

Good News Daily

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Sunday, November 15

Psalms 66 *Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!* (v.20 NIV)

There are countless things to praise God for, many of which we take for granted. This verse really convicted me that I am not praising and thanking God for these two very important things: for not rejecting my prayers and for not withholding His love from me. This is a great source of encouragement, for no matter how we give voice to the prayers of our hearts, God is *always* going to listen to them. No matter how good or bad we are, God is always surrounding us with His love and His presence. These are two of the greatest blessings we can ever receive, so we need to be singing God's praises for who He is and what He does for us.

Dearest Lord, thank You for forgiving my self-centeredness and for always being there for me.

1 Chronicles 14:1-17; Psalm 67; Acts 28:14b-23; Luke 16:1-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Venezuela - (Province IX, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Orlando Guerrero

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Granite City, The Rev. Anthony F. M.

Clavier, Vicar; Urambo Parish, Tanzania, the Rev. Can. Zephania Magaba, Rural Dean, Rev. Alex Iseke, Curate; the Mission of St. Mary Magdalene, Juliaca, Peru, Rev'd Ruben Mancilla and Rev'd Luis Vizcarra.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Dedee Champion.

Monday, November 16

Psalm 89:1-18 *Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD.* (v.15)

As I pondered the meaning of the first half of this verse, it struck me that acclaiming the Lord is something that is learned, and also that when I do it, it brings me blessing and joy. Doing so is only possible when I am "walking in the light of" God's presence. I suppose I have been learning to praise and glorify the Lord since I first began my walk with Him; and as I grow in Him, my praises come from deeper and deeper within my heart. As I grow older and stronger in my faith, the more I have come to appreciate God's enormous love for me, and the more I realize my unworthiness.

Here are three other Bible translations of the phrase, "who have learned to acclaim you," that I found enlightening:

(1) Who know the joyful shout (*Holman Christian Standard*)

(2) People that know the joyful sound (*King James Version*)

(3) People who know the passwords of praise (*The Message*)

We really do miss out on blessings and joy when we fail to praise our Lord. I know this is true because I have not praised Him on all occasions.

Help us, Lord, to acclaim You each and every day because You are great and worthy of our praise.

1 Chronicles 15:1-29; Revelation 20:7-15; Matthew 17:1-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Vermont - (I, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Thomas Ely

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Langford, Springfield; Birthday of Delores, wife of The Rev. Donald E. Coventry, Decatur.

St. Matthew's: Pray for those who are committed or considering participation in the parish mission trip and for members of our outreach ministries.

Tuesday, November 17

1 Chronicles 16:7-36 *Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.* (v.34)

This verse was set to music sometime in the late twentieth century and I first heard it when attending a contemporary worship service at my daughter's church in the late 1990's. This line is repeated numerous times during the song, and also the line, "Sing praise, sing praise." I love the fact that young musicians have popularized such wonderful Scripture as this. When I first sang this song in church, I wasn't aware that the words were from 1 Chronicles; all I knew that was that the words were *true*. (I have come across the replication of v.34 in other parts of the Bible, notably in Psalm 107:1).

God is "good" in the highest and fullest sense of the word. Many Christians today are fond of saying, "God is good. All the time." Even when my life doesn't seem to be so "good," it helps me to remember that God *is* good, and He can bring good out of bad circumstances. I am encouraged by the fact that His love for me endures forever. When I feel lonely or unlovable I have only to focus on the Lord and His many gifts to me, praise and thank Him for His love, and this very act begins to pull me away from the edge of the pity pit.

Praise You, Lord, for Your goodness and love!

Psalms 97, 99, 100; Revelation 21:1-8; Matthew 17:14-21

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Victoria Nyanza - (Tanzania) The Rt Revd Boniface Kwangu

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Sylvia wife of The Rev. Bruce DeGooyer, Bloomington.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Pray for those in discernment and training for Holy Orders.

Wednesday, November 18

Matthew 17:22-27 *When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life." And the disciples were filled with grief.* (vv.22-23)

This was the second time that Matthew recorded Jesus telling his disciples what lay ahead for him in Jerusalem. But the disciples, unable to grasp what Jesus was saying about resurrection, focused on what they did understand: the thought of his being betrayed and killed filled them with great sorrow. For three years they had followed Jesus, learning and growing in their faith, love, trust, and understanding of God through God's own Son. How was it possible that God's one and only Son would die, they must have thought. And so it was fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, at the time of Pentecost, that they did come to fully understand the meaning and purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection, because that is when the promised Holy Spirit came to indwell and empower them.

The Holy Spirit is *our* guide and the revealer of truth, just as he was for the disciples. Jesus referred to him as "the Counselor" in John 16:7, and he lives in each and every baptized Christian. When we acknowledge his presence and seek his guidance, he brings life to the Scriptures and enables us to be the persons Jesus Christ created us to be.

Praise the Lord for the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit!

1 Chronicles 20:1-8; Psalms 101, 109; Revelation 21:9-21

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Virgin Islands - (II, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Ambrose Gumbs

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, helps us to see that true wisdom shows itself by simplicity, and true power shows itself by modesty.

ST. MATTHEW'S: For those who teach and those who learn the Christian Faith.

Thursday, November 19

Matthew 18:1-9 *And he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of God. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."* (vv.3-4)

This was the answer Jesus gave his disciples when they asked him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" I wonder if they were surprised by his answer. As I reflected on this passage I began to think of the positive, childlike qualities that Jesus might have been implying, such as being

trusting, dependent on Jesus, being loving, forgiving, and obedient. These were certainly the qualities of Jesus himself, who was obedient to his Father in heaven, to the point of death! And what greater act of humility could there be than Jesus' own willingness to leave his exalted position in heaven and descend into the human race to become the servant of his master, and the servant of all mankind, to live and die as one of us?

Jesus gave his disciples a first-hand demonstration of what it looks like to be humble when he washed their feet at the last Supper...a beautiful act of love...a powerful visual for all time. Selflessness personified.

Dear Father in heaven, help us to learn humility from Jesus, that we may be pleasing to You.

1 Chronicles 21:1-27; Psalm 105:1-22; Revelation 21:22—22:5

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Virginia - (III, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Shannon Johnston; Bishop Suffragan The Rt Revd Susan Elyn Goff; Southwestern Virginia - (III, The Episcopal Church) The Rt Revd Mark Allen Bourlakas.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Tom Dean.

Friday, November 20

Matthew 18:10-20 *"For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."* (v.20)

What an incredible promise Jesus gives us in this verse. As I read it, I can visualize myself sitting down with a believing friend to pray for God's guidance and help with a particular problem, and Jesus is right there with us. In fact, I know of a man who will often pull an empty chair into a circle of people who have come together to pray, and before the prayers begin, he will invite everyone to picture Jesus sitting there in that chair. We might not be able to literally "see" him, but we know by faith that he *is* there if we have come together *in his name*, as opposed to coming in our own names to pray from a place of self-centeredness.

Thank you, Jesus, for the gift of your love and for always being in our midst when we come together in humble faith to ask for your help, and for always listening to our prayers.

1 Chronicles 22:1-19; Psalm 102; Revelation 22:6-13

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Waiapu - (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia) The Rt Revd Andrew Hedge

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Ann H. Tofani, Mt. Carmel, Ordination to the Priesthood.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Birthday of Ade Ogunmokun.

Saturday, November 21

Matthew 18:21-35 *"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."* (v.35)

In my study Bible, this passage is titled, "Jesus Tells the Parable of the Unforgiving Debtor." It clearly shows that Jesus is very serious about the importance of forgiveness. I, like the "unforgiving debtor," have a tendency to take God's forgiveness of my sins for granted, and then fail to give forgiveness to others. That must make God sad. God is willing to forgive *all* my sins, so why do I fail to forgive another person who asks for forgiveness? It shows that I don't appreciate or realize the depth of mercy Jesus has shown me by dying on the cross for *my* sins. He hasn't asked me to go to the cross, but only to forgive others from my heart.

Not only does Jesus require us to be forgiving, but he also equips us to do so by giving us the power of the Holy Spirit, which enables true forgiveness. Without this help, I am powerless to forgive.

Thank You, Father, for Your rich and deep, deep mercy.

Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Revelation 22:14-20

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Bishop of Taranaki Region - (Aotearoa NZ & Polynesia) The Most Revd Philip Richardson; Bishop of Waikato Region - The Rt Revd Helen-Ann Hartley

DIOCESAN CYCLE: O God, in my busyness of today, help me not to be so busy that I miss the most important things.

ST. MATTHEW'S: For an attitude of thanksgiving for all God has done for us.

by Anna Cash

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