

### January 14th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 11:1-12:26](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 10:14-33](#)

[PSALM 34:11-22](#)

[PROVERBS 21:14-16](#)

“...do all to the glory of God.” Keeping our focus on God keeps it off ourselves. We can live with the confidence that in all we do we are living close to Him. We know we will have troubles, be brokenhearted, feel crushed in our spirit, but we have One who hears our cries. Christ, Himself, felt these same things. How did He do it? He kept His eyes on God, the Father. He wept, He cried out, He was misunderstood by His disciples. Yet, He kept living His life here on earth for the glory of God.

### January 15th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 12:27-13:31](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-16](#)

[PSALM 35:1-16](#)

[PROVERBS 21:17-18](#)

David was being falsely accused, his life was in danger, and he was a victim of hatred. He had to hide from those who sought to lay their hands on him. In spite of all these things he knew who to turn to, the Lord. He appealed to God to be both his Advocate and his Judge. There are times we may feel like we are hiding in the desert. We don't know where to go or what to do. It seems as if we are hedged in no matter which direction we look. David looked to God. Christ promised to intercede for us with the Father and also sent the Holy Spirit to lead us. Praise the Lord! We are not alone. We also have One to turn to in time of trouble.

### January 16th Readings

[ESTHER 1:1-3:15](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34](#)

[PSALM 35:17-28](#)

[PROVERBS 21:19-20](#)

The New Covenant is our covenant with Christ... His body broken, His blood shed. By partaking of these outward signs of His death and sacrifice we are reminded of the reason He had to go to Calvary. It was for our sins. This is the Lord's Supper, a time of searching our hearts to remind us that we are kneeling before Him, recognizing what He has done for us. It is a time for us to come together in unity as His body, the Church.

#### January 17th Readings

[ESTHER 4:1-7:10](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-26](#)

[PSALM 36:1-12](#)

[PROVERBS 21:21-22](#)

How many names come to your mind when you think of those who have led righteous lives? Of course, we can think of many in the Scriptures. But, what of the righteous you have known during your own lifetime, who are they? What makes them stand out above others? They have a certain peace about them that radiates light. They have an inner strength and are kind and loving. What makes them so different from others? Esther loved the Lord and put all her faith and trust, even her very life, in His hands for the sake of others. Paul spoke of the gifts given to people, and to him, being empowered by God. Why would God do this in our lives? The answer is found throughout Scripture, and especially in the Psalms where David writes in 36:5-7, "Your steadfast love, O LORD, extend to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD. How precious is your steadfast love O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings." The more time we spend with the Lord, the more we become like Him and are strengthened by Him.

#### January 18th Readings

[ESTHER 8:1-10:3](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-13:13](#)

[PSALM 37:1-11](#)

[PROVERBS 21:23-24](#)

If we look at Esther's life we see one of servitude, humility, and love for others. She was

willing to give her life to save others. Paul reminds us that Christ gave His life for us. We, the church, are now His body both as a whole and individually. We know that God is faithful, gives hope when things seem hopeless, and has an abiding love for us. Out of His love come all of these other blessings. Imagine David as a young man being hunted by Saul. He could still say in confidence in Psalm 37:4 “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” That doesn’t mean that we can order up a beautiful house, a nice car, a good career, lots of money. It means that when we delight in the Lord, His desires become our desires and we take great delight in these. And what is His desire? That we love Him, ourselves, and others unconditionally.

#### January 19th Readings

[JOB 1:1-3:26](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-17](#)

[PSALM 37:12-29](#)

[PROVERBS 21:25-26](#)

In spite of all the tragedies in Job’s life he could fall down on the ground and worship the Lord. His friends didn’t understand this. Job tried to explain his steadfast faith in God. It is difficult sometimes to testify to others how good and loving God is in the midst of tragedy. They don’t know Him. They don’t understand. The “commission” we have been given is to show others God’s love and to help them understand. We’re not alone. God directs our steps. David says in Psalm 37:23-24, “The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.” That is such a comfort to me. I’m not perfect, and sometimes I’m not delightful to be around. But even when I fail, my Lord is there to hold my hand and pick me up. I am still His child and I can still be used by Him, as imperfect as I am, to reach out in His Name to others.

#### January 20th Readings

[JOB 4:1-7:21](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 14:18-40](#)

[PSALM 37:30-40](#)

[PROVERBS 21:27](#)

God's Word speaks to each of us. In Job He tells us not to withhold kindness from a friend. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 14 that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" and "all things should be done decently and in order." As Christians we are to keep God in our hearts (and our mouths) so our steps don't "slip". We have no strength of our own. Our strength comes from the Lord. In times of trouble He helps us, delivers us, saves us. Why? Because we "take refuge in Him". Ministry is not just preaching from a pulpit. It's reaching out to others. It's being gentle and humble and loving. It's taking the time to "rest in the Lord" so He will give us strength to walk in His ways and to hold our hand out to others along the way.