

**The Weekly Word**  
May 28-June 3, 2018

Well, we turn our calendars to June this week. Also, this week we turn from Job to the NT book of 1 Corinthians... Happy reading...  
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

**Monday, May 28: Job 40- How would you respond?...**

Job's words, the only words of a mortal in the chapter, grabbed me. *Then Job answered the LORD: "I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more"* (3-5).

I cannot imagine an answer different from these.

If God questioned me, I cannot fathom being able to say anything more and I wonder if I could even say this much. Even without the questions God has been firing at Job, to be in the presence of the Almighty would I believe be overwhelming.

How could I a mere mortal even stand in God's presence?

How could I a mere mortal even stand in God's presence... without the covering of Jesus Christ?

For the umpteenth time in Job I find myself contemplating perfection... I find myself contemplating the glory and majesty of God.

I am speechless...

I have no words...

*Oh, the glory and wonder of God... exalted in majesty... alone to be praised. Thank You, Lord God, for inviting me into Your presence through Jesus Christ, my Lord.*

*Praise be to You... the one and the only God, Supreme above all. Amen and amen.*

**Tuesday, May 29: Job 41- Fear, humility, ashamed...**

The inquisition of the Lord continues...

In the middle of God's interrogation comes these words, *Who then is able to stand against me? Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me* (10b-11).

Even without these words spoken this truth is pounded home by the Lord's queries. Stating this clearly only serves to emphasize this truth!

The answer to these rhetorical questions are clear, "NO ONE... especially not you, Job."

What would my response have been to the Lord had I been standing in Job's sandals?

Fear... I mean full on fear of One so powerful looming over me.

Humility... this is no false sense of humanity. Face to face with God Almighty I cannot imagine feeling anything but tiny, insignificant, and humble in His presence.

Ashamed... of my words, my boasts. Even as good as Job was, standing in the presence of perfection would accentuate every flaw in my humanity.

I don't know if I would have any voice to respond. I am not even sure a response is required. I might just fall on my face before the Lord...

*Lord, living into the spirit of the moment I just described, I humble myself before You... Mighty, Great, Majestic.  
You are Lord God Almighty and I surrender myself to You joyfully and fearfully with reverence and awe...  
Amen.*

### **Wednesday, May 30: Job 42- I am His...**

Called into the Lord's courtroom, how does a person respond? Job's final words say it well. *Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes (6).*

Repent... Job's word is an arrow straight to my heart.

Face to face with the Lord the wise and discerning heart repents. The perfection, power and presence of the Lord overwhelms mere humans. I cannot imagine anything less than Job's reaction. "I repent, Lord, of my actions, words, thoughts, and deeds. I repent, Lord, and I am utterly defenseless before You.

I cannot imagine any reaction short of this one.

As I sit, the need for stillness before the Lord; stillness and repentance overwhelms me.

God Almighty is here. I sit with Him and He with me. Even with my sin God joins me. I feel like Isaiah, "*Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips*" (Isaiah 6:5). I cry with the Prodigal son, "*Father I have sinned against heaven and you. I am no longer worth to be called your son...*" (Luke 15:21).

I have this pulse to become small and hang my head in shame for my sin-filled lack.

Still the Lord stays with me. God whispers one word, Jesus, as He pulls me close. God draws me to His side as if I were Jesus. I am clothed in Jesus' righteousness and accepted as a co-heir with Jesus.

The darkness created by my sin, begins to break as the light of God's love shines. I am lifted and drawn into God's embrace. I am His...

I am His, through faith in Jesus.

Alleluia! Joy floods the moment. Joy fills my heart.

*Oh, blessed Lord, words seem inadequate... Thank You. Bless You seems too simplistic. Still they are all my mind and heart can muster.*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Amen.*

### **Thursday, May 31: 1Corinthians 1- So true...**

Slogging through the middle chapters of Job grew to be a labor of trust that God knows best. Now that Job is over I am a bit sad to see it go. It was a book rich in meditation.

1Corinthians brings me back to direct connection with Christ, which is always refreshing. Verses 17-18 caught my heart: *For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

The cross of Christ... the pivotal moment and event in human history. What a rich thought to ponder.

Paul struck a nerve when he wrote, *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.* The cross really does divide.



Before my heart was alive to Jesus, I didn't think much, if at all, about the cross. Oh, it hung there every Sunday when I went to Mass, but it didn't capture my attention. I won't go so far as to say I thought it was foolishness but... uncaring inattention isn't much better. And I certainly can understand how non-Christians would believe it is foolishness. I mean really, God dying –how does God die anyway –for sin-filled humans. Who comes up with this stuff? It doesn't make sense.

However, to the mind open to Christ... ah, the cross is beautiful, the source of life, the doorway to redemption, salvation, unending unfathomable love. Yes, the cross is the power of God to save sinners and defeat the devil!

Years ago I made a cross out of the name Jesus. It hangs outside my study on a grand wall. I can see it right now. So rich. So beautiful is Jesus, my Savior and His atoning death on the cross.

I marvel at the gift Jesus gave on the cross. It has been so long since I first bowed my knee to Jesus that I forget what life is like without Him and without the benefits of His cross. The cross is the *power of God*.

My heart sings with delight for Jesus, my Savior...

*All hail the power of Jesus' name, let angels prostrate fall, bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of All.*

*Praise to You, Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords. I glory in Your cross because through Your cross I am saved, redeemed, restored and invited into God's family. Alleluia. Amen.*

### **Friday, June 1: 1Corinthians 2- The cross...**

My heart followed yesterday's lead latching on to the preeminence of Christ Jesus our crucified Lord. *For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified (2).*

A crucified Christ... the words seem impossible to the human ear, yet they are the very heart of the Gospel message. Jesus came to save sinners by offering His life in exchange for their life on the cross. And while Jesus sits in glory now and will return as the King of kings and Lord of lords, it is Jesus crucified that the church preaches. The cross is at the heart of redemption... the glories that follow redemption are wonderful; they, however, are the result of the action of Jesus' crucifixion.

So, I sit this morning considering the cross yet again. The cross... the key that unlocked the bondage Satan had over humanity.

The cross... the key that unlocked my chains to sin and death and set me free to know and embrace God in reverence and love.

*Oh, Thank You Jesus for willingly becoming the crucified Messiah... for setting me and millions free by Your loving sacrifice of Yourself in my (our) stead.*

And I'm forever grateful, Lord, to You. And I'm forever grateful for the cross. And I'm forever grateful to You, that You came to seek and save the lost.\*

*In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.*

\*The words to Jaunita Bynum song, "Forever Grateful," just burst from my heart as I prayed.

## **Saturday, June 2: 1Corinthians 3- It is always about the Lord...**

We live in a world that easily falls into personality cults. In politics, in entertainment and, yes, in the church we easily create 'personality cults' around favored and important leaders. Apparently in Christendom this habit dates back to the early church. Paul comes down hard on the Corinthians for making more out of church leaders than is wise.

*What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow (5-7).*

God definitely uses human earthly leaders. The church needs planters and waterers, but our focus needs to always and only be on God –Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit. God saves us. God grows us. God protects us. God, God, God... it is always and only about the Lord.

My sense in the text is that neither Paul nor Apollos sought any kind of personality cult, but people latched onto them. While this might have been true for Paul and Apollos, unfortunately, not all leaders are this pure. Whether the leader is complicit in encouraging the personality cult or not we, as the church, must guard our hearts against it.

I have leaders and writers who can speak deeply into my soul. I thank God for these people. At the same time I must be careful not to have my following and learning from them become more important than my following and learning from the Lord. These leaders/teachers play a part in my growth but only as far as they point me to and teach me about the Lord. As Paul notes *neither... is anything, but only God.*

And in any situation where I might be a leader, I must become as humble as Paul, recognizing that I may play a God ordained part in helping people in their journey of faith. Still, I am nothing... God is everything. And I suspect that I will be judged quite harshly by the Lord if I get this wrong!

So this morning the Lord is bidding me to examine and make sure that I am following Him and I have not slipped into the error of following any mere human whom God may have appointed for a particular task in helping the church grow in Him.

Who are you following and are you maintaining a God focused, God honoring perspective? Think about it...

*Jesus, be the centre. Be my source, be my light. Jesus*

*Jesus, be the centre. Be my hope, be my song. Jesus*

*(Chorus)*

*Be the fire in my heart*

*Be the wind in these sails*

*Be the reason that I live*

*Jesus, Jesus*

*Jesus, be my vision. Be my path, be my guide. Jesus*

*(Chorus)*

*Be the fire in my heart. Be the wind in these sails. Be the reason that I live. Jesus, Jesus.\**

\*Be the centre, Vineyard Music.

**Sunday, June 3, 2018, Sunday Worship**

*If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.*

*If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at [office@pcogonline.org](mailto:office@pcogonline.org).*

Click here for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.