

Good News Daily

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Sunday, July 26

Psalm 24 *Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in the holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. (vv.3-4 NIV)*

“Wipe your feet.” How often did your mom say that as you dashed in the door from the yard? There was a reason. She didn’t want anyone tracking dust and dirt into her clean house. That is why she’d placed the floor mat at the threshold.

Upon entering the Lord’s throne room in our prayers, we need to wipe our spiritual feet. God, by His nature, cannot be in the presence of sin. Cleanliness is truly next to godliness. That is why we confess our sins and receive absolution before we approach the altar to sup with Him at the Eucharist. We must have clean hands and a pure heart to stand in His holy place.

God wanted us to be with Him so much, He made the way for us to do so. Jesus became the floor mat on which we can leave all of our dirtiness. He took on all of our grimy and dusty sins when He hung on the cross so we can stand before the Father in Heaven in prayer.

Before you go to your knees to ask God for guidance or comfort, confess your negative attitudes, your anger, your pride. Wipe your feet! Then let Jesus shower you with his mercy. Now you are ready to enter into God’s presence.

2 Samuel 1:17-27; Psalm 29; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 25:31-46

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for Quebec – (Canada, Canada) The Rt Revd Dennis Paul Drainville
DIOCESAN CYCLE: Chapel of St. John the Divine, Champaign, The Rev. Sean Ferrell, Rector; Usigara Mission, Burundian Refugee Settlement, Tanzania, Rev. Eliezel Ndizeye; The Mission of Jesus the Nazarene & Shalom Mission, San Juan de Miraflores, Peru, The Rev. Patricia Blanchard, Deacon-in Charge; Birthday of Kathryn “K-Lou”, wife of the Rev. Christopher L. Ashmore, Jacksonville.
ST. MATTHEW’S: Pray for the clergy and those in formation at St. Matthew’s.

Monday, July 27

2 Samuel 2:1-11 *In the course of time, David inquired of the Lord... (v.1)*

My grandmother would nod and say, “It will happen in due time. Just wait. Don’t be in such a hurry.” I would stomp off. I was in a hurry—to grow up, to be on my own, to make my own choices. I didn’t understand that the world may have been my oyster, but making pearls take time.

People are even less patient today; fast food drive-throughs, technology and microwaves have spoiled us. We want things now. We sigh when our computer takes 15 seconds to boot up a page. We tap our fingers on the steering wheel when it takes the light 30 seconds to change to green. Waiting is not the easiest thing to do because we’ve become too results-now orientated.

The young shepherd named David was not that way. David was told at a young age he’d be the next king of Judah. Yet, he waited on the Lord’s timing for that to happen. It was not an easy wait. He battled Goliath, became famous and admired. He was tormented and hunted down by the jealous king, Saul. He lost his best friend in battle. And, he probably suffered a few arrows of jealousy slung from the direction of his older brothers who were not chosen to be king.

David sought God’s guidance all the way to the throne. He matched his timing to God’s, trusting that when Samuel had anointed him all those years before, it would eventually happen. In fact, this shepherd boy remained a loyal servant to Saul, the king he knew he’d one day replace.

The phrase, “in the course of time,” continues to introduce various chapters in 2 Samuel as the author tells David’s story. David wasn’t perfect by any means. But this one thing he got right. He learned to wait upon the Lord.

God still wants to anoint His faithful to do His will. But will we be as patient as David? Or will we rush ahead in the false hope we are doing what God wants, just when we want it to happen?

Psalms 56, 57, 58; Acts 15:36—16:5; Mark 6:14-29

ANGLICAN CYCLE Ruaha – (Tanzania) The Rt Revd Joseph Mgomu

DIOCESAN CYCLE: God, protect us with your strength.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Halian Littlefield.

Tuesday, July 28

Acts 16:6-15 *Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. (v.6)*

Later, in a dream he was told to go to Macedonia instead. Like King David in 2 Samuel we have been reading, Paul waited for God's directions. Paul knew God had commissioned him to go preach the Good News to the Gentiles. That was his destination. Yet, it was still up to God to dictate the path.

Have you ever felt blocked by God? I have. I stopped, pouted and thought, "Did I mess up? I thought I was doing what you wanted me to do? Why the change?" Then, God brought to mind my GPS. Recently, I was to travel to a destination I'd never been. So, I trusted in the little female voice on my GPS to get me there. But when she said, "Go two miles" she didn't mention the three traffic lights along the way. One turned yellow, then red. I had two choices. I could wait patiently for it to turn green, or I could stew about it. A few blocks later, there was a water main break. I had to follow the detour, but within a few turns, I was back on the road my GPS wanted me to travel.

God's directions are similar. He'll keep us on the right path, even if there are delays or detours. He may stop us in our tracks, just as He did to Paul and his companions. That may not mean we've been going the wrong way, just that our pace may need to be altered, or a hazard avoided. Maybe we have shifted into the doing-my-will-not-His-will mode. Or, maybe it was simply not the right time to move forward. Our job is to wait until He says, "Go" and then ask, "Where?"—just as Paul and his companions did.

2 Samuel 3:6-21; Psalms 61, 62; Mark 6:30-46

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rajasthan – (North India) The Rt Revd Warris Masih

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Holy Spirit, give us hearts to understand.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Georgia Griffin.

Wednesday, July 29

Mark 6:47-56 *Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. (vv.47-48a)*

Why would Jesus wait hours to come to their aid after he knew they'd been straining to row across the windy waters? Often times, we just don't understand the reasoning or the timing. Or, perhaps, we don't get the fact God is waiting for us to cry out to Him.

Even though the disciples had seen Jesus feed thousands with a few bits of bread and fish, heal the blind and lame, and perform other miraculous feats, they never called out for Jesus' help when they were in trouble. Instead, they strained and struggled most of the night relying on their own skills and muscle power. When he did come to their aid, they acted fearful and surprised.

We can't be too harsh on the disciples. How many times do we try to accomplish things on our own, and then are surprised when Jesus enters the picture? Usually it is in a way we do not expect, isn't it? It takes our breath away. He is mighty and we are weak.

2 Samuel 3:22-39; Psalm 72; Acts 16:16-24

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rayalaseema – (South India) The Rt Revd B D Prasada Rao

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of the Rev. Mark E. Evans and Sandy Moore, Lincoln.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for those involved in Outreach Ministries and our local mission partners.

Thursday, July 30

Psalm 71 *Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.* (v.20)

If anyone ever told you the life of a faithful believer would be easy, they lied. The Bible never states that. What it does say is that if we remain faithful to His commands, God will always be at our side. We are never alone.

As Christians, we have the Holy Spirit inside us as our comforter, guide, and companion through thick and through thin. God never gives up on us. He is always Emmanuel—God with us. Even if you are depressed, weighed down with immeasurable sorrow, or in deep physical pain, you never have to question where God is. He is there right by your side, wiping your tears, holding your hand, and giving you strength to fight.

But here is the best part. He will be by your side every day until it is time to call you home to Heaven. Then, you will be by *His* side for eternity.

2 Samuel 4:1-12; Psalm 70; Acts 16:25-40; Mark 7:1-23

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Recife – (Brazil) The Rt Revd João Cancio Peixoto

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of the Rev. Canon David M. Baumann, Salem.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for our Vacation Bible School and Children's Ministries.

Friday, July 31

Acts 17:1-15 *"This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women. But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city.* (vv.3b-5a)

You have seen it on bumper stickers, heard it on the news, and now TV shows are supporting it—global religious tolerance. Some of the Christian denominations are letting this plague seep into their pulpits, proclaiming it to be the holy, "I'm OK-You're OK" doctrine. This broadmindedness applies to everyone—except, often times, to Christians. People don't seem very tolerant of us when we claim our Lord and Savior is the only way to salvation. How do we convince them it is not arrogance, but truth?

Paul ran into this similar attitude in Athens, as we can see in tomorrow's passage from Acts. A city of vast cultures and religious tolerance, it says in Acts 17:19 that they were curious about each new teaching. But, Paul, inspired by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, didn't chastise them for believing in other gods. He didn't Bible-thump them. He convinced them with their own logic. Not all believed, but a few repented and accepted Jesus as Lord. God took those few who did believe, as well as others along Paul's journeys, and soon spread a faith-message that is still rocking the world.

The next time I am confronted by a non-Christian or secular attitude, I hope I will remember Paul's tactics. Before I open my mouth, I pray the Holy Spirit will infuse me with wisdom. May he give me the right words to speak, and tell me when to speak. After all, our call is to win souls, not arguments.

2 Samuel 5:1-12; Psalm 69; Mark 7:24-37

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Rejaf – (Sudan) The Rt Revd Enock Tombe

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of the Rev. Brant V. and Stephanie Hazlett, Mt. Carmel.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Benjamin Lucey.

Saturday, August 1

Mark 8:1-10 *Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat."* (vv.1b-2)

All through this week we have discovered examples of God's love for us. We have also seen there is a part to play in response. We are to be patient, wait on His timing, call on Him in time of need,

never doubt His presence, and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us as we witness to others about His mercy and grace.

Today's passage proves Jesus has compassion for our physical health as well as our spiritual one. It also conveys our Lord wants us involved in His compassionate acts. Being God, Jesus could have rained down fish and loaves, milk and honey, fig and dates. But, instead, he involved his disciples in the process. That didn't make the miracle less spectacular, did it?

An appropriate outpouring of our gratitude for what God has done for us is to go "do" for others in His name. In fact, is that not what Jesus has called us to do? Sometimes, tending to each other's physical needs opens the door to tending to the spiritual ones. It's called God's love in action. For proof, just go to any church-run soup kitchen or shelter. Better than that, why not volunteer at one?

2 Samuel 5:22—6:11; Psalms 75, 76; Acts 17:16-34

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Remo – (Lagos, Nigeria) The Rt Revd Michael Fape

DIOCESAN CYCLE: the Rev. Benjamin D. Hankinson, Mt. Vernon, Ordination to the Priesthood;

Wedding anniversary of the Rev. John D. and Barbara Richmond, Bartonville.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for the members of the Altar Guild.

by Julie B Cosgrove

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