

FRIDAY

*"WHEN YOU ARE HOMESICK
FOR GOD"*

Scripture: Psalm 42:1-5; Isaiah 40:28-31
Romans 12:1, 2

"It seems to me that real liberty consists in obeying God in all things . . . taking as our rule of life the intention to please God in all things; not only to do what is acceptable to Him, but if possible what is most acceptable."

Fénelon

Take inventory of your life. How many compromises have you made, spiritually and morally in the last ten years: in your entertainment; your recreation; your relationships; your personal habits; the way you spend your Sundays?

Do you find yourself defending these changes? What line of logic do you use? Have the changes caused you joy — a light step? Do you feel good at the end of the day . . . or are you aware of an underlying edginess and fatigue?

Are you comfortable with your children — do you avoid certain friends?

Do you have the vague feeling that there is something you need to do, and somehow you cannot find the time to process that feeling?

Are you "homesick" for God and for the former freedom and contentment you knew when you loved Him and were being loved by Him?

We all need to come home, to the warmth and familiarity of our early faith to compare who we are now to what we wanted to be then . . . to what we felt God wanted us to be.

Prayer: Dear Father, the rhythm of the world is so catchy and provocative, and yet I am so hungry for the organ-tones of Your powerful music that used to lift me and fill me and put my world right! Oh God, bring me back into Thine arms and let me see Your plan for my life so that I may again walk in the light of Your love and approval. AMEN

SATURDAY

"FROM RICHES TO RAGS"

Scripture: John 12:9-19; Mark 15:16-20

We all experience certain ups and downs in our lives — some are more devastating than others but we manage to get through them, and we usually conceal the humiliation and despair from our friends: to outward appearances we are self-sufficient and durable.

Not many of us, though, experience the public displays of such extremes from which a person cannot hide, and in which all the hurt and dismay is open to scrutiny and derision. The fair-haired executive who suddenly plummets to an obscure position and must live with the humiliation. A politician who is confronted with opposition which turns the crest of his wave into an ebb tide. The mother who thought her family was intact, only to have it suddenly ripped apart by divorce or a prodigal child. The father who had always been the provider — now suddenly incapable of this and having to be dependent!

There are so many instances where we feel betrayed by life or people, and we cry to God and ask "Why!"

This cry is the beginning of the greatest discovery of our lives — for when we are "riding high," we feel sufficient unto ourselves; God is not a necessity. But in our crises, we reach out to Him, and He becomes our only hope, our sole source of strength.

These are the times, when you quietly turn all of your energy and thoughts to Him.

Prayer: Oh God, I beseech Thee to give me wisdom and strength to endure this heartache, as Your Son endured His. Bring me understanding and insight so that I may be ready to help others as Thou dost help me. I pray in Thy Son's name. (Job 33:29-33) AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021

*"CHOOSE THIS DAY WHOM
YOU WILL SERVE"*

Scripture: Prov. 16:18, 19; II Cor. 2:14-17

"To be humble and loving — that is true life. Do not let insult harden you, nor cruelty rob you of tenderness. If men wound your heart, let them not embitter it; and then yours will be the victory of the Cross. You will conquer as Christ conquered, and bless as He blessed."

F. W. Robertson

"Try to be humble, to be free from all conceit, to question your own opinions, to give up your own way, to put simplicity first among all excellences of character, to be ready to think yourself in the wrong, to prefer others to yourself; for this character is nearest to God's heart."

Archbishop Temple

How sad that the person who is most rare today is that man or woman who leans forward to listen, who perceives your pain without a sign from you, who touches you when you need it and asks nothing in return.

We admire these people, but they are not the ones we emulate, are they? We mimic instead those who command attention, who perform center stage but to whom people never go for comfort because we know they are too busy.

What is your ideal — whom do you follow in your daily living?

Prayer: Dear Lord, it is hard not to "play" for the world and its acclaim. Father, I want to be like Your Son — I want to be someone to whom others come, a vessel through which they receive Your love and comfort. It is this which will give my life meaning. AMEN

For information regarding these devotions, contact:
Daily Family Devotions
Tel: (818) 457-1798 • info@dailyfamilydevotional.org

TUESDAY

“BUT I HAVE NOTHING TO BRING”

Scripture: I Cor. 12:4-31; Isaiah 66:13

A disconsolate six-year-old boy, in spite of his mother's encouragement, steadfastly refused to visit his friend who had chicken pox. When his mother asked, “Why?” he blurted out, “Because I have nothing to share!” His mother said, “When you're sick, what do you like me to do best?” He thought, then suddenly smiled, “Just be with me!” he said.

Many people who are gravely ill, show a rare understanding and gentleness with those friends who seem to realize how difficult it is to come and not know what to say. How often we hear the visitor exclaim, “I came away with more than I took.”

If you find it difficult to go to the one who is sick, what about the family of the patient? Is there something you can do there — a meal for the children, errands to run, a lift to the market, the post office?

There are so many sudden gaps when a loved one is away and it takes so many people to fill that place! Men especially, need the solace of other men. Even a quick lunch break and a listening ear can be God's hand on his shoulder.

And learn to listen to God's urging. It may surprise you what simple things prove to be the most precious. You are the instrument by which they come.

Each of us is capable of different kinds of ministry. Search your heart and do what you can do with ease and confidence. Let God use it and glorify it as He will! (Mark 12:41-44)

Prayer: Father, forgive me for hiding behind my feeling of inadequacy. As the widow with the mite, may I give what I have as unto Thee knowing You will bless it and multiply it. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“MOLD ME AND MAKE ME, AFTER THY WILL”

Scripture: Heb. 12:1-13; Gen 50:20

The ancient art of making a samurai sword is nearly lost today. It is painstaking, time-consuming and demands absolute precision in the tempering and cooling of the metal. The artisan must apply certain types of mud or clay to specific portions of the blade; each portion requires a different tempering time and heat. And only the knowledge and skill of the maker determines this decision.

So it is with each human life which submits to God's hand. No two people are “fashioned” exactly alike by Him: the “fire” — its intensity and time — even the application of the “clay” or surrounding circumstances and relationships are never quite the same.

But God's goal is the same: to make people who will not buckle under stress, whose action is sure and clean, and who become sharper and more sure the more they are used by their Maker.

When we look at the vicissitudes, the tests, the very difficult places through which we are sometimes taken, we will be able to endure them better if we realize God is making us into more perfect people, not just for His use in this world, but for eternity and our serving Him and enjoying Him there.

Then we will never be heard to say, “Why me, Lord?” but rather “What would you have me learn now, Father?” Scripture says “no chastening is pleasant for the moment, but yields the peaceful fruit of the righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Can you believe this?

Prayer: Dear Father, I thank Thee for Thy searching love that removes the things in my life that keep me from being an acceptable vessel for Thee. Help me not to fear Thy touch, nor to doubt Thy knowledge of me as You stoop to mold me to Thy purpose. AMEN

THURSDAY

“GOD HATH NOT GIVEN US THE SPIRIT OF FEAR”

Scripture: Ps 118:5-9; Mat 14:28-31

Fear in the human heart is one of the most insidious, distorting forces in our lives. Its impact on society, in all our relationships, is evident daily, and all of us have some fear with which we must deal if we are to be emotionally and spiritually healthy people.

In children the manifestations of fear are all too familiar and vary from one extreme to the other — running away or clinging too close, hiding or exaggerated bravado, talking too much or not at all, jumpiness, withdrawal — anger or tears, violence or total immobility.

Tragically, we carry this on into our adult lives, where its irrational behavior disrupts the normal progression of living, intrudes on other lives, and dissipates our own energies.

Look in your Concordance and see how often fear is mentioned in both Old and New Testaments. There is the healthy “fear” — respect and awe which leads to obedience and a right relationship; but the unhealthy fear is based on our own guilt and resentment. This leads to further disobedience and anger.

Can you identify the fear which keeps you from being totally at peace in your spirit? It can be a small thing like fear of flying or fear of change, but it can be a dangerous detour that can force you out of God's will. It evidences a lack of trust in Him, and can keep you from putting out your hand and stepping willingly into the place He needs you.

There is no fear in you that is not common to man. (I Cor. 10:13)

Prayer: Lord, as I come to You, I am afraid to name my own fear. I am a child before Thee; help me to know this and to trust Thy discerning love which can dissolve my fear and make me whole again, and free to serve Thee. AMEN