

The PATH, January 11-17, 2020

Theme: A new year always brings with its share of challenges and opportunities. It brings good days and bad days. In fact days can go from good to bad to good again, or vice versa. Each day is new, but there is one constant in a new year (and a new day) and that is the presence of God. He has promised to never leave us or forsake us and that makes all the difference in how we live. Because of the promise of the presence of God we can now live with hope.

Monday - 2 Chronicles 5

God had always been with His people. He had brought them out of Egypt, He had given them the 10 commandments and He had won numerous victories for them on the fields of battle. He had even led them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Now that the people of God were becoming a more settled people they wanted to build a temple where they could go and worship Him. The temple is nearing its completion in 2 Chronicles 5 and many of the relics from David's reign and the victories that were won during that time were being put into the temple. It would serve as a visible reminder of God's faithfulness and His goodness to His people. The temple proclaimed the good news of God's majesty and goodness to His people. And yet the good news stretched beyond the temple as God continued to be with His people all the time, not just when they met inside the temple. That good news continues today as God is with us at all times. In fact we need to live with the realization that God's presence is always with us. This will change how we live as it will enable us to live with hope, knowing that God is always there. It gives us stability and an anchor in life, knowing that God is always there, and it also shapes the people that we are and it should motivate us to stay away from the sins of the world, knowing that God is always there.

God's presence is continually with us as we go throughout this new year. He is the constant when everything seems different or changing. He is our anchor point and as Paul says, "He holds us together." Celebrate God's presence today. Know that He is with you and live with hope and joy because of that. Let that fact change you and motivate you to live for His glory. Let that amazing promise shape you and let it motivate you to worship, to be thankful each and every day but also to make worship with the body of Christ a priority as well.

Tuesday - Job 23

This is certainly a difficult chapter to read as Job contemplates God's works and the things that He has done and has allowed. Job says basically God is always there and for that I'm thankful, but there are some things that don't make sense to me. He says God does what God wants to do and I simply have to trust Him even when what He does doesn't seem to make sense. Verse 13 says "God is unique", what Job is saying there is that God is wholly other, there is no one like Him and because of that we cannot fully understand Him. Certainly He does as Job says "whatever He wants and desires." Because of that realization Job says I am terrified and not just terrified but terrified of God. Job is scared because He realizes that God is so much greater than Him and because of that Job cannot put Him in a box. Job now has a holy reverence for God and the greatness of God. We would do well to have that today as well. Yes we can run to God as our Father, and yes He is the friend that sticks closer than a brother, but He is

also the God of the universe. He is in total control and we need to understand that and have a holy reverence for Him. We can only come to Him because He may be a way for us to do so, so we come to Him on His terms and even when we don't understand Him (as Job didn't) we trust Him, and we know that He is always with us.

Wednesday - Psalm 16

Psalm 16 is beautiful in tone and filled with hope. It tells us about God's faithfulness and the victory that comes through the Messiah. It tells us that because God is always with us that we should not be moved (v. 8) In other words we can stand strong because of the presence of God. Verse 9 even tells us that we can live rejoicing and we can live with hope because God is always with us. He will not forget us, He will deliver us, and He is faithful to us (v. 10). David even says "you will not allow your Holy One to see corruption" in verse 10. This is prophetic to Jesus, who died but who did not stay in the grave, but up from the grave He arose. Because of God's faithfulness that is seen through the person of Jesus Christ we can have joy. David in fact says we can have fullness of joy in God's presence. This is a promise that we experience joy now when we spend time in the presence of God. It is a reminder that we can have joy everyday of our lives because God's presence is continually with us. But it is also a forward looking passage that says in heaven, in the kingdom of God we will have "fullness of joy" because then we will be fully in His Presence and fully aware of His presence. We can rejoice everyday because of God's faithfulness and because of the promise of God's kingdom which means there is always light at the end of the tunnel.

Thursday - Psalm 121

Psalm 121 lets us know that God does not sleep or slumber but that He keeps watch over His children. He is continually with us and He is continually watching us and watching over us. What an amazing Father. The psalmist says, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills - from where comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Let that sink in. The God of this universe willingly watches over you. He chooses to care about you and to love you. He also chooses to help you. The God of this universe, the one who created heaven and earth helps you. Don't get overwhelmed by what goes on on this earth but instead trust the one who made the earth. He helps you, He loves you and He is always with you. Simply trust Him and don't be dismayed.

Friday - Matthew 1

Matthew 1 is a passage of Scripture that we usually read at Christmastime. It contains the genealogy of Jesus and then tells us about His birth. So why should we read Matthew 1, this Christmas passage of Scripture when we are 343 days (49 weeks) from Christmas? Because of the glorious promise that we are given in verse 23. It is a promise that tells us who Jesus is, He is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." Whatever we face in 2021, whether good, bad or in between there will be one constant, God will be with us. There is reason to live with rejoicing hope because of that!