

Faithbuilders Devotional Series

Through the Bible in a Year
A Daily Devotional

June

Pastor Mike Fast & Pastor David Curtis

Day 181 – June 30th

2 Kings 16:19-20; 2 Chronicles 28:26-27; Isaiah 13-16 — Faithful Prophecies

It is amazing to read through the passage in Isaiah as it describes the fall of Babylon and to remember that this was written a century before Babylon even became a world power. Assyria was the world power in the time of Isaiah and Babylon is just a small part of that empire. Isaiah predicts that it will not only become a world power (which it did), but that it will also fall in such a way that it will remain desolate and uninhabited. Saddam Hussein tried for years to restore Babylon and make himself “the Nebuchadnezzar replacement.”

And the prophecies didn’t stop there. Isaiah continues in chapters 44 and 45 to describe specifically who it was who would overthrow Babylon. Cyrus united the Medes and Persians and overthrew Babylon about a century after their reign as the world power.

The Medo-Persian Empire remained the world power until the Roman Empire overthrew them, which was also prophesied (very detailed in the book of Daniel).

Moral: The Bible is 100% true 100% of the time.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 152 – June 1st

Proverbs 17-19 — Parental Wisdom

I counted at least seven proverbs pertaining to children in these three chapters. Several describe the pain a parent can experience when their child is on the road to folly. A few others explain the benefits of discipline. There was one, far more uplifting, although I believe a few teenagers would take exception, which read: “parents are the pride of their children” (17:6). In fact, Mark Twain illustrated my point when he wrote, "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."

Parenting is definitely one of those things that go better with wisdom. Wisdom is something every parent wants more of. It seems to come too slowly. Wisdom has a great deal to do with experience, and experience comes with time. Texas Bix Bender wrote, “Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.”

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 153 – June 2nd

Proverbs 20-22:16 — Dangerous Business

I enjoy reading quotes by Will Rogers, a great social humorist. One of his comments on chitchat was, “Live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.”

In our society we have a lot of jokes and quips about gossip. There have been various comical television series for years that have a character portraying a nosey neighbor or town gossip. The unfortunate thing is that we have somehow missed the serious perception God takes of gossip. It is not a light, frivolous activity.

Romans 1:29 lists gossip as a wickedness associated with other wrongs as serious as murder. Gossip is described in today's passage as harmful and deceitful. Back a few chapters (16:28), we were told that “gossip separates the best of friends.” Today we are informed that, “A gossip tells secrets, so don't hang around with someone who talks too much” (20:19).

We are warned not to listen to it, and we are warned not to do it. “If you keep your mouth shut, you will stay out of trouble” (21:23).

My Prayer List:

Day 180 – June 29th

Isaiah 1:21-5:30 — Faithful Judgment

“God is a judge who is perfectly fair” (Psalm 7:11a).

Today's passage testifies repeatedly of God's coming judgment. Israel and Judah were to be dealt with according to their disobedience. There are actually four things to remember as you read this passage. Number one, the judgment is warranted by the accused. Israel rejected God and everything He asked of them. Number two, the judgment is fitting to the offense. Because of Israel's rejection of God, it is appropriate that He let that choice take its course (see Rom. 1:21-32). Number three, the Judge is righteous and fair. Who are we to question the decisions and judgment of God? We all know about rules when we play a game. Rules make playing the game more enjoyable and practical. It would not make sense without them. Why do we balk at God's rules? Number four, the judgment is coming. Beyond the judgments Israel endured there is a final judgment for all people, and the duration of that sentence will be eternal. Choose wisely for there are but two options: Heaven or Hell.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 179 – June 28th

2 Kings 17:5-41; 18:9-12; Isaiah 1:1-20; 28:1-29 — Faithful Treatment

Isaiah 28 closes with a wonderful poetic parable. The parable describes how a farmer deals uniquely with each crop. The farmer knows what each of his various sections of land will produce the most of in a specific crop. He knows what tools will prepare the land the best. He knows what each crop will require in order to be most efficiently harvested.

It is apparent that this passage is dealing with discipline that Israel is about to receive. Israel is about to receive God’s punishment for centuries of ignoring His rules and refusing to serve Him alone. Yet, in the parable, lies the beauty of God’s compassion. God’s actions “will be as measured and as well-timed as a farmer’s.” God will take into account the vulnerability and character of Israel. He will deal with them as He knows best, so that in the end the harvest will be fruitful.

God does the same for us. He knows what we need and what we can handle. He knows how far He will need to stretch us in order to make us the most fruitful in the end.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 154 – June 3rd

Proverbs 22:17-24:34 — Attaining Wisdom

Repeatedly we are told to listen to the words of direction, and apply our heart, and heed the teaching, and stay attuned to instruction. The emphasis would be hard to miss.

“Apply your heart to instruction.” Many times I can rush by a phrase like that and miss out on some of its meaning. I often need to slow down and acquire some clarity. For example, the word “apply” seems pretty simple—or does it? If I apply something I put it on. I cover something else. I do more than just agree with it, I prioritize it. I become affected and concerned with it. I will put it to work and employ its use.

What about the word “heart?”

This is a reference to the center and source of our life, emotions and affections. It encompasses our passions, directions, motives and desires.

What about “instruction?” In this case it would be best for us to define “instruction” from the passage, which has been frequently summed up as those things which reveal godly wisdom. Cover your life with God’s Word.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Week 23 – June 4th-10th

Song of Songs 1-8; Ecclesiastes 1-12; 1 Kings 11:1-17:7;
2 Chronicles 9:29-17:19

The theme for this week is simplicity. This concept is brought out especially in the book of Ecclesiastes. We are not looking at simplicity as the ultimate goal of life during this week, for bringing pleasure to God is our greatest purpose. Rather we are studying and thinking about simplicity because of the many connections that exist between obediently following God, making wise decisions and living a simple life.

Bible Discussion Guide

Make a list of everyone who would be affected if you were to have an extramarital affair.

In what ways is life more complicated when we engage in multiple romantic relationships?

Why do you think so many people pursue other religions instead of remaining true to the God of the Bible?

Is it wrong to have a simple faith? What did the man born blind do right regarding his confession of faith in John 9?

Day 178 – June 27th

Hosea 9-14 — Faithful Always

Under Nevada state law, any county with a population of fewer than 400,000 is allowed to legalize prostitution in brothels if it so chooses (which as of last year was all but one). And escort services offering sexual entertainment consume 140 pages of the Las Vegas yellow pages.

It's disturbing to even talk about prostitution. It's sad that we can pervert and degrade everything for financial gain, and worse, justify legalizing it.

In a harsh comparison, Hosea announced that Israel had been untrue to their God, "hiring themselves out like prostitutes, offering sacrifices to other gods" (9:1). In a more PC fashion we may prefer to say "they were unfaithful," but that doesn't depict the severity of God's perspective. Considering the way Hosea and God describe it may help us understand the seriousness and danger in being unfaithful. "As you cannot take a day off morally and remain moral, neither can you take a day off spiritually and remain spiritual. God wants you to be entirely His, and it requires paying close attention to keep yourself fit" (Oswald Chambers).

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 177 – June 26th

Hosea 2:14-8:14 — Faithful Love

I performed a wedding ceremony a few weeks ago and not once were there promises of unfaithfulness. In fact, I've never been to a wedding where a couple vowed to be unfaithful. Yet Hosea knew his wife, Gomer, would be unfaithful. God had told the prophet this and had told him why. Hosea's life was a living love story and illustration of Israel's love story with their God.

Hosea's letter is addressed to Israel as it describes their sin and rejection of God. They turned from Him and vowed devotion to idols. They committed spiritual adultery.

Hosea was instructed to bring his wife back again from her unfaithfulness and love her. And the next sentence tells us how God does the same; "For the LORD still loves Israel even though the people have turned to other gods, offering them choice gifts" (3:1).

God is never unfaithful to us. He never trades in His love for us on someone or something else. He will never go back on His promises or change His mind, His intentions or His plans.

My Prayer List:

Make a list of the various ways that we can complicate rather than simplify our lives?

How does finding your meaning and purpose in God help to simplify and clarify life?

What are your favorite sights to enjoy in this world?

How do you find balance between enjoying God's creation and becoming too worldly in how you live?

If you could change one thing regarding your relationship with God right now, what would it be?

What is holding you back from making the change you just shared in the previous question?

In what ways has choosing to follow God actually made life more complicated for you?

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Why doesn't God always make life easier and simpler for people of faith?

When is the cost of success too high?

If your life were to end tonight, would you be happy with the success you have achieved? Would you be happy with the relationships you have maintained in your life?

Day 176 – June 25th

2 Kings 15:30-31; 16:10-18; 17:1-4; 18:1-8; 2 Chronicles 28:16-25; 29:1-2; Isaiah 12:1-6; 17:1-14; Hosea 1:1-2:13 — Faithful Expressions

Isaiah 12 describes songs of praise sung on a specific day (vv. 1, 4), the day when the Messiah rules the earth. Obviously, we look forward to that day with great anticipation and we will no doubt sing God's praises, but what about days other than that? Do we have as many reasons to praise the Lord now as we would then?

Isaiah describes the Lord as One who provides comfort and salvation, the source of my strength and the reason for my song, and the One who "has done wonderful things." What has the Lord done for you? Do you faithfully recognize each of God's blessings?

Isaiah didn't leave it there. He added another dimension to it. He said that if we feel that way about the Lord we should thank Him, praise His name, "tell the world what He has done" and "make known His praise around the world."

Why wait until then? Practice praising Him now. Express your gratitude daily. Tell others of the greatness of God.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Read Isaiah 1:21 and Hosea 9:1... List specific ways a people can “prostitute” themselves before God.

From the June 28th devotional: What comfort do you find in knowing God deals uniquely with you?

Have you ever questioned the judgment of God? Why or why not?

What difference does it make that Biblical prophecies are fulfilled? Would it truly make a difference if only 1 out of 10 was incorrect?

What does “reform” mean to you personally?

Day 155 – June 4th

Song of Songs 1-8 — Rejoice in the Wife of Your Youth

God created sex (Gen 2:24-25) and blesses it in the proper context of a committed, loving marriage relationship. This book is a beautiful description of the intimate relationship that takes place between a husband and a wife.

Many have wondered how Solomon, the author of this book, could have written such a beautiful love poem considering his 700 wives and 300 concubines. It is most likely written about his relationship with his first wife, the daughter of Pharaoh. The playfulness and intimacy they share is reflective of a simpler time in Solomon’s reign before the building projects and rapid expansion of his wealth and influence. Solomon had it all – God’s blessing, money, wisdom, power, influence and women. And yet the more he had, the worse his relationship with God became.

Many lives have been complicated and pain compounded as a result of extramarital affairs. Not only is it an obedience issue, it makes for a far simpler life if we heed Proverbs 5:18, “Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth.”

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 156 – June 5th

1 Kings 11:1-43; 2 Chronicles 9:29-31; Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 —
Simple Faith

Solomon inherited a peaceful kingdom from his father David. Early in his reign Solomon and his people enjoyed living in peace (1 Kings 4:24-25). In all his wisdom, Solomon did not realize that the success of his Kingdom and the peace that he and his people enjoyed was dependent upon his obedience to the Lord.

As we read today, Solomon’s life and reign as king became increasingly more complicated as his heart wandered from the Lord. He was constantly building new and different shrines and altars as he attempted to keep his many wives happy. Then there were the political issues and the Lord raised up different adversaries to Solomon.

Instead of chasing religion like Solomon, we ought to be more like the blind man in John 9, who experienced healing at the hands (and spit) of Jesus. When he was questioned about the one who healed him, he said, “I don’t know whether he is a sinner, but I know this; I was blind, and now I can see” (John 9:25).

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Week 26 — June 25th-July 1st

2 Kings 15:30-31; 16:10-20; 17:1-18:12; 2 Chronicles 28:16-31:21; Isaiah 1-5; 12-17, 28; Hosea 1-14

Faithfulness is the theme of the week. We will see illustrations of God’s faithfulness to us and the people’s faithfulness to Him. We will read vivid real life examples of what it means to be unfaithful. We will see what God thinks of being unfaithful, and we will see how He responds to it (believe it or not, faithfully—both in love and judgment).

Bible Discussion Guide:

List reasons you have to praise God.

How do you do at remembering these blessings daily?

How do you do at sharing/expressing these blessings to others?

God faithfully loves Israel and the church beyond our ability to comprehend. “And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her” (Eph. 5:25). Use this opportunity to recommit your faithful love and devotion to your spouse. Perhaps even consider what damage unfaithfulness can cause.

Day 158 – June 7th

Ecclesiastes 7:1-11:16 — The Best Things in Life are Free

Have you ever had a chance to sit on the beach and enjoy the sunset? Another sight that I really enjoy is to watch the sunrise over the alfalfa fields of the high desert in the fall with the cool air of a frosty morning surrounding me. Of course these sights pale in comparison to that of my three-year-old daughter’s smile.

In writing Ecclesiastes, Solomon makes it clear that enjoying the simple things in life is okay, and I think it even brings pleasure to God. In the second half of this book we read that we can enjoy prosperity (7:14), eating (8:15), drinking (8:15), life (8:15) and marriage (9:9).

Life is something that is meant to be enjoyed. It is a gift from God and it is a desire of God to see His children enjoying His gift. We are still living in God’s creation and He is still that author and sustainer of life even though the world has been tainted by sin. Remember, “Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above, who created all Heaven’s lights...” (James 1:17).

My Prayer List:

Day 174 – June 23rd

2 Kings 15:32-16:9; 2 Chronicles 27:1-28:15; Isaiah 7:1-25; Micah 1:1-16 — Testing God

“Do not test the Lord your God” (Matt. 4:7).

While in the wilderness, Jesus quoted the above verse from Deuteronomy 6:16. His purpose in quoting it was to fend off the temptation from Satan. Satan wanted Jesus to test God’s promise of protection (Psalm 91:11-12).

In Isaiah 7, King Ahaz is in a similar situation. God has promised him protection from his enemies (Isa. 7:3-9) and then invites Ahaz to ask for the most difficult sign possible (Isa.7:10-11). Now we know from the historical narratives in Kings and Chronicles that Ahaz was not righteous. So I am surprised by his response of refusing to ask for a sign. He actually demonstrates a proper fear of the Lord in this instance.

If you were in Ahaz’ shoes, what would you have done?

Someone who fears the Lord also knows what it means to trust in the Lord. When we ask God for a sign to confirm His word, we reveal a lack of faith and trust in that word.

May you learn to trust God at His word each and every day.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 173 – June 22nd
2 Kings 14:28-29; 15:6-29; 2 Chronicles 26:22-23; Isaiah 6:1-13;
Amos 7:1-9:5 — Fear of Santa

Like many kids, my son had a paralyzing fear of Santa Clause when he was younger. I find this phenomenon very curious since there is nothing about this character, even if he were real, that is to be truly feared. The worst he could do would be to give you coal in your stocking instead of toys.

The fear Isaiah experienced when he encountered the LORD was a more legitimate fear, I think. Certainly Isaiah was familiar with God’s declaration to Moses that no one may see God and live (Ex. 33:20).

Why is it that we observe so few people who exhibit a genuine fear of God? It is directly related to how they view God. Isaiah feared God when he saw him for who He really is. People who view God more like a divine Santa Clause find that there is nothing to fear. They believe that God is merely a kind, loving, benevolent being who can only withhold gifts, not bring judgment.

May you come to a full understanding of who God is and realize that it is right to fear God.

My Prayer List:

Day 159 – June 8th
Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:14; 1 Kings 12:1-33; 2 Chronicles 10:1-11:17
— Honor God in Your Youth

I have a problem. You may very well have the same problem. I often find myself thinking that it will be easier to honor God and make Him more of a priority in my life down the road. If I can just survive until some day in the future, life will be better and easier, right? Not necessarily.

The older I get the more I realize that if I don’t make the changes now, I probably won’t do it in the future.

Solomon exhorts his readers to “Honor God in your youth” (Eccl. 12:1). We are not to wait until we are older to take God seriously, but rather we are to do it today.

A while back, my wife and I enjoyed the movie *The Last Holiday*. In that movie, the lead character made a decision to enjoy life and start working towards her dreams. As you can imagine, her life changed drastically and she finally truly enjoyed her life.

It took a doctor’s report that she was dying in order to change her life. What will it take for you to really start living today? When will you make God and His perfect will for your life a priority?

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 171 – June 20th

2 Kings 13:12-13; 14:1-27; 15:1-5; 2 Chronicles 25:1-26:21; Jonah 1-4 — Too Familiar

We are all very familiar with the story of Jonah; it is after all a whale of a tale. Sorry, I know – bad joke. But seriously, I encourage you to look at the story with a fresh perspective and consider for me, if you will, the use of irony in this historical story.

Jonah, a prophet of God should model a proper fear of God. And yet, as you may have noticed, the sailors and the wicked Ninevites demonstrated more fear of God than Jonah. How can this be? How can people who do not know God as well as Jonah does, demonstrate more fear than Jonah would?

One possible explanation that I would have for this is familiarity. Jonah was far more familiar with the Lord than was anyone else in the story. I think this curse of familiarity can happen to anyone who has known the Lord for a long time. We can grow so accustomed to His grace and forgiveness that we forget about His wrath and justice in dealing with sin.

May you fear God like someone who is encountering Him for the first time.

My Prayer List:

Day 161 – June 10th

1 Kings 15:16-24; 16:1-17:7; 2 Chronicles 16:1-17:19 — Cost of Success

“If you just ignored your family you would have time to get it all done.”

As I thought about this comment my wife jokingly made to me as we talked about the disheveled state of our van, I realized that she was right. I could accomplish a lot more in life by ignoring all of the people that I cared the most about. And in reality many people achieve success by this method, but at what cost.

Today you read a brief statement about the man who rebuilt Jericho. Certainly it must have been a proud accomplishment for him. The only downside was that it resulted in the death of two sons because of the curses spoken by Joshua son of Nun (Josh. 16:34).

Achieving success in life is a driving force for many people. However, at what point do the costs associated with that success become too great. We may not cause someone to lose their life because of our success, but if we ignore loved ones or neglect relationships, the pain and hurt we can cause is immeasurable.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Week 24 — June 11th-June 17th

1 Kings 17:8-22:53; 2 Kings 1:1-10:31; 2 Chronicles 18:1-22:9

This week’s passage describes God speaking in a variety of rather powerful ways (fire from Heaven, famine, etc.). However, Elijah discovered God’s typical approach: God spoke in a quiet whisper. As you read these passages you may be convicted and enlightened as you consider how you listen for God’s voice.

Bible Discussion Guide:

List some of the big things in which we look for God (i.e. popular leaders, conferences, etc.).

Have you ever found yourself needing to step back from the noise and activity of your busyness in order to hear God’s quiet voice?

Read Job 37:1-13 and describe God’s voice. Why are we inclined to describe God’s voice more often as “thunderous” than “quiet?”

Do you spend deliberate time listening for God’s voice?

Describe ways God speaks quietly.

Day 170 – June 19th

2 Kings 12:17-13:11, 14-25; 2 Chronicles 24:23-27 — Why Fear God?

“Have no fear, have no fear, said the cat in the hat.” I read that line today at lunch in the book I was reading to my daughter. As I was reading it, I thought about our theme this week and the subsequent mess that the cat in the hat made. Fortunately for the children in the story, the cat cleaned up his mess, but life doesn’t always play out like a Dr. Seuss book.

Today we read about more kings over God’s people that made one mess after the other. The idolatry they allowed showed a total lack of fear towards the LORD. What do we see as a result of this lack of fear? We see the consequence of incurring God’s judgment. Both Joash, king of Judah (2 Chr. 24:24), and Jehoahaz, king of Israel (2 Kings 13:2-3), invited God’s judgment on their people because they didn’t fear God and practiced idolatry.

So why should we fear God? We fear God because He is the one who judges our actions (Eccl. 12:13-14). We fear God because of the consequences that result when our actions invite His judgment.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 169 – June 18th

2 Kings 10:32-12:16; 2 Chronicles 22:10-24:22 — Learned Helplessness

At lunch today I had to do a little maintenance on our home computer that my wife uses for work. I suggested to her that she begin to solve these problems without my help. She promptly declared that, as long as I was around, she didn't need to; she had a 'learned helplessness' when it came to our computer.

King Joash took the throne when he was seven years old. I wonder if his early ascension didn't develop in him a learned helplessness. As a child he surely had been taught, if not just told, what to do by Jehoiada. He never developed an ability to think independently. Joash remained fully dependent upon the input and influence of others around him as is clear from his departure from the Lord following Jehoiada's death.

Do you suffer from a spiritual learned helplessness? May you fear the Lord and may your faith mature that you will "no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth" (Eph. 4:14).

My Prayer List:

Try to remember a time you felt God was too quiet, and perhaps for too long. Did you look for an answer elsewhere?

Define the difference between being an "instrument" of God and being a "servant" of God (6/17).

If you ever find your heart not being 100% into fulfilling God's desires (i.e. sensing and then meeting a need), are you more an "instrument" or a "servant?"

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Finish this sentence: Right now in my life I fear the Lord more because_____.

Are we, as Christians, above God’s law? In what ways are we still subject to God’s law?

Are Christians to fear God the same, or more, or less than non-Christians?

As you grow in your faith and come to know God more fully, do you fear him more? In what ways?

Why do so many people refuse to fear God?

For people who don’t fear or acknowledge God, what do they have to fear?

What is the connection between fearing God and trusting God?

Day 163 – June 12th

1 Kings 20:23-22:9; 2 Chronicles 18:1-8 — Listening Amidst the Noise

Jehoshaphat was listed as “a good king, but...” He fell short in seeing things through to the end. He did not completely destroy idolatry in Judah. He did not think through the long-term results of his decisions; be it allying with a wicked king, or allying his son in marriage to a wicked king. His poor decisions resulted in mediocrity as a parent and a king.

However, he is to be commended for how he sought the desire of the LORD regarding the decision to go to battle against the Arameans. Jehoshaphat wanted to hear from God and recognized that Ahab’s prophets were not of God. Ahab also knew there was a difference. In fact, Ahab recognized that often the messages from God’s prophets were different than that of his idol-worshipping prophets.

Although the noise of 400 erroneous prophets was loud around him, Jehoshaphat wanted to hear even just one quiet voice from God. How well do you recognize God’s voice and His message? Does the noise of the world get in the way?

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Day 164 – June 13th

1 Kings 22:10-40, 51-53; 2 Chronicles 18:9-20:30 — Unpopular Proclamation

After reading today’s passage, the bottom line has to be: “Sometimes people don’t like to hear what the Lord has to say.” Micaiah’s prophetic messages from the Lord always irritated King Ahab. In fact, he hated Micaiah for it. There was never any “good news” for Ahab (no doubt something that would support his evil acts).

Ahab’s wicked prophets told Micaiah what he should say – only that which would agree with and make Ahab happy. The evil prophet, Zedekiah, danced around with iron horns pretending to have a message for Ahab. He also hated Micaiah’s message and slapped him across the face. Ahab then had Micaiah put in prison and fed nothing but bread and water. And we never read whether or not he ever got out of prison.

When you listen for God’s voice are you hearing the exhorting and the encouragement? Do you listen to the convicting as you would the comforting? Or, how are you at heeding God’s word even when it’s not the most popular opinion?

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Week 25 – June 18th-24th

2 Kings 10:32-15:29; 15:32-16:9; 2 Chronicles 22:10-28:15; Isaiah 6:1-11:16; Amos 1-9; Jonah 1-4; Micah 1:1-16

This week’s theme is the fear of the Lord. This is an often puzzling subject and can be difficult to fully comprehend. God loves us and we love Him in return, and yet we are also supposed to fear Him. Sometimes this fear is a sense of awe and respect because of the holiness of God and the fact that He is so vastly different than we are. Sometimes this fear of God is because, as the sovereign Lord, He is the one who judges our actions and thoughts and has the power and authority to save and to condemn at the same time.

Bible Discussion Guide:

Why should we avoid having a learned helplessness in our spiritual lives?

What are some actions someone could take to avoid having this learned helplessness?

What can a lack of the fear of the Lord lead to in our lives?

How can familiarity cause you to fear something less?

Day 166 – June 15th

2 Kings 2:1-25; 4:1-44 — What Do You Hear Him Say?

A wealthy woman from Shunem sensed Elisha had a need and then took it to the next step and met that need. There are several wonderful attributes displayed in her life. First, in discerning a need, she had to be sensitive and open to the hardships of others. She was obviously a person of compassion and grace. Secondly, she was obedient and responsive to the will and desires of God. Third, she was willing to spend time and money to meet other’s needs. There is an enormous difference between sensing someone’s needs and meeting their needs. James says it well, “Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, and you say, ‘Well, good-bye and God bless you; stay warm and eat well’ – but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?” (2:15-16).

Obviously, she also exercised hospitality and generosity, but beyond that she looked for ways to serve and help. Although God asks that of each of us we may not do so as freely as we should.

My Prayer List:

Day 167 – June 16th

2 Kings 5:1-8:15 — Hoping for the Loud

Have you ever expected God to answer a certain way only to find out He answered differently? Naaman was angry when the answer he expected to hear from God’s prophet came back differently. In fact, Naaman’s officers confronted him on this point. They asked him why he was only looking for a loud and great reply, and not willing to listen to the simple and quiet response.

In this case, the result was the same, as far as healing goes, but the spiritual result was something deeper and greater. Naaman came away from the experience “know(ing) at last that there is no God in all the world except in Israel.” He also vowed to “never again offer any burnt offerings or sacrifices to any other god except the LORD.”

There may be something glamorous or sensational about a loud and great response from the Lord. Yet, for that very reason, it may be why God chooses to respond more often in a quiet and simple way. In humility may we hear God’s quiet voice.

My Prayer List:

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____

Taking every thought captive to Christ: _____
