

100th Anniversary Weekly Devotions - August

Week 25 – We Need Help

Pastor Palmer Wold

The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. –1 Corinthians 2:14

I have heard many people say, “I read the Bible but it doesn’t make much sense to me.” How can we change that?

Did you know that the world’s smallest Bible consists of a single piece of microfilm about one inch square? It contains the 773,746 words of the King James Version of the Bible. You can hold it between your fingers, carry it in your purse or wallet, or mail it in a letter to a friend. The entire Old and New Testaments have been placed on one small bit of plastic. But it is impossible to read it with the naked eye. The microfilm must be magnified to be readable.

As you look into the heavens on a clear night, you can see about 3,000 stars but there are millions upon millions of stars that you cannot see without a powerful telescope. With a telescope, you can focus on any location and see a myriad of heavenly bodies that you never dreamed existed.

To read the microfilm or see God’s amazing handiwork in the sky above, we need something to help us. It is the same with understanding the Bible. We cannot understand the message of the Bible unless we ask the Holy Spirit to help us. When we do, the Bible will become alive with meaning!

Question: Why hasn’t the Bible gone out of date?

Week 26 – The Gift

Pastor Palmer Wold

He that gives to the poor shall not lack, but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse. –Proverbs 28:27

Although there is abuse in welfare programs, we must never forget that there are many who are poor through no fault of their own. It is important that each of us reach a little deeper into our pockets to help those individuals who are less fortunate.

August H. Francke, a well-known preacher of the 17th century, founded an orphanage for homeless children who roamed the streets of Halle. Unfortunately, he always seemed to be in desperate need of money.

One day a Christian widow came to his door pleading for some help financially. When Pastor Francke told her that he had nothing to give her, she sat down and began to weep. Moved by her tears, he asked her to wait while he went into his room to pray. He felt God told him that this woman needed help and that he should be the one to give the assistance. He reached into his own pocket and gave her a small

amount of cash. Two days later he received a note from the widow thanking him for his generosity. She also wrote that she had asked the Lord to shower the orphanage with gifts.

God answered her prayer, sending a flood of blessings. A rich lady sent him a substantial gift. This was followed by gifts from two Swedish men. Shortly thereafter, Pastor Francke was informed that Prince Lodewyk van Wurtenburg had died, leaving a substantial amount of money to the orphanage. Francke wept with joy! He had give what he could and God honored that gift by multiplying it many times over.

Question: Is it still true that he who gives shall not lack?

Week 27 – My Agnostic Computer

Pastor Donohue Sarff

Now if you are willing to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods of your ancestors...or the gods of the Amorites...but for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. -Joshua 24:15

One of the extraordinary features of computers is spellcheck. I think it is wonderful! My elementary school years spelling handicap has followed me all the days of my life. And spellcheck has rescued me many, many times as I write on my computer. With just a couple clicks and all my errors are corrected. Sometimes it automatically corrects while I am in the process of writing.

But then there are those times when my computer assumes it is smarter than I am and inserts a word it thinks I should use...and it is totally wrong. There is one word especially where my computer and I have a running battle...when I type the word *God*. I admit that sometimes I don't press down hard enough on the shift key to get the capitol *G* and it comes out *god* in my text. Then I get irritated with my computer and talk to it!

"Don't you know that I meant *God*, not *god* when I typed that word? Why didn't you correct it?"

And my computer answers back, "How was I to know what you want? What kind of god or God do you have in mind? You need to make that decision yourself, not leave it up to a machine! If you want to choose your God, then you need to be VERY intentional about the capitol G. I'm just an agnostic machine. I can't choose for you!"

I bow my head in humility and thank my computer for teaching me an important bit of theology that seems to have been swept under the rug. There is no such thing as automatic *Choose-God-Check!* I can't depend on any institution or sacrament in the church to do it for me. Even God doesn't automatically change my *g* to a *G*.

Week 28 – A Five Finger Prayer Guide

Pastor Donohue Sarff

Rejoice always, prayer without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. -1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Among other things, Scripture admonishes us to “Pray without ceasing.” Our hands are constantly within view and can be used as vivid reminders of a wide variety of prayers in our devotional life. Some people believe this idea came from Martin Luther. It certainly is in harmony with his knack for making complicated things simple.

1. Thumb –Family and Friends: The digit often closest to us, so represents those persons who are closest to us.
2. Index/Pointer—Leaders and Teachers: The Pointer represents those who point the way to go in life.
3. Tall-man—Government and Authority: Represents those who are in a position of leadership...which very often we are!
4. Ring (our weakest finger)—Weak or Sick: represents the disenfranchised and oppressed peoples in this world.
5. Little/Pinkie—Myself Last: Represents ourselves...a healthy/humble opinion of ourselves.