rachel and Jason Stankus and Teg and Mikkel Tegelaar minister to and through the athletic department and are trusting God to build a spiritual movement that impacts the campus, community and world for Christ. Pray today for Jason & Rachel and for Teg & Mikkel as they continue to build relationships with student athletes this summer.

Notes:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13

“Remove far from me vanity and lies.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Proverbs 30:8 & Psalm 38:21

Here we have two great lessons - what to deprecate and what to supplicate. The happiest state of a Christian is the holiest state. As there is the most heat nearest to the sun, so there is the most happiness nearest to Christ. No Christian enjoys comfort when his eyes are fixed on vanity - he finds no satisfaction unless his soul is quickened in the ways of God. The world may win happiness elsewhere, but he cannot. I do not blame ungodly men for rushing to their pleasures. Why should I? Let them have their fill. That is all they have to enjoy. A converted wife who despaired of her husband was always very kind to him, for she said, “I fear that this is the only world in which he will be happy, and therefore I have made up my mind to make him as happy as I can in it.” Christians must seek their delights in a higher sphere than the insipid frivolities or sinful enjoyments of the world. Vain pursuits are dangerous to renewed souls. We have heard of a philosopher who, while he looked *up* to the stars, fell into a pit; but how deeply do they fall who look *down*. Their fall is fatal. No Christian is safe when his soul is slothful, and his God is far from him. Every Christian is always safe as to the great matter of his standing in Christ, but he is not safe as regards his experience in holiness, and communion with Jesus in this life. Satan does not often attack a Christian who is living near to God. It is when the Christian departs from his God, becomes spiritually starved, and endeavors to feed on vanities, that the devil discovers his vantage hour. He may sometimes stand foot to foot with the child of God who is active in his Master’s service, but the battle is generally short: he who slips as he goes down into the Valley of Humiliation, every time he takes a false step invites Apollyon to assail him. O for grace to walk humbly with our God! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Chris and Donna Roberts are living in Müllheim, Germany working with Young Life's German-speaking ministries. Chris is an Area Developer for Young Life's new service learning initiative in which he helps to develop and implement a curriculum for service learning that uses Young Life methodology to reach German-speaking teenagers. Pray today for the summer camp in Lörrach that the kids would have the best week of their lives! Pray also for the experienced Young Life staff as they train German leaders and staff on Young Life camping principles, methodology, and theology of camping.

Becoming Like Christ (BLC) is dedicated to equipping women to be all God means for them to be by providing a discipleship experience that is based on biblical principles in a small group of 10-12 followers of Jesus. Pray today for Kristin Cazana, the National Executive Director of BLC, and all the women currently involved in BLC.

Notes:

THURSDAY, JUNE 14

“O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face ... because we have sinned against thee.”

Today's Devotional Reading

Daniel 9:8

A deep sense and clear sight of sin, its heinousness, and the punishment which it deserves, should make us lie low before the throne. We have sinned as Christians. Alas! that it should be so. Favored as we have been, we have yet been ungrateful: privileged beyond most, we have not brought forth fruit in proportion. Who is there, although he may long have been engaged in the Christian warfare, that will not blush when he looks back upon the past? As for our days before we were regenerated, may they be forgiven and forgotten; but since then, though we have not sinned as before, yet we have sinned against light and against love - light which has really penetrated our minds, and love in which we have rejoiced. Oh, the atrocity of the sin of a pardoned soul! An unpardoned sinner sins cheaply compared with the sin of one of God's own elect ones, who has had communion with Christ and leaned his head upon Jesus' bosom. Look at David! Many will talk of his sin, but I pray you look at his repentance, and hear his broken bones, as each one of them moans out its dolorous confession! Mark his tears, as they fall upon the ground, and the deep sighs with which he accompanies the softened music of his harp! We have erred: let us, therefore, seek the spirit of penitence. Look, again, at Peter! We speak much of Peter's denying his Master. Remember, it is written, "He wept bitterly." Have *we* no denials of our Lord to be lamented with tears? Alas! these sins of ours, before and after conversion, would consign us to the place of inextinguishable fire if it were not for the sovereign mercy which has made us to differ, snatching us like brands from the burning. My soul, bow down under a sense of thy natural sinfulness, and worship thy God. Admire the grace which saves thee - the mercy which spares thee - the love which pardons thee! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Mostafa and Mona Sharkawy serve among Arab Muslims in the U.K. Their goals are to see Arabic churches arise from Muslim background believers, to see new generations of leaders from Muslim believers, and to teach and prepare them for future ministry. Pray today For the growing ministry inside the Immigration Removal Centre as more refugees arrive in the United Kingdom. Pray for opportunities and protection for Mostafa as well as open and willing hearts for the detainees.

Bethany Christian Services is a global organization caring for orphans and vulnerable children on five continents. They manifest the love and compassion of Jesus Christ by protecting and enhancing the lives of children and families through quality social services such as adoption, family support, foster care, pregnancy counseling, refuge services and infertility. Pray today for the staff as they work with families to facilitate adoptions.

Notes:

FRIDAY, JUNE 15

“He openeth, and no man shutteth.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Revelation 3:7

Jesus is the keeper of the gates of paradise and before every believing soul he setteth an open door, which no man or devil shall be able to close against it. What joy it will be to find that faith in him is the golden key to the everlasting doors. My soul, dost thou carry this key in thy bosom, or art thou trusting to some deceitful pick-lock, which will fail thee at last? Hear this parable of the preacher, and remember it. The great King has made a banquet, and he has proclaimed to all the world that none shall enter but those who bring with them the fairest flower that blooms. The spirits of men advance to the gate by thousands, and they bring each one the flower which he esteems the queen of the garden; but in crowds they are driven from the royal presence, and enter not into the festive halls. Some bear in their hand the deadly nightshade of superstition, or the flaunting poppies of Rome, or the hemlock of self-righteousness, but these are not dear to the King, the bearers are shut out of the pearly gates. My soul, hast thou gathered the rose of Sharon? Dost thou wear the lily of the valley in thy bosom constantly? If so, when thou comest up to the gates of heaven thou wilt know its value, for thou hast only to show this choicest of flowers, and the Porter will open: not for a moment will he deny thee admission, for to that rose the Porter openeth ever. Thou shalt find thy way with the rose of Sharon in thy hand up to the throne of God himself, for heaven itself possesses nothing that excels its radiant beauty, and of all the flowers that bloom in paradise there is none that can rival the lily of the valley. My soul, get Calvary’s blood-red rose into thy hand by faith, by love wear it, by communion preserve it, by daily watchfulness make it thine all in all, and thou shalt be blessed beyond all bliss, happy beyond a dream. Jesus, be mine forever, my God, my heaven, my all. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Vitaly and Oksana Voinov live in Moscow, Russia. Vitaly is working with the Institute for Bible Translation (IBT) in Russia/CIS as IBT’s director. IBT has been serving the non-Slavic peoples of the former Soviet Union for four decades by translating the Holy Scriptures - Bibles, New Testaments, individual Bible books, and illustrated Children’s Bibles. Pray today for a relaxing and refreshing summer for the Voinov family.

The Bible Society of Egypt is the largest Arabic Bible publishing operation in the world. They are publishing the Scriptures in a variety of formats and media (print, audio, visual), with each product designed for a particular social, economic, age, and cultural interest group. Pray today for the staff as they perform the day-to-day tasks required to publish the Bibles.

Notes.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16

*“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”*

Today’s Devotional Reading

Psalm 27:1

“The Lord is my light and my salvation.” Here is personal interest, *“my light,” “my salvation;”* the soul is assured of it, and therefore declares it boldly. Into the soul at the new birth divine light is poured as the precursor of salvation; where there is not enough light to reveal our own darkness and to make us long for the Lord Jesus, there is no evidence of salvation. After conversion our God is our joy, comfort, guide, teacher, and in every sense our light: he is light within, light around, light reflected from us, and light to be revealed to us. Note, it is not said merely that the Lord gives light, but that he is light; nor that he gives salvation, but that he is salvation; he, then, who by faith has laid hold upon God, has all covenant blessings in his possession. This being made sure as a fact, the argument drawn from it is put in the form of a question, *“Whom shall I fear?”* A question which is its own answer. The powers of darkness are not to be feared, for the Lord, our light, destroys them; and the damnation of hell is not to be dreaded by us, for the Lord is our salvation. This is a very different challenge from that of boastful Goliath, for it rests, not upon the conceited vigor of an arm of flesh, but upon the real power of the omnipotent I AM. *“The Lord is the strength of my life.”* Here is a third glowing epithet, to show that the writer’s hope was fastened with a threefold cord which could not be broken. We may well accumulate terms of praise where the Lord lavishes deeds of grace. Our life derives all its strength from God; and if he deigns to make us strong, we cannot be weakened by all the machinations of the adversary. *“Of whom shall I be afraid?”* The bold question looks into the future as well as the present. “If God be for us,” who can be against us, either now or in time to come? - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Europe

Eric and Beth Yodis are facilitating church planting in eastern Ukraine. Eric and Beth returned to the Ukraine last year to help with church planting in Kiev. Pray today for a revival throughout the Lugansk and the entirety of the war zone.

Bridges International serves the needs of international students adjusting to living and studying at the University of Tennessee. Pray today for the international students on campus that they may understand the love of Jesus during the summer.

Notes:

SUNDAY, JUNE 17

“Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Number 21:17

Famous was the well of Beer in the wilderness, because it was *the subject of a promise*: “That is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.” The people needed water, and it was promised by their gracious God. We need fresh supplies of heavenly grace, and in the covenant the Lord has pledged himself to give all we require. The well next became *the cause of a song*. Before the water gushed forth, cheerful faith prompted the people to sing; and as they saw the crystal fount bubbling up, the music grew yet more joyous. In like manner, we who believe the promise of God should rejoice in the prospect of divine revivals in our souls, and as we experience them our holy joy should overflow. Are we thirsting? Let us not murmur, but sing. Spiritual thirst is bitter to bear, but we need not bear it - the promise indicates a well; let us be of good heart, and look for it. Moreover, the well was *the center of prayer*. “Spring up, O well.” What God has engaged to give, we must enquire after, or we manifest that we have neither desire nor faith. This evening let us ask that the Scripture we have read, and our devotional exercises, may not be an empty formality, but a channel of grace to our souls. O that God the Holy Spirit would work in us with all his mighty power, filling us with all the fulness of God. Lastly, the well was *the object of effort*. “The nobles of the people digged it with their staves.” The Lord would have us active in obtaining grace. Our staves are ill adapted for digging in the sand, but we must use them to the utmost of our ability. Prayer must not be neglected; the assembling of ourselves together must not be forsaken; ordinances must not be slighted. The Lord will give us his peace most plenteously, but not in a way of idleness. Let us, then, bestir ourselves to seek him in whom are all our fresh springs. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Central America

Paul and Dori Pittman currently serve as area directors for United World Mission’s Latin America region. Paul is also project coordinator of UWM’s Cuba Partnership Project. Pray today for the Pittman family as they are in a season of change. Sam and Sarah have moved to the U.S. for college and Paul and Dori are also living in Lake City, Florida for a year on homestay.

Bridge Refugee Services facilitates the resettlement of refugees in East Tennessee. Bridge empowers refugees to become self-sufficient, and works closely with many volunteers, employers, and churches that sponsor refugee families. Pray today for all the refugee families that have recently settled in Knoxville and those that are waiting to come to the United States. Pray that God will remove the barriers that prevent them from entering our country.

Notes.

MONDAY, JUNE 18

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse."

Today's Devotional Reading

Song of Solomon 5:1

The heart of the believer is Christ's garden. He bought it with his precious blood, and he enters it and claims it as his own. A garden *implies separation*. It is not the open common; it is not a wilderness; it is walled around, or hedged in. Would that we could see the wall of separation between the church and the world made broader and stronger. It makes one sad to hear Christians saying, "Well, there is no harm in this; there is no harm in that," thus getting as near to the world as possible. Grace is at a low ebb in that soul which can even raise the question of how far it may go in worldly conformity. A garden is *a place of beauty*, it far surpasses the wild uncultivated lands. The genuine Christian must seek to be more excellent in his life than the best moralist, because Christ's garden ought to produce the best flowers in all the world. Even the best is poor compared with Christ's deservings; let us not put him off with withering and dwarf plants. The rarest, richest, choicest lilies and roses ought to bloom in the place which Jesus calls his own. The garden is *a place of growth*. The saints are not to remain undeveloped, always mere buds and blossoms. We should grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Growth should be rapid where Jesus is the Husbandman, and the Holy Spirit the dew from above. A garden is *a place of retirement*. So the Lord Jesus Christ would have us reserve our souls as a place in which he can manifest himself, as he doth not unto the world. O that Christians were more retired, that they kept their hearts more closely shut up for Christ! We often worry and trouble ourselves, like Martha, with much serving, so that we have not the room for Christ that Mary had, and do not sit at his feet as we should. The Lord grant the sweet showers of his grace to water his garden this day. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Central America

Carlos and Sandy Rios are planting Rivers of Grace Bible Church in the San Andres area of Guadalajara, Mexico. The church is growing, and many new families are attending. Pray today for salvation for Alex, Humberto and Mercedes and the growth of new believer Raquel.

Campus Renewal Ministries is a National Christian Ministry devoted to seeing transformation on college campuses for God's glory. They have been around for over 15 years and work with colleges across America. Pray today for their leaders as they serve students on UT's campus.

Notes:

TUESDAY, JUNE 19

“My Beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Song of Solomon 2:16-17

Surely if there be a happy verse in the Bible it is this - “My Beloved is mine, and I am his.” So peaceful, so full of assurance, so overrunning with happiness and contentment is it, that it might well have been written by the same hand which penned the twenty-third Psalm. Yet though the prospect is exceeding fair and lovely - earth cannot show its superior - it is not entirely a sunlit landscape. There is a cloud in the sky which casts a shadow over the scene. Listen, “Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.”

There is a word, too, about the “mountains of Bether,” or, “the mountains of division,” and to our love, anything like division is bitterness. Beloved, this may be your present state of mind; you do not doubt your salvation; you know that Christ is yours, but you are not feasting with him. You understand your vital interest in him, so that you have no shadow of a doubt of your being his, and of his being yours, but still his left hand is not under your head, nor doth his right hand embrace you. A shade of sadness is cast over your heart, perhaps by affliction, certainly by the temporary absence of your Lord, so even while exclaiming, “I am his,” you are forced to take to your knees, and to pray, “Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved.”

“Where is he?” asks the soul. And the answer comes, “He feedeth among the lilies.” If we would find Christ, we must get into communion with his people, we must come to the ordinances with his saints. Oh, for an evening glimpse of him! Oh, to sup with him tonight! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Central America

Manuel and Annabella Valverde are involved in church planting and leadership training in Guatemala. Manuel started the Francisco Lacueva Theological Seminary (STFL) in 2012 and they now have 14 students. Pray today for a mission project that Iglesia Bíblica de Guatemala (the Valverde’s church) is supporting in a backwoods area in Quiché, Guatemala.

Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) is committed to the evangelism of boys and girls through Good News Clubs, the Tennessee Valley Fair and any other means to reach the children of the Knoxville community. Good News Club is a ministry in which trained teachers meet with groups of children in schools, homes, community centers, churches, apartment complexes and just about anywhere the children can easily and safely meet with their parent’s permission. Pray today for the families of the children that attend the Good News Clubs each week that they may know and understand the love of Jesus.

Notes:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20

“Straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Mark 1:18

When they heard the call of Jesus, Simon and Andrew obeyed at once without demur. If we would always, punctually and with resolute zeal, put in practice what we hear upon the spot, or at the first fit occasion, our attendance at the means of grace, and our reading of good books, could not fail to enrich us spiritually. He will not lose his loaf who has taken care at once to eat it, neither can he be deprived of the benefit of the doctrine who has already acted upon it. Most readers and hearers become moved so far as to purpose to amend; but, alas! the proposal is a blossom which has not been knit, and therefore no fruit comes of it; they wait, they waver, and then they forget, till, like the ponds in nights of frost, when the sun shines by day, they are only thawed in time to be frozen again. That fatal *to-morrow* is blood-red with the murder of fair resolutions; it is the slaughter-house of the innocents. We are very concerned that our little book of “Evening Readings” should not be fruitless, and therefore we pray that readers may not be readers only, but doers, of the word. *The practice of truth is the most profitable reading of it.* Should the reader be impressed with any duty while perusing these pages, let him hasten to fulfil it before the holy glow has departed from his soul, and let him leave his nets, and all that he has, sooner than be found rebellious to the Master’s call. Do not give place to the devil by delay! Haste while opportunity and quickening are in happy conjunction. Do not be caught in your own nets, but break the meshes of worldliness, and away where glory calls you. Happy is the writer who shall meet with readers resolved to carry out his teachings: his harvest shall be a hundredfold, and his Master shall have great honor. Would to God that such might be our reward upon these brief meditations and hurried hints. Grant it, O Lord, unto thy servant! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Central America

Kenton and Adriana Wood serve in Guadalajara, Mexico as church planters. Pray today for Kenton who oversees a mother church that has six services on Sunday. Pray also for the Purépecha Indians in the nearby state of Michoacan that they may be reached with the gospel.

Choices Resource Center is a Christian, life-affirming pregnancy resource center offering services to help people facing decisions regarding pregnancy, parenting, purity, and post abortion healing. Pray today for each young woman who will visit this center this week.

Notes.

THURSDAY, JUNE 21

“The foundation of God standeth sure.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

2 Timothy 2:19

The foundation upon which our faith rests is this, that “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” The great fact on which genuine faith relies is, that “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,” and that “Christ also hath suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;” “Who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree;” “For the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.” In one word, the great pillar of the Christian’s hope is *substitution*. The vicarious sacrifice of Christ for the guilty, Christ being made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, Christ offering up a true and proper expiatory and substitutionary sacrifice in the room, place, and stead of as many as the Father gave him, who are known to God by name, and are recognized in their own hearts by their trusting in Jesus - this is the cardinal fact of the gospel. If this foundation were removed, what could we do? But it standeth firm as the throne of God. We know it; we rest on it; we rejoice in it; and our delight is to hold it, to meditate upon it, and to proclaim it, while we desire to be actuated and moved by gratitude for it in every part of our life and conversation. In these days a direct attack is made upon the doctrine of the atonement. Men cannot bear substitution. They gnash their teeth at the thought of the Lamb of God bearing the sin of man. But we, who know by experience the preciousness of this truth, will proclaim it in defiance of them confidently and unceasingly. We will neither dilute it nor change it, nor fritter it away in any shape or fashion. It shall still be Christ, a *positive substitute*, bearing human guilt and suffering in the stead of men. We cannot, dare not, give it up, for it is our life, and despite every controversy we feel that “*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure.*” - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: U.S. Based

Steve Hoke works with national church denominations and mission organizations in 25 countries and North America in the area of leader development and strategic life coaching. Pray today for Church Resource Ministries as they recruit young men and women to catalyze Disciplemaking Movements (DMM) in the difficult places of the world (the Middle East, North and West Africa, and Southeast Asia). Pray today for 50 or more new leaders in 2018 and that God will equip the CRM staff with vision and faith to steward them into the right roles of cross-cultural leadership.

Christian Leadership Concepts (CLC) is an organization that seeks to find and deploy the natural male disciple-makers in our city, asking them to pour into other men via a two-year disciple-making process. Pray today for the men currently in the two-year discipleship groups.

Notes.

FRIDAY, JUNE 22

“That those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Hebrews 12:27

We have many things in our possession at the present moment which can be shaken, and it ill becomes a Christian man to set much store by them, for there is nothing stable beneath these rolling skies; change is written upon all things. Yet, we have certain “things which *cannot* be shaken,” and I invite you this evening to think of them, that if the things which can be shaken should all be taken away, you may derive real comfort from the things that cannot be shaken, which will remain. Whatever your losses have been, or may be, you enjoy present salvation. You are standing at the foot of his cross, trusting alone in the merit of Jesus’ precious blood, and no rise or fall of the markets can interfere with your salvation in him; no breaking of banks, no failures and bankruptcies can touch that. Then you are *a child of God* this evening. God is your Father. No change of circumstances can ever rob you of that. Although by losses brought to poverty, and stripped bare, you can say, “He is my Father still. In my Father’s house are many mansions; therefore will I not be troubled.” You have another permanent blessing, namely, *the love of Jesus Christ*. He who is God and Man loves you with all the strength of his affectionate nature - nothing can affect that. The fig tree may not blossom, and the flocks may cease from the field, it matters not to the man who can sing, “My Beloved is mine, and I am his.” Our best portion and richest heritage we cannot lose. Whatever troubles come, let us play the man; let us show that we are not such little children as to be cast down by what may happen in this poor fleeting state of time. Our country is Immanuel’s land, our hope is above the sky, and therefore, calm as the summer’s ocean; we will see the wreck of everything earthborn, and yet rejoice in the God of our salvation. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Asia

Jeff and Ellen work among unreached people groups in two restricted access countries of Southeast Asia catalyzing Church Planting Movements. Pray today for an annual conference that almost all the ministries team will attend June 26-July 1.

Cedar Springs partners with Redeemer City to City to plant churches in urban areas around the world. Pray for all the church planters that are supported throughout the world, especially those in Europe who have opportunities to build relationships with refugees from the Middle East who have settled there.

Notes.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23

“Waiting for the adoption.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Romans 8:23

Even in this world saints are God’s children, but men cannot discover them to be so, except by certain moral characteristics. The adoption is not manifested, the children are not yet openly declared. Among the Romans a man might adopt a child, and keep it private for a long time: but there was a second adoption in public; when the child was brought before the constituted authorities its former garments were taken off, and the father who took it to be his child gave it raiment suitable to its new condition of life. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” We are not yet arrayed in the apparel which befits the royal family of heaven; we are wearing in this flesh and blood just what we wore as the sons of Adam; but we know that “when *he* shall appear” who is the “first-born among many brethren,” we shall be like him, we shall see him as he is. Cannot you imagine that a child taken from the lowest ranks of society, and adopted by a Roman senator, would say to himself, “I long for the day when I shall be publicly adopted. Then I shall leave off these plebeian garments, and be robed as becomes my senatorial rank?” Happy in what he has received, for that very reason he groans to get the fulness of what is promised him. So it is with us today. We are waiting till we shall put on our proper garments, and shall be manifested as the children of God. We are young nobles, and have not yet worn our coronets. We are young brides, and the marriage day is not yet come, and by the love our Spouse bears us, we are led to long and sigh for the bridal morning. Our very happiness makes us groan after more; our joy, like a swollen spring, longs to well up like an Iceland geyser, leaping to the skies, and it heaves and groans within our spirit for want of space and room by which to manifest itself to men. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Asia

Ron and Amy Barber are equipping the next generation of church planters. Their ministry at International Graduate School of Leadership (IGSL) in the Philippines prepares students for ministry in cross-cultural contexts around the world. Pray today for students that Ron is teaching who are from countries where Christians are in the minority and face persecution. Many of them have just returned to their countries after graduating this spring.

The mission of Collegiate Abbey is to create environments of spiritual and personal growth, to shepherd with the heart of Jesus Christ, and to serve strategically to effectively meet the needs of the collegiate community. Britton Sharp is the Director of this ministry at the University of Tennessee that partners with the body of Christ to serve their neighbors and our Savior for the glory of God. Pray today for Britton and his family.

Notes.

SUNDAY, JUNE 24

*“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said...
Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods.”*

Today's Devotional Reading

Daniel 3:16,18

The narrative of the manly courage and marvelous deliverance of the three holy children, or rather champions, is well calculated to excite in the minds of believers firmness and steadfastness in upholding the truth in the teeth of tyranny and in the very jaws of death. Let young Christians especially learn from their example, both in matters of faith in religion, and matters of uprightness in business, never to sacrifice their consciences. Lose all rather than lose your integrity, and when all else is gone, still hold fast a clear conscience as the rarest jewel which can adorn the bosom of a mortal. Be not guided by the will-o'-the-wisp of policy, but by the pole-star of divine authority. Follow the right at all hazards. When you see no present advantage, walk by faith and not by sight. Do God the honor to trust him when it comes to matters of loss for the sake of principle. See whether he will be your debtor! See if he doth not even in this life prove his word that “Godliness, with contentment, is great gain,” and that they who “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, shall have all these things added unto them.” Should it happen that, in the providence of God, you are a loser by conscience, you shall find that if the Lord pays you not back in the silver of earthly prosperity, he will discharge his promise in the gold of spiritual joy. Remember that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of that which he possesseth. To wear a guileless spirit, to have a heart void of offence, to have the favor and smile of God, is greater riches than the mines of Ophir could yield, or the traffic of Tyre could win. “Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and inward contention therewith.” An ounce of heart's-ease is worth a ton of gold. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Asia

Lewis and Elsbeth have just moved to Seoul, South Korea to work with exiled high school students. Lewis works to make evangelical literature available to the nations so that people can come to Christ. Pray today for their new students who have lived through a difficult journey to arrive in Seoul.

*The mission of **Compassion Coalition** is to inform, prepare, and unite churches to transform lives and communities through the love of Christ. They strive to walk alongside Knoxville-area churches who earnestly desire to slow down and respond to the cry of the suffering, the broken, and the abandoned within their congregations and out in the community. Pray today for the work of this ministry in Knoxville and for the staff that works with Executive Director Grant Standefer.*

Notes:

MONDAY, JUNE 25

“The dove found no rest for the sole of her foot.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

Genesis 8:9

Reader, can you find rest apart from the ark, Christ Jesus? Then be assured that your religion is vain. Are you satisfied with anything short of a conscious knowledge of your union and interest in Christ? Then woe unto you. If you profess to be a Christian, yet find full satisfaction in worldly pleasures and pursuits, your profession is false. If your soul can stretch herself at rest, and find the bed long enough, and the coverlet broad enough to cover her in the chambers of sin, then you are a hypocrite, and far enough from any right thoughts of Christ or perception of his preciousness. But if, on the other hand, you feel that if you could indulge in sin without punishment, yet it would be a punishment of itself; and that if you could have the whole world, and abide in it for ever, it would be quite enough misery not to be parted from it; for your God - your God - is what your soul craves after; then be of good courage, thou art a child of God. With all thy sins and imperfections, take this to thy comfort: if thy soul has no rest in sin, thou are not as the sinner is! If thou art still crying after and craving after something better, Christ has not forgotten thee, for thou hast not quite forgotten him. The believer cannot do without his Lord; words are inadequate to express his thoughts of him. We cannot live on the sands of the wilderness, we want the manna which drops from on high; our skin bottles of creature confidence cannot yield us a drop of moisture, but we drink of the rock which follows us, and that rock is Christ. When you feed on him your soul can sing, “He hath satisfied my mouth with good things, so that my youth is renewed like the eagle’s,” but if you have him not, your bursting wine vat and well-filled barn can give you no sort of satisfaction: rather lament over them in the words of wisdom, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!” - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Asia

J & F live and work in one of the poorest and most heavily populated states in a country in Asia. They are seeking to make a difference in this state in both physical and spiritual realms. They have been operating a micro-finance business that is creating self-sustaining means of support for churches and church plants as well as continuing to provide funds for the installation of hand pumps to provide clean water to needy areas of the state. Pray today for direction and funding for their team as they seek to launch new “business” initiatives.

Core Leadership is a ministry of spiritual formation and leadership development. Its mission is to help strengthen and encourage the life of leaders, in the Knoxville area and beyond, by the means of spiritual nurture and leadership development. Jim Branch is the director of Core Leadership and is actively involved in the lives of people all over the city of Knoxville and beyond, as well as being active in the Powell community, where he lives. Pray today for Jim and his family.

Notes.

TUESDAY, JUNE 26

“Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

2 Peter 1:4

Vanish forever all thought of indulging the flesh if you would live in the power of your risen Lord. It were ill that a man who is alive in Christ should dwell in the corruption of sin. “Why seek ye the living among the dead?” said the angel to Magdalene. Should the living dwell in the sepulcher? Should divine life be immured in the charnel house of fleshly lust? How can we partake of the cup of the Lord and yet drink the cup of Belial? Surely, believer, from open lusts and sins you are delivered: have you also escaped from the more secret and delusive lime-twigs of the Satanic fowler? Have you come forth from the lust of pride? Have you escaped from slothfulness? Have you clean escaped from carnal security? Are you seeking day by day to live above worldliness, the pride of life, and the ensnaring vice of avarice? Remember, it is for this that you have been enriched with the treasures of God. If you be indeed the chosen of God, and beloved by him, do not suffer all the lavish treasure of grace to be wasted upon you. Follow after holiness; it is the Christian’s crown and glory. An unholy church! it is useless to the world, and of no esteem among men. It is an abomination, hell’s laughter, heaven’s abhorrence. The worst evils which have ever come upon the world have been brought upon her by an unholy church. O Christian, the vows of God are upon you. You are God’s priest: act as such. You are God’s king: reign over your lusts. You are God’s chosen: do not associate with Belial. Heaven is your portion: live like a heavenly spirit, so shall you prove that you have true faith in Jesus, for there cannot be faith in the heart unless there be holiness in the life.

“Lord, I desire to live as one
Who bears a blood-bought name,
As one who fears but grieving thee,
And knows no other shame.”

- Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Partner Focus: Asia

Michael and Kim Essenburg are serving at Okinawa Christian School (OCS), a school for missionary children and children of business and professional people in Okinawa, Japan. Pray today for God to provide for them the health, energy, and wisdom they need to finish this school year well.

Cru, formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ, is a campus organization that seeks to share the gospel with students through relationships, small group studies and larger events like retreats and mission trips. John Strange leads Cru at the University of Kentucky. Pray today for the staff of Cru and the students involved in their ministry this summer.

Notes:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

1 Corinthians 7:20

Some persons have the foolish notion that the only way in which they can live for God is by becoming ministers, missionaries, or Bible women. Alas! how many would be shut out from any opportunity of magnifying the Most High if this were the case. Beloved, it is not office, it is earnestness; it is not position, it is grace which will enable us to glorify God. God is most surely glorified in that cobbler’s stall, where the godly worker, as he plies the awl, sings of the Savior’s love, aye, glorified far more than in many a prebendal stall where official religiousness performs its scanty duties. The name of Jesus is glorified by the poor unlearned carter as he drives his horse, and blesses his God, or speaks to his fellow laborer by the roadside, as much as by the popular divine who, throughout the country, like Boanerges, is thundering out the gospel. God is glorified by our serving him in our proper vocations. Take care, dear reader, that you do not forsake the path of duty by leaving your occupation, and take care you do not dishonor your profession while in it. Think little of yourselves, but do not think too little of your callings. Every lawful trade may be sanctified by the gospel to noblest ends. Turn to the Bible, and you will find the most menial forms of labor connected either with most daring deeds of faith, or with persons whose lives have been illustrious for holiness. Therefore be not discontented with your calling. Whatever God has made your position, or your work, abide in that, unless you are quite sure that he calls you to something else. Let your first care be to glorify God to the utmost of your power where you are. Fill your present sphere to his praise, and if he needs you in another he will show it you. This evening lay aside vexatious ambition, and embrace peaceful content. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Focus: Asia

Bruce and Laura Harris directed SEND International’s camp and conference ministry in the mountains of western Tokyo for many years. The Harrises have returned to church planting and have just arrived back in Japan from a home assignment. Pray today for the launch of a new initiative to reach their city - Engage Kanto 5/30.

We provide support for *cru* (Campus Crusade for Christ International) in France and Albania. Agape Europe, an umbrella organization of 18 national ministries, is the Western European ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International, a non-profit organization that brings spiritual hope and help to millions of people around the globe. Pray today for the leaders of *cru* in France and Albania.

Notes:

THURSDAY, JUNE 28

“But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.”

Today's Devotional Reading

Exodus 7:12

This incident is an instructive emblem of the sure victory of the divine handiwork over all opposition. Whenever a divine principle is cast into the heart, though the devil may fashion a counterfeit, and produce swarms of opponents, as sure as ever God is in the work, it will swallow up all its foes. If God's grace takes possession of a man, the world's magicians may throw down all their rods; and every rod may be as cunning and poisonous as a serpent, but Aaron's rod will swallow up their rods. The sweet attractions of the cross will woo and win the man's heart, and he who lived only for this deceitful earth will now have an eye for the upper spheres, and a wing to mount into celestial heights. When grace has won the day the worldling seeks the world to come. The same fact is to be observed in the life of the believer. What multitudes of foes has our faith had to meet! Our old sins - the devil threw them down before us, and they turned to serpents. What hosts of them! Ah, but the cross of Jesus destroys them all. Faith in Christ makes short work of all our sins. Then the devil has launched forth another host of serpents in the form of worldly trials, temptations, unbelief; but faith in Jesus is more than a match for them, and overcomes them all. The same absorbing principle shines in the faithful service of God! With an enthusiastic love for Jesus difficulties are surmounted, sacrifices become pleasures, sufferings are honors. But if religion is thus a consuming passion in the heart, then it follows that there are many persons who profess religion but have it not; for what they have will not bear this test. Examine yourself, my reader, on this point. Aaron's rod *proved* its heaven-given power. Is your religion doing so? If Christ be anything he must be everything. O rest not till love and faith in Jesus be the master passions of your soul! - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Focus: Asia

Darlene Johnson has been a member of MTW's church-planting team in Nagoya, Japan, since 2000. She teaches conversational English and evangelistic Bible studies and is involved in choral and instrumental music ministry. Pray today for a new church plant in Nagoya and for the final details to be worked out for a space for the church to meet that has recently become available.

The Cedar Springs Adoption Ministry is a group of individuals and families who have a heart for adoption and foster care and for providing support for other individuals and families starting or going through the adoption/foster care process. Pray today for couples who seeking to adopt as they wait and prepare their hearts to receive a child into their family.

Notes:

FRIDAY, JUNE 29

“Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.”

Today’s Devotional Reading

2 Chronicles 32:31

Hezekiah was growing so inwardly great, and priding himself so much upon the favor of God, that self-righteousness crept in, and through his carnal security, the grace of God was for a time, in its more active operations, withdrawn. Here is quite enough to account with the Babylonians; for if the grace of God should leave the best Christian, there is enough of sin in his heart to make him the worst of transgressors. If left to yourselves, you who are warmest for Christ would cool down like Laodicea into sickening lukewarmness: you who are sound in the faith would be white with the leprosy of false doctrine; you who now walk before the Lord in excellency and integrity would reel to and fro, and stagger with a drunkenness of evil passion. Like the moon, we borrow our light; bright as we are when grace shines on us, we are darkness itself when the Sun of Righteousness withdraws himself. *Therefore let us cry to God never to leave us.* “Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from us! Withdraw not from us thine indwelling grace! Hast thou not said, ‘I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day’? Lord, keep us everywhere. Keep us when in the valley, that we murmur not against thy humbling hand; keep us when on the mountain, that we wax not giddy through being lifted up; keep us in youth, when our passions are strong; keep us in old age, when becoming conceited of our wisdom, we may therefore prove greater fools than the young and giddy; keep us when we come to die, lest, at the very last, we should deny thee! Keep us living, keep us dying, keep us laboring, keep us suffering, keep us fighting, keep us resting, keep us everywhere, for everywhere we need thee, O our God!” - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Focus: Asia

J and C are working in a Creative Access country for World Outreach. J. is developing an entry platform using sustainable technologies that will provide income and economic development for the people there. Pray today that the fingerlings would continue to grow and be protected from poachers and disease.

The CSPC Refugee Ministry, under the leadership of Almaz Gemechu, assists with resettling international refugees who arrive in Knoxville. There are many opportunities for volunteers to help with this mission. Pray today for Almaz, the Home Missions staff, and all the volunteers with the Refugee Ministry as they hold their annual ESL Camp for refugee students through July 26.

Notes:

SATURDAY, JUNE 30

“Ah Lord God, behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.”

Today's Devotional Reading

Jeremiah 32:17

At the very time when the Chaldeans surrounded Jerusalem, and when the sword, famine and pestilence had desolated the land, Jeremiah was commanded by God to purchase a field, and have the deed of transfer legally sealed and witnessed. This was a strange purchase for a rational man to make. Prudence could not justify it, for it was buying with scarcely a probability that the person purchasing could ever enjoy the possession. But it was enough for Jeremiah that his God had bidden him, for well he knew that God will be justified of all his children. He reasoned thus: “Ah, Lord God! thou canst make this plot of ground of use to me; thou canst rid this land of these oppressors; thou canst make me yet sit under my vine and my fig-tree in the heritage which I have bought; for thou didst make the heavens and the earth, and there is nothing too hard for thee.” This gave a majesty to the early saints, that they dared to do at God's command things which carnal reason would condemn. Whether it be a Noah who is to build a ship on dry land, an Abraham who is to offer up his only son, or a Moses who is to despise the treasures of Egypt, or a Joshua who is to besiege Jericho seven days, using no weapons but the blasts of rams' horns, they all act upon God's command, contrary to the dictates of carnal reason; and the Lord gives them a rich reward as the result of their obedient faith. Would to God we had in the religion of these modern times a more potent infusion of this heroic faith in God. If we would venture more upon the naked promise of God, we should enter a world of wonders to which as yet we are strangers. Let Jeremiah's place of confidence be ours - nothing is too hard for the God that created the heavens and the earth. - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening - Daily Readings*

Prayer for the church, for others, for myself

Global Focus: Asia

H and L serve in Asia and are taking on new roles in 2018. H has been asked to be a coordinator for their agency's efforts to facilitate the development of local mission movements within one country in Asia, particularly for reaching the peoples of East Asia. L will be working to connect Asian citizens who have become Christians while studying abroad with local churches in their own countries upon their return. Pray for both of them as they begin these new ministries.

Echo Resources is a ministry to ministers. ER's vision is for ministers to live in deeper intimacy with Christ, family and community, and to thus have greater effect for God's Kingdom. Pray today for Buddy Odom as he leads this ministry.

Notes.