

therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in Heaven” (Matthew 10:32).

Psalms 140, 142; 1 John 3:1-10; Matthew 10:24-33

## Good News Daily

May 12–17, 2008

### Saturday, May 17

Pray for your pastors' purity.

Pure motives.

Pure thought-life and faithfulness to their spouses.

#### Birthdays

Dick Jodry and Bob Moler

#### Anniversary

Tony & Michele Wood

Matthew 10:34-42 *“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”* (v.34)

I do not believe Jesus meant that peace is not desirable, but rather that we should avoid “peace at any price.” More to be desired than peace is a heart for God that is willing to take a stand on behalf of His plan. That presupposes that we can know His plan or at least follow His guidance. That means we should read His Word, listen to His voice and see His action in others. Jesus means to encourage us to stand in the face of discouragement and doubt. We are to battle satanic forces that would deceive and destroy.

It is plain that Jesus did not intend his remarks to be an excuse for genocide or for turning family members in to the Gestapo. He is telling his disciples they have a hard road ahead of them; so hard that even friends and family may turn against them. For those expecting a military hero, He is an unacceptable Messiah. How many times do we miss present-day prophets because they do not fit our image? I knew a man 40 years ago who prophesied difficult times for the church of which he was a member. The people refused to listen and wanted to evict him from the premises, but the rector said no. The prophecy proved to be true. The church is intact today, but the congregation went through a hard period. It is true that we are not to listen to everyone crying in the wilderness because some are deceivers. But some are not. We are to seek Gods wisdom in all matters.

Ezekiel 47:1-12; Psalms 137, 144; 1 John 3:11-18

by Ellen M. Smith

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### Monday, May 12

Pray for your pastors' families.

God's peace and protection.

A growing love relationship with their spouses.

A commitment to quality and quantity time together.

#### Birthday

Jim Sheffield

1 John 1:1-10 *...but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His son cleanses us from all sin.* (v.7)

When Jesus freed me from the bondages of “late” and “shy” He led me into “fellowship” and “caring.” He turned my heart from an inward focus to an outward one. He is still teaching me in this area. Currently, He is showing me how to live from my servant heart (for others) instead of my arrogant heart (for self). I still have an arrogant heart with which to contend, but I am learning to identify its motives. I am learning to separate my needs from my wants. I know my needs will be met in many ways, but always involving others. As my needs are met, my wants are changing from self-serving to self-offering. My desire is for a servant heart. I have discovered there is a life-giving glow in living out of my servant heart. For me this is walking in the light with Jesus.

Ezekiel 33:1-11; Psalm 106:1-18; Matthew 9: 27-34

### Tuesday, May 13

Pray for wisdom for your pastors.

The mind of Christ.

Godly decision-making.

Understanding of biblical truth.

1 John 2:1-11 *The one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.* (v.10)

How many times have you fumbled in the dark for the light switch? The arrogant heart (writer Jack Frost calls it our “Orphan Heart”), leaves us fumbling in the dark and stumbling over all kinds of faulty baggage—self-reliance, need for approval, the need to be right, competition and rivalry, spiritual ambition, shame and guilt, and a myriad of self-bashing thoughts: “It’s all my fault,” “I’ll never get it right,” “I’m not good enough,” and on and on. When the light of Christ enters that room

in our heart we are suddenly aware of his love for us and our need to love others. In God's light all that baggage is seen for what it is—an array of false notions and obstacles in our path. We can place them at the foot of the cross for His disposal or transformation.

Ezekiel 33:21-33; Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; Matthew 9:35—10:4

### **Wednesday, May 14**

Pray for your pastors' ministry focus.

Clear vision.

Commitment to biblical priorities.

Remain true to their God-given gifts and strengths.

#### **Birthday**

Chance Fertitta

Matthew 10:5-15 *And as you enter the house, give it your greeting. And if the house is worthy, let your greeting of peace come upon it: but if it is not worthy, let your greeting of peace return to you.* (vv.12-13)

I create what I call "Scripture Paintings." Several years ago I began asking the Lord to put His blessing upon each painting that I might bless those who purchase it. Since my work is an extension of me, I am entering their house with a greeting of peace. This I would explain to the buyer. Finally, it occurred to me that I also needed to ask the buyer if they will receive the blessing. I really don't want my work hanging in a place where the owner rejects God's blessing. Most people are delighted with the idea of receiving God's blessing. Some even send photos showing where it is hanging in their home. Others don't know quite what to say, but the blessing is free (although the painting is not) so they accept it.

In a culture that blesses people every time they sneeze, there should be more teaching on the nature of God's blessing in Holy Scripture. How often do we miss God's blessing by being unaware?

When Joseph was sold into slavery God blessed everything that he did in Egypt. The Lord even blessed the master's house and all that he owned. My Bible concordance calls "blessing" the gift of God's grace. Peace is the result of His blessing. We all want peace. According to Matthew's gospel, preparation is required to be a bearer of His peace to others. Are we willing to come under such authority and discipline?

Ezekiel 34:1-16; Psalm 119:145-176; 1 John 2:12-17

### **Thursday, May 15**

Pray for your pastors' health.

Protection of their body and mind.

An extra portion of stamina and strength.

Commitment to stress-releasing activity.

### **Birthdays**

Tanya Beltran, Robin Martin, Christopher Lopez,  
Jerry Carden, Michael Steffey

### **Anniversaries**

Michael & Dianne Steffey, Ray & Karen Grimes

Matthew 10:16-23 *"And brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death."* (v.21)

My friend, David, has returned from Rwanda, Africa, where reconciliation has begun between feuding tribes and families. In their recent past, Matthew 10:21 became reality as thousands killed their own families and friends, even their own children. Genocide captured their minds and today they are still burying their dead. Out of this, the amazing stories of God's grace brings reconciliation as killers ask for and receive forgiveness from survivors. I can hardly fathom that depth of death and forgiveness. It sure puts a new perspective on my own petty angst. How dare we question God's ability to forgive our failures and wrong turns! How dare we withhold forgiveness from ourselves for stupid mistakes! How can we not forgive those who have fought against us? Lord, have mercy on us all.

Ezekiel 37:21b-28; Psalms 131, 132, 133; 1 John 2:18-29

### **Friday, May 16**

Pray for your pastors' health.

Protection of their body and mind.

An extra portion of stamina and strength.

Commitment to stress-releasing activity.

Ezekiel 39:21-29 *"And I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out My spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.* (v.29)

After my husband died, I knew I needed to put my large house on the market. I had not the finances, the energy, or the incentive to maintain a 1925 house with multiple repair needs. Only God could have orchestrated the series of events that led to my property today being headquarters for various ministries. It is home to prayer groups, healing ministries, worship events, and art workshops. Repair and maintenance are under control, and I still have "my space" plus the fellowship of community. God has prepared me and my house for this new role. He surely can prepare the House of Israel to receive the outpouring of His Spirit. One of the speakers at my house this year was a woman who brings the Messiah Jesus to Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem. Dangerous business, but she is leading them one by one to their Savior. "Everyone