

Friday, October 6, 2017

## Prayer

Luke 19-20

*Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be a house of prayer," but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"*

Luke 19:45-46

Jesus quotes two of the prophets as He defines worship in the temple. One is a positive example (Isaiah 56:7), the other negative (Jeremiah 7:11). True worship of God reveals God to people. The temple was to be a place where worshiping God would be a draw for all nations to come and worship. Yet at the time of Christ, as at the time of Jeremiah, it had become a place for the worship of this world. The worship did not reveal God, it revealed greed. Prayer is that constant conversation with God that is to identify His children. The temple was to be a place where there was constant conversation with God that allowed for His presence to be palpable. Instead, it had become a place that was indistinguishable from the world. What of my worship? What of the worship of the Church gathered together? How are the worship services that I attend revealing my heart of constant conversation with God through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit? Can people tell that I have been with Jesus? Is the gathering of the Church displaying reliance upon God or self? How can my worship reveal a total dependence upon my Savior? May greed not find its way into my worship.

*Father, may You be worshiped in Your house. I am a temple of the Holy Spirit. I realize that as Your dwelling place I have the opportunity to reveal a total dependence upon a continuing conversation with You that keeps me in Your grip. May people see You when they see me. May Your presence be palpable in my life! Amen.*

Saturday, October 7, 2017

## Generosity

Luke 21-22

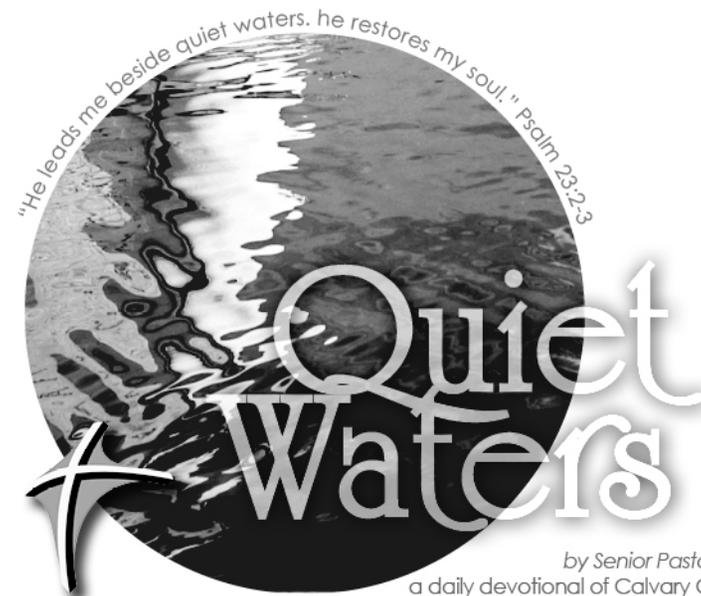
*As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."*

Luke 21:1-4

To read the account of the widow, I must read over the unfortunate chapter break between chapters 20 and 21. The account of the widow's offering must be understood in light of the conversation that Jesus is having about the teachers of the law. I read 20:21-21:4 without stopping to see that Jesus is indicating that the offering the widow made to the Lord was in contrast to the teachers of the law taking widows' houses for themselves, while offering lengthy prayers to show how great they were. These accounts go together because of Luke 21:1: "As he looked up." Jesus saw the perfect opportunity to reveal the contrast. She gave all. In many ways, it is much harder for people who have a lot to give with the same degree of sacrifice as those who have little. It is hard for one who has much to understand sacrificial giving in the same way as one who has very little. Jesus watches what I give and what my attitude is as I give. He is checking my heart to see if I understand the need for generosity. A generous heart will keep me from greed. Greed causes me to carefully consider how much I need to keep for myself before I give. Generosity causes me to think of how I can live in such a way that I have plenty to give. I must remember that all I have comes from God. It is all His. Whatever He leads me to give back, I must be ready to give. But I must also realize that whatever He lays on my heart to keep is still His. So, in that way, I seek to give it all.

*Jesus, I know that You are watching me as I live my life. Help it be a life of generous living. See my heart of offering in the same way that You see the heart of this dear widow. Help me give all my copper coins to You and trust You to care for me. Help me be wise with all Your resources that You have entrusted to me. Amen.*

October 2 - 7, 2017



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka  
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, October 2, 2017

## Lit up

Luke 11-12

*"See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you."*

Luke 11:35-36

In Luke 11:33-36, Jesus talks about the light within us. At the time of this teaching, it was thought that vision came through the eyes from a light within. So the light shining out gave sight. Jesus uses this understanding to help people think about whether or not they had light within them.

Each person is born in darkness; that is, we are born in sin. Sin is darkness. Jesus came as the light (John 1:4-5), to place His light in men. This light is life—spiritual life! And this spiritual life overcomes the darkness and removes the darkness from the soul. It is a lifetime battle to chase out the darkness and live in the marvelous light of Life—Jesus. The presence of Jesus in my life is light. When I walk with Him and abide in Him and He in me, then my life is lit up with His truth. This light comes into my life as I learn who He is and what His design is for my life. It is when I obey that I really begin to live as light (John 14:21-23). Am I filled with the light of Jesus? If so, then I am able to receive instruction and I will be guided by God's teaching. But even more, I will be a lamp in the darkness. God will be able to send me into places of darkness so that I can be His light! As I am in the light, the love and light of God radiates from me!

*Father, help me be filled with Your light so that no darkness is in me. Help me be lit up by and for You! Oh, how I long to bring Your light into this dark world. Thank You for trusting me with the light of Your love. Keep me burning brightly by keeping me obedient to Your truth. Amen.*

Tuesday, October 3, 2017

## Obey

Luke 13-14

*"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

Luke 14:34b

Are my ears ready to hear? Jesus is teaching in a powerful way in Luke, especially in these chapters. There are many things that He is teaching that leave me with the question of whether or not I am ready to put those things into practice. I consider the teaching of who to invite to a lunch or dinner (14:12-14). How often I am more inclined to have people over that I am comfortable with and close my eyes to those who have great need (those who are in physical need but also those who are without Christ). As God, Jesus is able to teach perfectly. But learning, in many ways, depends much more on the student than on the teacher. What kind of student am I? Am I ready to learn all that Jesus has to teach or am I more open to cherry-picking—looking only to the teachings that are easy or that I agree with? It is the identifying characteristic of a disciple to follow and learn. A disciple asks what the next step of obedience is. Obedience is the path of a disciple. A disciple of Jesus gives up every distraction so that they may learn from Him (14:33). I consider carefully this truth: If I allow myself to be distracted from Jesus, I am a disciple of that which distracts me and I learn from that distraction. So, what is it that distracts me from Jesus? That is what I must put to death in my life so that I can learn from Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30). I must resolve to passionately follow Jesus as one of His disciples with ears that are ready to hear all He is teaching.

*Dear Lord Jesus, please help me focus my love and devotion on You. Help me put off everything that would keep my ears from being ready to hear. Help me be a fully-devoted disciple of You. Help me readily see what is distracting me from You. I long to be distracted by You instead of from You. Keep my eyes on You and my ears listening to You. Guide me into obedience. May obedience be the path of my life! Amen.*

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

## Valued

Luke 15-16

*"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight."*

Luke 16:13-15

Jesus continues to teach and is trying to help the Pharisees understand the truth of God. The Pharisees genuinely believed that they were pursuing God, but Jesus wanted to help them see that in reality, they were trapped into valuing the things of this world rather than the things of the kingdom of God. There is an eternal economy. The currency of the eternal economy is much different than the currency of this economy. The currency of this economy has no value in the eternal economy. Truthfully, not only does it have no value, the currency of this economy is detestable to God. There is no way to worship and serve the currency of both worlds. It is impossible because the currencies are absolutely opposed to each other. I cannot love both currencies. Yet that is what living in this world tries to convince me is possible. It is not. I cannot live with a foot in each world. I must have a love for the eternal kingdom that causes me to detest the currency of this world. I must serve one Master with all my heart and soul, mind, and strength. The pressure to love what is valued among men is great. It overwhelms me at times. I must stay tethered to Jesus so that I can see clearly what it is that He would have me adore. May I value what is valuable to Him!

*Dear Lord, how often I get sucked in to valuing things that are detestable to You. Arrgh!! It's so hard! Help me. Draw me ever closer to You. Help me love the things that are valuable to You and detest the things that are not. Savior, rescue me! I reach out to You. Amen.*

Thursday, October 5, 2017

## Gratitude

Luke 17-18

*Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?"*

Luke 17:17

In this account, the grace of God is revealed through the healing power of the Holy Spirit flowing through Jesus and ten lepers are healed. They stood far from Jesus, calling out to Him and asking to be healed. Nine of them apparently never experienced the joy of closeness to Jesus. One of them did. The one who experiences closeness with the Savior is the one who responds in gratitude. It causes me to wonder how I have responded to the healing that I have been given by the grace of God. I have been healed of a much greater devastation than leprosy. I have been cleansed completely from my sin that had me trapped in a desolate situation of despair and torment. I had no choice but to know God from a distance, but He healed me, rescued me, and saved me from myself, my sin, my shame, and my guilt. He spared my life and redeemed it by the sacrifice of His own. Have I been quick to come "praising God in a loud voice," throwing myself at Jesus' feet and thanking Him? It is in so doing that I come closest to Him, adoring Him, prostrate at His feet. My life needs to be a life that is radiating gratitude. I am free to serve the King who loves me and has healed me.

*Jesus, thank You for my salvation and my healing. Let me never ever cease to praise You and thank You for my rescue. Draw me close to You. Help my life of gratitude be one that You use to draw others close to You as well. Help me walk so closely to You that when others are with me, they cannot help but see You! Amen.*