

THE HAPPY GARDENER

PSALM 119:1-8 NIV // CORINTHIANS 3:1-10 NLT

MONDAY 2/13/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 // 1 Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord.

1 Corinthians // 3 1-10 1 Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ. 2 I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready.

REFLECTION

Paul uses the term "babies in Christ" to emphasize the common sense approach to being a true Christian. Children of God do not just belong to the physical world, we also live in the unseen world with God's Spirit. Peter urges us to be like newborn babes who: 1 Peter 2:2 "Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment." When we humble our minds and become like little children, we are engulfed by the grace of God. We relearn to have an intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Jesus invites us to enter into the Kingdom of God. In the beginning God made heaven and earth like a garden. We were created to be the eternal "gardeners of His creation." When Adam disobeyed God we became separated from knowing God's love. Now, through Christ, God reestablishes us as His holy gardeners. As we embrace God like little children we come alive in truth and wisdom. In Luke 18:17 we read: "I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." When we accept the Spirit of God coming upon us we begin to become clear in thought towards God and mature children in Christ.

PRAYER Joyful, joyful I adore you O 'God. You are my guide for integrity and truth. I pray you to continue to give me courage and wisdom to follow your instructions. In Jesus Name Amen

TUESDAY 2/14/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 2-3 // Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts. 3 They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in his paths.

1 Corinthians 4:1-10 // 3 for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world?

REFLECTION

Jesus is the "gardener of my heart." Are you like me? At times, we all get sickened by our sinfulness in our relationships with others. When I get caught acting badly I become defensive and fight against the sin in me. Who am I to pounce upon another with my ill behaviors? Thank goodness I come to my senses before I act out my sinful thoughts. It is in these moments I smile and find joy living for Christ. Because before accepted the love of God, I would readily create tension with others. We are called to live as a child of God with the Spirit of Christ in us. When we do, we find real joy. Psalm 119:2 "Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts."

PRAYER Lord Jesus as I learn to follow you help me to obey you by offering grace in the face of evil. Search my heart O' Lord and help me not to compromise what you have taught me. IJNA

WEDNESDAY 2/15/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 // 4-5 You have charged us to keep your commandments carefully.

5 Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your decrees

1 Corinthians 3 1-10 4-5 When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and another says, "I follow Apollos," aren't you acting just like people of the world? 5 After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.

REFLECTION

As I get more mature in my faith I experience the joys of Christ so much more. When the Spirit of Christ presides in our lives we will no longer follow the soothsayers of the day. Instead, we stand firm in our faith. We all hear the voices of today's cultural prophets.. They cause all kinds of social disorder. As followers of Christ, we are to seek truth, integrity and honesty found on the God's word. Paul writes in verse 5, "We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us." That means we are granted a very special gift. We are invited to share God's "one way love" with others. We are "gardeners" planting the seeds of forgiveness and mercy. We water the soil for others to experience this true joy. These worldly philosophers have no cure for what is sick in our society, but Jesus Christ does. I ask do you really believe this?



PRAYER Lord Jesus I pray today for you to give me wisdom and strenght to keep your commandment to love God, others and myself. I pray my actions today reflect your decrees. IJNA

THURSDAY 2/16/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 // 6 Then I will not be ashamed when I compare my life with your commands.

1 Corinthians 3 1-10 // 6-7 I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. 7 It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow.

REFLECTION

I would like to invite you to see that each person of Christ has the opportunity to change the world. In today's verses Paul teaches, once you have recived God's "one way love" we become a gardener in the Kingdom of God. Genesis 2:8 "Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there He placed the man He had made." It was our orginal nature to take care of God's beautiful garden. Now as Christ's gardeners we are to plant the seeds of God's grace. We water with the truth about Jesus. We till the soil for the Holy Spirit to grow fruit. We are still the gardeners of God's kingdom. When we accept God's "one way love" we also accept that He makes the garden grow. In John 4:10, Jesus says to a desperate and starved for love woman. "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." This living water has changed the world as we know it today.

PRAYER Lord God forgive me of my sin of anger and resentment, I am ashamed of my actions when I compare my life with your commands. Guide my hand and heart this day so I my find your joy. IJNA

FRIDAY 2/17/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 // 7 As I learn your righteous regulations, I will thank you by living as I should

1 Corinthians 3 1-10 // 8 -9 The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. 9 For we are both God's workers. And you are God's field. You are God's building.

REFLECTION

As "gardeners" of the kingdom, our reward will be granted to us by our Lord Jesus in our eternal home. . Paul is clearly saying our work makes a difference in our future life. By the world's standards we are granted life's reward for becoming educated, saving our money, and being wise without choice. So it is being one of God's gardeners. We need not to catch the applause of the pagans in this world but only to please our Lord. The truth is, we all shy away from the judgment seat of God, in which we all will be judged. For those of us baptized in the blood of Christ we will be able to stand before God, our Creator. Those who are intoxicated with power, control and worldly glory will stand alone on their own merit. These are the people who have not understood or accepted the gospel. Paul cautions us and admonishes the Corinthians not to seek empty applause. We are to be careful not to be drawn in by elegant worship hours. There are many ambitious clergy who seek personal respect rather than learning to devote themselves to God causes. So when we set our eyes upon Christ and His heavenly kingdom the foolish desire of the flesh will disappear.

PRAYER Heavenly Father, Your righteous regulations guide my path in this life. I pray you help me to be a more productive gardener. I praise Your name and shout for joy, for You have given me meaningful life. IJNA

SATURDAY 1/14/2023

Psalm 119:1-8 // 8 I will obey your decrees. Please don't give up on me!

1 Corinthians 3 1-10 // 10-11 Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

Verse 11, Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. According to Paul the grace of God is the most powerful and beautiful foundation in which we are to live our lives and build our churches. Let us never steal God's glory who created us, sustains us, and invites us to participate in the reclaiming of His holy garden. We should act like Paul who is always diligent in reminding others that God is sovereign over all things. Christian gardeners are like instruments in the hand of God tending to His kingdom. As true gardeners of God's estate, we must learn to stand with great confidence to confront the proud and the arrogance who deny Him. Today, people continue to despise the doctrine of "justification by Christ alone". Paul boldly declares he is the first master-builder of God teaching us how to lay down the foundation of Christ.. Let us be clear never to venture to lay another foundation, (new age social justice Christianity) nor a church not be answerable to the true foundation of Christ.

PRAYER Lord Jesus I pray you give me more faith and confidence to obey your decrees. Please help our church root out the misdirected doctrines of the Gospel and renew our hearts and minds. IJNA



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