

VCEFC Daily Devotion May 22- May 28

May 22 Who can enjoy the fellowship with the living God?

Psalm 15

“Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill?”

This psalm is probably a liturgical psalm for the pilgrims to examine themselves before entering the courts of God’s sanctuary. Have they lived a life that is pleasing to God? The repetition of “who” is not so much a question of the *identity* of those entering into God’s presence as it is of *what kind of* a person may enjoy God’s fellowship. The positive and negative requirements are given as guidelines for self-examination of one’s heart. They are to guide God’s people into a life of integrity, righteousness and deep respect for others, so that they may live in the presence of God no matter where they may reside. The conclusion of the psalm affirms the true worshippers of God’s pleasure, presence and blessing in life.

“The true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.” John 4:23

May 23 Apart from you I have no good thing.

Psalm 16

“I said to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing....the sorrow of those will increase who run after other gods.’”

The psalmist’s confession of his confidence in God exemplifies an intimate relationship with and a deep trust in the Lord, which transcends life and death. In reflecting and celebrating the sovereign beneficence of the Lord that he has experienced in life, the psalmist not only expresses his confidence in the Lord, but also rejoices in the expectation of a continued walk on the path of life in God’s blessed presence. His intimate relationship with the Lord is the source of all his benefits. His only delight is in the Lord, Who is the reason and the joy of his existence. His delight in God also finds expression in a joyful acceptance of the “saints”, the people worshipping the true God. The psalmist’s love for the Lord and the saints is contrasted with his attitude toward the ungodly, who are worshippers of idols. God’s judgment would come on them. He would increase their anguish. The psalmist shows loyalty to the Lord in praise and in obedience (“I have set the Lord always before me.”). He will not be moved by the idolaters, because his chief goal in life is to love God and live for him.

Are you a worshipper of the true God? How does your life show it?

May 24 Help is already there

Psalm 17

“I call to you, God, because I am sure of an answer. So- answer! Bend your ear! Listen sharp! Paint grace-graffiti on the fences; take in your frightened children who are running from the neighborhood bullies straight to you.”

“Hear...Listen...Give ear...”These are the intense expressions of the psalmist’s call/yell to the Lord for help. The language of psalm always vividly depicts what it means to be human beings before God. We pray and cry out for help, desperately drawing God’s attention, hoping to see His helping hand. Many times, the help is already there, right at hand, only that it may not be the kind of help we are looking for or hoping for. So,

instead of asking why the help has not come, we should learn to look carefully at what is actually going on in our lives, in our history, our leaders, our movements, our peoples, and ask, "Could this be the help that God is providing? I never thought of this in terms of help, but maybe it is." As Eugene Peterson says, "Prayer gives us another, far more accurate way of reading reality than the newspaper. "Think of it!" exclaims Bernanos's country priest, "The Word was made Flesh and not one of the journalists of those days even knew it was happening."(Living the Message, 41)

May 25 Love in Action

Psalm 18

"He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the Lord was my support. He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me."

The unfailing love of God for His servants is beautifully expressed by a series of actions, "He reached down....and took hold of me....he drew me out of the deep waters...He rescued...He brought me out...He rescued me. Have you experienced the loving hands of God touching your life, rescuing you from enemies too strong for you? The strongest enemies may not come from outside, but from inside of us: our hang-ups, our past hurts, our failure.... God is our powerful deliverer. *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."* John 8:36. He has won the victory over the great strength of our enemies. Claim this victory today: through prayer.

May 26 God's revelation

Psalm 19

"The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb."

C. W. Lewis regards this psalm to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world. In celebrating God's wisdom in His works and His words, the psalmist combines the most beautiful poetry with some of the most profound of biblical theology. It affirms that the natural revelation of God is sufficient to lead man to seek God's favor, as Paul says in Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities- His eternal power and divine nature- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." However, the revelation of God's law is clearer, greater and more comprehensive, because it is given by the covenant God, whose name is Yahweh (the Lord.) His words give healing to the whole person, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, and wisdom to all who are ready to receive them. The climax of God's revelation is when the "Word became flesh", the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. Jesus is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word." (Hebrew 1: 3). Christian faith is a call to a personal relationship with the Word, who gives healing to the whole person, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, and wisdom to all who are ready to receive Him.

May 27 What do you trust?

Psalm 20

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.”

We always want to be in control and to rely on our own abilities, but the psalmist reminds us that the true source of strength is the Lord. In the ancient time, kings multiplied for themselves chariots and horses to secure victory, power and control. However, Israel’s kings were warned against acquiring great numbers of horses and were required to revere the Lord (cf. Deut. 17: 14-20), because the Lord is the great king over all nations and He has the power to deliver His people from their enemies.

In today’s world, people store up treasures to secure a comfortable life, but Jesus teaches us, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6: 19-21)

Where is your treasure? What is the true source of your security?

May 28 The unfailing love of the Most High

Psalm 21

“For the king trusts in the Lord; through the unfailing love of the Most High, he will not be shaken.”

This psalm reminds us how God bestows great gifts on His servant: His presence, rich blessings, a crown of pure gold, a long rule, great glory, honor, and joy. In response to the rich and eternal blessings of the Lord, the king expresses his loyalty and commitment to Him. By his trust and dependency on the Lord, his relationship to the Lord is strengthened, and the Lord assures him that His love will not depart. Because the king is wholly dependent on the Great King for his strength, honor, longevity and authority, he will not be shaken.

It is in counting God’s blessings in our lives, that we can continuously renew our commitment to Him, and develop a deeper relationship with Him.