

February 25th Readings

ISAIAH 51:1-53:12

EPHESIANS 5:1-33

PSALM 69:19-36

PROVERBS 24:7

Ephesians 5:8

When was the last time you were trying to accomplish something in the dark. When everything is dark, it is almost impossible to do anything.

I attend church with a lady who is blind and has been all her life. Before I knew her well, I used to think how sad her world must be. Her world may be physically dark, but her spirit shines so bright it is an inspiration to me.

She doesn't lament her sorrows or blame others. She embraces the gifts God has given her, she tells those she meets about God, and loves to attend His worship with her spiritual family. God shines through her darkness to inspire others.

Surely with all the blessings I've been given, I can find a way to let God shine through me. Maybe I can be that much needed smile, that encouraging word, or good deed that will inspire someone else to seek God.

February 26th Readings

ISAIAH 54:1-57:14

EPHESIANS 6:1-24

PSALM 70:1-5

PROVERBS 24:8

Ephesians 6:1-24

Children obey your parents. God commands this and Paul reiterates this is right. He starts talking to the children first because we develop our first relationship with God

usually through our parents. Then as adults, children of God, we can translate that first level of obedience to our obedience to God. God provides the perfect example of obedience with Jesus. Christ was obedient to God even to death on the cross. In doing so, he honored his father.

Living a life of full obedience all the time is not the easiest thing to accomplish. We disappoint God with our disobedience all the time. Sometimes, our sin is deliberate and sometimes it is unintentional. If we can seek Him in prayer, ask forgiveness for sins we know we commit, and trust in God's grace to cover the rest. The main idea is that we try to live a life of obedience in all we do.

February 27th Readings

[ISAIAH 57:15-59:21](#)

[PHILIPPIANS 1:1-26](#)

[PSALM 71:1-24](#)

[PROVERBS 24:9-10](#)

Philippians 1:1-26

It has been just a few months since Thanksgiving and Christmas. Like most people we got together with family, enjoyed each other's company and gave thanks for what we have in life. Paul writes this letter to the Philippians from prison. I have never been in prison, but I don't think I would be happy there. I'm not sure I would find much to be thankful for while being incarcerated. Paul writes in verse 11 of being filled with the fruits of righteousness which comes through Christ. I'm sure Paul didn't want to be in prison but he wasn't wallowing in self pity about his circumstances. He is thankful that his situation has allowed him to glorify God! He continues to be prayerful and thankful.

I hope that when our life seems or feels stressed and out of control, we can stop and give thanks for who gives us life here on earth, and more importantly – eternally.

February 28th Readings

ISAIAH 60:1-62:5

PHILIPPIANS 1:27-2:18

PSALM 72:1-20

PROVERBS 24:11-12

Philippians 1:22-2:18

Paul is describing joy in suffering. Wait, that doesn't sound right. JOY in SUFFERING?

Paul knew a lot about suffering. He was beaten – many times. He was imprisoned – A LOT. What joy can be found in physical and mental pain? He found joy in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ and what he had done for him. We have to live our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Christianity is not a way of thinking or believing, it is a way of living. Paul was a great example of this and he was constantly telling others of this great joy.

I hope and pray that I am joyous everyday, not only when things are great, even when times are bad. Living a life worthy of the Gospel edifies your soul and more importantly, allows Jesus' light to shine in this dark world.

March 1st Readings

ISAIAH 62:6-65:25

PHILIPPIANS 2:19-3:3

PSALM 73:1-28

PROVERBS 24:13-14

Psalm 73

When we look at the world, we see so much extravagance. The news is filled with lavish parties and crazy behaviors. We look at all the wealth of people and it feels like money allows them to get by with all kinds of wickedness. It seems that people are

competing against each other to see who can create or own the newest, latest, or greatest. We see all the worldly people getting richer and more wicked and wonder where is our reward for being good?

That is the problem ... we keep looking at the world when we should focus on Christ. Do we want what the world has? Do we want what the world will get? The wicked are receiving their rewards now. When the treasures of the world have fallen away, God will still stand firm. When physical beauty fades, God will still be faithful. Make God your home and your inheritance will be more rewarding than all the gold earth can hold.

March 2nd Readings

[ISAIAH 66:1-24](#)

[PHILIPPIANS 3:4-21](#)

[PSALM 74:1-23](#)

[PROVERBS 24:15-16](#)

Philippians 3:4-21

Paul uses this scripture to give his pedigree and his spiritual resumé. He lists things that had been given to him by the nature of his Jewish birth and things he had accomplished by his own efforts. He is not trying to brag about himself, rather, he lists these as things that give him confidence in belonging to God. Paul was surely special to God.

But Paul doesn't consider any of his advantages to be gain. Paul changed his entire value system to be a child of God. The things that used to be his advantage, became a disadvantage. The confidence he placed in his heritage was actually keeping him from Jesus Christ.

Paul understood that to hope in Christ was to consider everything else loss. Christ and

his salvation means everything. How much of a priority in your life is knowing Christ? Do you spend enough time reading your Bible and trying to gain more knowledge of what Christ's love did and can do for us?

March 3rd Readings

JEREMIAH 1:1-2:30

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-23

PSALM 75:1-10

PROVERBS 24:17-20

Philippians 4:1-23

What is contentment? This world, it seems, is constantly looking for the next big fix, the thing that they are sure will change their world and make everything better. It seems we are always wanting better jobs, cars, homes, better family life, and more money.

Do these things really make us content? Might I suggest the key to contentment is what we put into our mind and heart? In verse 8, Paul teaches about proper thinking. What do we meditate on? If we are thinking about Christ and His love for us, this might change how we think about our daily walk. In verse 9, Paul tells the Philippian Christians to practice what they had learned, heard, and seen. They needed to think on those things and let them guide their behavior.

Paul does not say to think only positive thoughts. Our world is wrapped up in the idea that if we think positive, then we will have a good life. When we direct our thoughts on what is pure, lovely, commendable, and worthy of our calling – only then can we be content.