



DAILY READINGS

23RD FEBRUARY - 21ST MARCH

A big THANK YOU to Des Pratt for blessing us with four weeks of daily notes.

THIS GUIDE IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS:

Pick the option that suits you. Pgs. 2-13 contain devotional notes for encouragement and reflection, while pgs. 14-16 support a journal style discovery approach

EPHESIANS IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS:

Chs. 1-3 praise God for His amazing grace, and chs. 4-6 instruct us in how to respond.

There are no readings on Sundays - they can be used as a catch-up day

MONDAY 23TH FEBRUARY EPHESIANS 1:15

Key Verse: Vs 18 **I PRAY ALSO THE EYES OF YOUR HEART MAY BE ENLIGHTENED IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY KNOW THE HOPE TO WHICH HE HAS CALLED YOU, THE RICHES OF HIS GLORIOUS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS AND HIS INCOMPARABLE GREAT POWER FOR US WHO BELIEVE.**

Song 848 "Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Pauls' prayer that our

- 1) Heart is enlightened so:
 - a) You may know the hope
 - b) You may Know He has called you
 - c) You may know Your rich inheritance
 - d) You may know His great power for us who believe
- 2) Paul prays for a fuller revelation and a fuller knowledge of God.
- 3) In this age, we are in a world of despair. Not unlike the times of the early church. Where does our hope lay? No hope leads to anxiety and depression.- Do you believe that statement?
- 4) We have been called - 1 Corinth 1: 22-25 What are we called from,--- to what?
- 5) Is your rich inheritance coming from a rich relative? What is the rich inheritance that Paul speaks of in this passage?
- 6) For Paul, the supreme proof of power was Jesus' resurrection. It proved that God's purposes cannot be stopped by any action of man. In a world that looks chaotic, it does us well to remember who is in control! How do you go knowing God is in control? Can you live in that knowledge/faith?
- 7) Where are you looking for Holy Spirit power in your life?

Prayer; Father, we pray the eyes of our heart will be opened: our ears will be unstopped; our hearts receptive and our tongue loosed, to respond to You with praise and glory for the hope you have put in our heart, and praise for our great inheritance in You, and the dynamic power that is available in Jesus' name!

TUESDAY 24th FEBRUARY EPHESIANS 1; 20-23

Key Verse: vs 22 **AND GOD PLACED ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET AND APPOINTED HIM TO BE HEAD OVER EVERYTHING FOR THE CHURCH, WHICH IS THE BODY, THE FULLNESS OF HIM WHO FILLS EVERYTHING IN EVERY WAY.**

The Church is the body of Christ! Vs 22

In Paul's day, the world was in complete disunity. Disunity between Jew and Gentile; Greek and Barbarian; disunity between man; disunity in nations – but above all, disunity between God and man.

Jesus died to wipe out separation, reconcile man to man and man to God. Christ died to bring all things and all men into one family. But of course, that unity is not complete until all know Christ. The task of the Church is to bring that about through the saving grace of Jesus.

There is a legend that when Jesus went to Heaven bearing the marks of the cross, Gabriel said, "You must have suffered terribly. Do they all know that You loved them and what you did for them?" "Oh, no" Jesus replied. "Then, how will they know?" Gabriel enquired. "I have left a few people to tell the world.", was Jesus' response. Gabriel looked horrified. "Don't you know how fickle man is? What if they grow tired and fail to tell them. What's plan B?"

Jesus replied, "I haven't made any other plans, I'm counting on them!"

We are only one generation away from extinction as a church but... vs 22 All things are under his feet! He is the head over the Church, which is His body!

Does this fill you with dread or assurance?

Prayer. Dear Lord, knowing You have entrusted us to share the Gospel and be Your representative here on earth, fills me with dread at times, because I am only too aware of my failings and timidness. But on the other hand, I feel relieved and assured, that it is Your Church, and You are the Head, and it is You who is faithful and all powerful to draw people to Yourself. It is a privilege that You desire to include us in Your work. Father, help me be authentic. consistently expressing Your love to all people. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 25TH Isaiah 40: 25-31

Key Verse 29-31 **He gave strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall: but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on the wings like eagles: they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.**

1. How did you answer the last question yesterday? Does this passage give you hope?
2. Have you ever reached rock bottom? Total despair? Are you in this place at the moment?
 - a. Where do you look? Vs 26 Psalm 121:1,2
 - b. List God' s attributes and promises for His people. (25-31)
 - c. List His promises to you. (25-31)

Even the strongest people get tired at times, but God' s power and strength never diminishes. He is never too tired/too busy to help and listen to us!

This is true of the Church as well. Let us not be dependent on our fatigue or strength! It is His church- and He is ever present. Never too tired or too busy.

Prayer. Lord, I get tired, weary, despondent! I thank you, that You promise to lift me up. Jesus, when my head hangs low, and I look inward, encourage me to look up for Your strength. You have promised to lift us up, and rise us above our troubles. Praise you, Jesus!

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26TH PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11

Key Verse vs 6 **BEING CONFIDENT OF THIS, THAT HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL CARRY IT ON TO COMPLETION UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST.**

While I have always read this verse (vs 6) as great encouragement personally, Paul was writing this to the church of Philippi, giving thanks for their encouragement and tireless work of partnering with Paul, sharing the gospel.

Faithful as they may be and as faithful as we may be, but we do tire and we forget who it is that sustains our church and who will keep us to the end! Paul prays for the church, for love to abound, for more knowledge and discernment, so as to be pure and blameless until Christ returns.

Paul provides encouragement to the church, when the newness of faith has worn off.

- 1) Have you ever begun or taken on a work or service for Christ and the Church, only to feel tired and wondering if it was God who called you?
- 2) Where do you go when this happens? Do you get frustrated; feel imprisoned; despairing; failure? Where does Paul suggest is the answer?
- 3) Again, often we feel it is up to “me”. Shouldn’t we look to Christ and to the body of Christ, in love, in discernment to lead us on to be blameless until Christ returns!

Prayer. We thank you for the Church- the body of Christ. We thank you for our church. Sometimes we feel small and insignificant.- and unable to carry on. Thank you for the Word of encouragement; Zachariah 4;10 “Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begun.” And we have been assured, You will bring it to completion. Thank you, Jesus

FRIDAY 27TH FEBRUARY COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

Key Verse 9a **WE HAVE NOT STOPPED PRAYING FOR YOU AND ASKING GOD TO FILL YOU WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL THROUGH ALL SPIRITUAL WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING AND WE PRAY.....**

Paul was in confinement or prison. The days of when he could be in person, sharing the gospel to crowds, doing ministry were curtailed or non- existent. Like Paul may have felt, many of us may feel our best days are over!

- 1) In Pauls' imprisonment, what things cannot be taken from him?
- 2) Paul had not ever been to Colossae. Are you inspired by Pauls' great encouragement to a small, insignificant church (in the worlds eyes)?
- 3) Do you ever feel your best days for God are over?
- 4) Are we ever too old or infirmed to pray?
- 5) Our church actively supports the Ugandan and Cambodian ministry. Most of us have never been or met these people. Would you consider praying passionately and fervently for these people and leadership as Paul did for the Colossians?
- 6) Closer to home, we have school chaplains, ministers of the word etc. Would you pray for these leaders?
- 7) Our church is small, but we long to be faithful, have wisdom and understanding, live a life worthy of the Lord. Will you joyfully give thanks to God and pray for power and strength to endure and be patient in our witness to Christ?

Prayer; Too often, Lord, we are obsessed with 'doing' instead of 'being'. For some of us, our doing days are almost done- but we have time to "be' with You, listen to Your heart, and abide in You. We have time to seek Your face; and to pray in harmony with Your Spirit for those You are drawing to Yourself. Bring to our mind those we are partnering in Cambodia, Uganda and other ministries that You have brought to our attention. Guide us, we pray!

SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY PSALM 27

Key Verse vs 4 **THE ONE THING I ASK OF THE LORD – THE THING I SEEK MOST – IS TO LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE, DELIGHTING IN THE LORDS' PERFECTIONS AND MEDITATING IN THE TEMPLE.**

Has it been a hard week? Too much stress? Too much worry?

"It is a scene played out in movies, books and our imagination. People sitting together, talking and enjoying each other's company. Children playing games, completely safe, laughing and relishing the freedom of life. These ideals are exactly how He wants us to view His kingdom. He wants us to know that one day there will be conversations, peace, fun, laughter and connectedness. Allow yourself to dream a little as you wind down."
(From book 365 Days of Psalms)

Vs1 The Lord is my light and my salvation-

Who shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life-

of whom shall I be afraid?

Prayer. We sit at Your feet- and rest in You. All HAS to been done, - HAS been finished on the cross. Still our thoughts, -help us to bring to mind Your wonder, might, power, faithfulness, mercy, grace: You are my light and salvation, my stronghold; whom shall I fear! -I give You praise, honor and glory!

MONDAY 2ND MARCH

EPHESIANS 2:1-5

Key Verse 4,5 **BUT BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US, GOD, WHO IS RICH IN MERCY, MADE US ALIVE WITH CHRIST EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN TRANSGRESSIONS – IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED.**

Paul uses the Greek word ‘hamartia’ for sin. This word is a shooting word and literally means ‘miss’. Sin is the failure to hit the target of life. We think of sin as murder, robbing, drunkard, adulterer. ‘Hamartia’ brings us face to face with what sin is, failure to be what we ought to be: loving, forgiving, thankful to God, generous, service etc.

- Some people recoil when scripture calls us “sinners”
- Others feel totally unworthy of God’s grace, and can’t accept it is free, so feel the need to earn their salvation.

- 1) How would you explain Vs 4,5 in to-days words to an enquirer who is from group (a) and (b)?
- 2) How close have you been to death? What saved you? Vs 1
Paul insists that it is by grace we are saved. We have not earned salvation nor could we have earned it. It is a gift from God and our part is to simply accept it.
- 3) What has God’s grace meant for you?
- 4) How has your life changed since you met Christ?
- 5) Prayer. Father, we acknowledge that much of what You have done, doing and will do in our lives is a mystery to us. And Lord, as much as we would love to share the Gospel, we get tongue tied and confused and find we stumble – and often do not even get started for fear of failing You.

Lord, give us courage and conviction to share our story of what You have done in our lives, and the assurance we have in You- even if we don’t have all the right words. Lead us, and empower us by Your Spirit we pray!

TUESDAY 3RD MARCH Ephesians 2: 6-10

Key Verse: 8-10 **FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED, THROUGH FAITH – AND THIS IS NOT FROM YOURSELVES, IT IS A GIFT OF GOD – NOT BY WORKS, SO THAT NO-ONE CAN BOAST. FOR WE ARE GODS’ WORKMANSHIP, CREATED IN JESUS CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS, WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED IN ADVANCE TO DO.**

“When we see children trying to win approval from their parents it saddens me. The parents should love their children irrespective of the results. God loves us like that. There is nothing we can do to make Him love us any less. When we strive, it is not for God’s affection or place in heaven but to live holy lives because we want to be good ambassadors for Him. We want to be a good witness and show the world that there is only one way and that is through Jesus, our Lord and Savior.” (Angus Buchan)

- 1) Acknowledging we are saved – not by works - what good works has God created for you to do? Vs10
- 2) What is the relationship of verse 10 to verses 8 & 9?
- 3) Some of us do not feel particularly ‘good or clever’ at anything. It is not obvious to us to see what ‘Gods’ workmanship’ is in us for us to do good works. Can you see the importance of encouraging others to share their ‘work’ that God has planned for them?
- 4) Can you also see the importance of seeking out what God has equipped you to do, for His glory?

Prayer. We will never stop praising You that You have saved us through faith- and we can’t even boast of that - because it is a free gift. We know we would be totally unaware unless Your Holy Spirit convicted us. Praise You! Praise YOU! And praise You, that You have ‘work’ and a purpose for our lives. Give us eyes to see and an energy to do Your work, we pray!

WEDNESDAY 4TH MARCH Titus3:3-7

Key Verse 4,5 **BUT WHEN THE KINDNESS AND LOVE OF GOD OUR SAVIOR APPEARED, HE SAVED US, NOT OF RIGHTEOUS THINGS WE HAVE DONE, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY.**

- (1) How would you describe your life before your “rebirth” -experiencing God's love and mercy?
- (2) How would you describe your life since?
- (3) Does this encourage you to persevere and continue to ‘run the race set before you?
Paul says v5b(NLT); ‘He washed away our sins, giving us new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit ‘
- (4) How do you experience new life through the Holy Spirit? Paul says in 2 Corinth 5:17, “If anyone is in Christ, is a new creation, the old is gone and the new is come!
- (5) In my life, I experienced being ‘a new creation’. As time has passed, the changes seem incremental- often 2 steps forward- .75 steps back. How might we ‘live in’ the renewal of the Holy Spirit?
- (6) Do you believe that it is an instant transformation or a work in progress?
- (7) What areas of your life would you like to see changed?
- (8) Would you seriously consider asking the Holy Spirit to do renewal within you – or are you comfortable with where you are at?

Prayer. “Renew in me, a passion for You. Breathe on the coals of my heart, Let the fires burn! Lord, dwell in my life, be my consuming desire, I dedicate to You. All this life that You have given me; Please lead me on with You!

THURSDAY 5TH MARCH Romans 3:21-26

Key Verse vs 22,23 **THIS RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD COMES THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST TO ALL WHO BELIEVE. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD AND ARE JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE**

Admit you need a Savior. We can't get to God on our own. We are all sinners. We've blown it. Heaven is perfect and we are not.

Believe in Jesus Acts 16:31 ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved’ This means we believe Jesus is Who the Bible says He is, and we trust him for our future with everything we have.

Confess your commitment to Jesus. Tell Jesus you trust Him and His promises.

Depend on Gods' promises. You can rely on Gods' promise in John3;16 ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, so whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.’

Prayer of commitment to Christ. If you haven't trusted in Jesus and committed to following Him, wait no longer! ‘Dear Jesus, you have promised that if I believe in you, everything in the past will be forgiven. I will learn the purpose of my life and you will accept me into eternal life. I confess my sin, and I believe you are God, my Savior. I receive you, by faith, into my life as Lord. (Rick Warren)

Welcome into the Body of Christ.

The angels are rejoicing in heaven, and you brothers and sisters in Christ will be overjoyed.

Please, share this decision with a trusted friend, who will help and guide you as you walk with Jesus.

Prayer. Dear Lord Jesus, this may be a first for some, but it brings us all back to the time when we knew You died in our place, and we, in faith, trusted You with our lives – now and forever! The joy, the peace, the love – the excitement of knowing You lead us, walk with us, and have given us Your Holy Spirit to empower us. Lord, through the ups and downs of life, You have been our constant friend – faithful and caring. Lord, there is so much to be grateful for—praise You!

FRIDAY 6TH MARCH JOHN3:1-17

Key Verse: John 3:16 **FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.**

- 1) How did Jesus explain what it means to be “born again”? (5-8)? What is the water Jesus spoke of? The Spirit? The Kingdom of God? How does the wind help explain the new birth?
- 2) What do you remember about being ‘born again’? Can you relate to this expression? Why/why not?
- 3) What does it mean to you to believe in the Son of God? --Believe that He walked this earth? Believe He has the power to heal, cast out demons, raise people from the dead? Believe He paid for our sin in His death on the cross? Believe He was raised from the dead-so we who believe have eternal life? Believe that He really was who He claimed to be – The Son of God? Or was he a good man? A moral teacher? He was a good man- but was delusional thinking he was the son of God? He was tortured and died a cruel death for nothing?

Prayer; Father, this we know, that You, by Your Holy Spirit, searches us out, pursues us, and offers us grace. We also know that we are often ‘stiff necked’ and reluctant to grasp Your grace and put our faith in You but rather go our own way. But, right now, we confess our sin, repent and put our faith and believe that You, Jesus, died in my place and rose again, defeating death. By Your Spirit, confirm in me that I am ‘born again’. I rest in this knowledge , knowing I have entered the Kingdom of God, and are Your child. Thank you, Jesus.

SATURDAY 7TH MARCH PSALM 51

Key Verse vs 10,11, 12 **CREATE A CLEAN HEART, O GOD, AND RENEW A STEADFAST SPIRIT WITHIN ME. DO NOT CAST ME FROM YOUR PRESENCE OR TAKE YOUR HOLY SPIRIT FROM ME.RESTORE TO ME THE JOY OF YOUR SALVATION AND GRANT ME A WILLING SPIRIT, TO SUSTAIN ME.**

It’s time to sift through your heart.

Make a pile of spiritual clutter.

Stack it up, take one last look and be done with it - clean start!

Come before Him; ask Him to expose the rubbish – that stuff that hides!

Then offer it up to Him – whether it be confession or just wrong thinking!

Then thank Him for dealing with it on the cross!

Experience His refreshing joy and strength in place of rubbish!

Watch as He does His cleansing work and thank Him for your change in spirit.

Standing bare before God – everything is exposed, it is life changing!

Be still; ask Him to speak to you. Tell Your heavenly Father how much you love Him. Speak of His wonderful attributes; Thank Jesus for His sacrifice ; praise the Holy Spirit for guiding , empowering you and speak your allegiance to Him . Praise You Father,Son, Holy Spirit!

MONDAY 9th March EPHESIANS 2 :1-13

Key Verse:15 **BUT NOW IN CHRIST YOU WHO WERE ONCE FAR AWAY, HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

- 1) When did you ever feel excluded like an outsider?
How did you react? Have you recovered?
Formerly Gentiles (all people other than Jews) were excluded from the covenants of promise: without hope and without God in this world. This was the life of the Ephesians- a Gentile people.
- 2) How do you suppose the Ephesians felt of this former alienation? Pauls' teaching "They that have been brought near through the blood of Christ."
What would you suppose their response is now?
- 3) Have you ever felt 'far away' from God? Why?
- 4) How were you reconciled to God?
- 5) How important is it for us? Firstly, we are acceptable to God and then all are acceptable to Him 'through the blood of Christ'.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you that you have offered grace to us through Jesus. Father, we pray that we will always offer Your love to others who are not yet aware of Your love for them and welcome them into the kingdom. In Jesus name!!

TUESDAY 10th March EPHESIANS 2: 14-18

Key Verse :14a **FOR HE HIMSELF IS OUR PEACE**

Have you received Peace in Jesus when turmoil surrounds? So many of us acknowledge that peace but then try to achieve peace through paying off the house, or waiting for the kids to leave home or doing Christian service or secular work. None of this is bad. It is just 'real peace' comes from knowing Jesus intimately. Philippians 4;4-7

Jesus said in John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you My Peace I give to you. Not as the world gives to you do I give"

Peace is the blessed assurance that Jesus Christ is with us always, in every situation and every circumstance. Verse 18 'For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.'

Prayer suggestion:

Breathe in – "Be still and Know "

Breathe out- "and know I am God"

You will experience the Peace of God!

Prayer: Come fill our hearts with Your peace. Amen

WEDNESDAY 11TH March EPHESIANS 2: 19-22

Key Verse vs 22 **AND IN HIM YOU TOO ARE BEING BUILT TOGETHER TO BECOME A DWELLING IN WHICH GOD LIVES BY HIS SPIRIT – vs 20 WITH CHRIST HIMSELF AS THE CORNERSTONE**

Paul is saying that the Gentiles who were once on the outside are now full participants of the family of God.

After considering how it feels to be an outsider, how can we make those ‘outside’ the church family feel they belong?

A.B DAVIDSON tells how when he was staying in a foreign city he used to walk the streets at evening times. Sometimes through windows he would see a family sharing their evening meal. When the curtain was drawn, he would feel lonely and shut out.

We must be aware to not allow anyone to feel like that in the family of God. Through Jesus, there is a place for all. Paul also gives us a picture of the Church as a building – built on a foundation of the apostles, prophets with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone.

“The Church will realize her unity only when she realizes that she does not exist to propagate the point of view of people, but to provide a home where the Spirit of Christ can dwell and where all people who love Christ can meet in the Spirit” (Barclay)

Have you considered what ‘part’ you bring to Christ’s body – with Jesus as the cornerstone?

Prayer. “Please Jesus, lead me and give me confidence to be a valuable part of the body, always seeking Your direction as the Head and Cornerstone. Amen”

THURSDAY 12TH March EPHESIANS 3;1-13

Key Verse vs 12 **IN HIM AND THROUGH HIM WE MAY APPROACH GOD WITH FREEDOM AND CONFIDENCE.** Compare Hebrews 4;16

- 1) If you were a prisoner, what would you miss most from the outside? What creative way would you try to escape your thoughts?
- 2) Whose prisoner is Paul? (v1) What does this say about His ability to deal with negative thoughts? Why was he a prisoner? (Acts 28: 17-20)
- 3) Why is the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's plan a mystery? (vs6) What does this mean for the Jews? What does this mean for the Gentiles?

Church growth experts suggest that churches grow more when people of the same background, similar social class and status, come together.

Would you consider it more important for numbers or diversity in our church?

- 4) Do you consider our Church embraces diversity? What would you say to people with these thoughts- Faith is private, personal and an individual matter. The Church is not important to Faith.
- 5) Does this attitude fit with verse 6?
Read verse 12 again.
- 6) Do you have confidence and freedom to approach God through faith in Jesus? (v16)

Prayer : Father , we do have confidence and freedom to come to You through faith in Jesus ! We know it – but sometimes we wrestle with it. Sometimes we feel unworthy. Sometimes we feel failures. Lord, help us to come boldly in faith – when we least feel able. Let us also encourage others to come to you, in their differences, knowing You always have Your hands outstretched to all! Amen

FRIDAY 13TH March EPHESIANS 3: 14-21

Key verse vs 20 **NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS IN US.**

The Lord does not want us to limit Him:

- 1) How do you limit God? How big is your vision? Do you concur with 'If your vision doesn't scare you, it's not big enough?
- 2) What is one thing you are asking God to do in your life? Do you feel it is up to your ability or God who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us?
Hearing this truth, do you feel bold enough to lift your vision? Can you put into words what that God given vision is – not airy fairy!! Would you dare write it down and come back to it later?
- 3) Will you allow your imagination to let loose and ask God to allow you to imagine His power – and trust Him to bring it about?
- 4) Would you be willing to share your vision with a trusted friend?

Pauls' prayer vs 17-19

"Being rooted and established in love, may you have power, together with all the saints to grasp how wide and long and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

SATURDAY 14TH MARCH JOHN 17; 20-26

Key Verse vs 23 **I IN THEM AND YOU IN ME. MAY THEY BE BROUGHT TO COMPLETE UNITY TO LET THE WORLD KNOW THAT YOU SENT ME AND HAVE LOVED THEM EVEN AS YOU HAVE LOVED ME.**

- 1) In one word how would you summarize what Jesus wanted for his disciples from this passage?
- 2) What is the model for this? (vs21) how would this help the world to believe?
- 3) Read John 13: 35 How will the world know that Jesus is Lord of our lives?
- 4) What relationship is there between love and unity? Can one exist without the other?
- 5) Do you believe our church is united? What ways are we? What is a cause of division?
- 6) Do your actions lead more to unity or division?
- 7) Does this reading encourage you personally to begin and grow the process of unification to His glory?

Prayer. Please Lord, give me a Godly love for my brothers and sisters in Christ. Give me humility and an attitude of service rather than a desire to be right and insist on my way. Jesus, I acknowledge without Your Holy Spirit this is impossible. Fill me to overflowing with Your Spirit and a desire to make your Body whole and complete. In Jesus name, Amen

MONDAY MARCH 16th EPHESIANS 4:1-6

Key Verse vs 1 b **I URGE YOU TO LIVE A LIFE WORTHY OF THE CALLING YOU HAVE RECEIVED.**

- 1) What qualities ought to characterize 'a life worthy of the calling'?
- 2) How would you define these qualities? Vs 2
- 3) What results when believers live these qualities? Vs3
- 4) How does each quality promote unity?
- 5) Of these qualities, which could you use to strengthen and unite the body of Christ?
- 6) Which of these qualities do you struggle with? How could you make improvements? What is the Holy Spirits' part, and what is your part in making this happen?
 - a) There is one body – Christ is the head and the Church is the body.
 - b) There is one Spirit- Greek for Spirit is 'breath'. Body without breath is dead.
 - c) There is one Hope- our calling towards God.
 - d) There is one Lord- Jesus Christ is Lord. Phil 2:11
 - e) There is one Faith- complete surrender and trust in Jesus Christ and Lord
 - f) There is one Baptism- public confession that Jesus Christ is Lord.
 - g) There is one God- Father of all: Lover of His children, guiding, sustaining, loving, ever present -Grace.

Prayer

Father, You have created us unique. We have different strengths and some failings that limit our effectiveness to further Your Kingdom. Father, we pray that we can look beyond ourselves, encourage others so we can live in unity to express together those things that are essential; One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one GOD!

TUESDAY MARCH 17th EPHESIANS 4:7-13

Key Verse vs7 **TO EACH ONE OF YOU, GRACE HAS BEEN GIVEN, AS IT HAS BEEN MEASURED OUT TO YOU BY THE FREE GIFT OF CHRIST.**

VS 11-13 AND HE GAVE TO THE CHURCH, SOME AS APOSTLES AND SOME AS PROPHETS AND SOME AS EVANGELISTS AND SOME AS PASTORS AND TEACHERS, TO PREPARE GODS' PEOPLE FOR WORKS OF SERVICE, SO THE BODY OF CHRIST MAY BE BUILT UP UNTIL WE ALL REACH UNITY IN FAITH AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SON OF GOD AND BECOME MATURE, ATTAINING TO THE WHOLE MEASURE OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

- 1) Exactly, how does the church grow into maturity?
- 2) What place does diversity have in a mature and united church? This passage gives us a picture of the organization and administration of the early church.
 - a) Apostles – authority throughout the whole church – not just local congregations – teach Christ; know Christ; bring the power of Christ; having experienced Christs' risen power.
 - b) Prophets – not so much for tell the future but forth tell the will of God. They were wanderers in the Church. Their message was not so much thought and study but Holy Spirit led.
 - c) Evangelists – were wanderers (we might call missionaries). They took the gospel to the world
 - d) Pastors -shepherd the flock – local church
 - e) Teacher- there were few books in the early church so the story of Jesus was transmitted by word of mouth. People coming into the church were coming from heathenism so were taught truths of the Christian faith.
- 3) Can you think how this 5 fold ministry works in our Church?

PRAYER

Father, may we never forget that you have called each of us by grace. Love unearned -Free gift. In that knowledge, may we look to You as to how we can serve You and give others the same opportunities that we have received! You are good – so, so good! Thankyou Jesus.

WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH EPHESIANS 4:14-16

Key Verse vs 15 **SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, WE WILL IN ALL THINGS GROW UP INTO HIM, WHO IS THE HEAD, THAT IS CHRIST.**

“ The only thing which can keep the individual Christian solid in faith and secure against seduction, the only thing that can keep the church healthy and efficient is an intimate connection with Jesus Christ who is the head and the directing mind of the Body” (Barclay)

Over the years we have seen or experienced the church tossed about by ‘clever trickery of men and cunning cleverness: to lure people away from the truth of Jesus.

- 1) What should we watch out for?
- 2) What are the ‘red flags’ that might warn us?
- 3) How important is it to encourage each other as members of the body {speaking the truth in love}— sharing the tasks to allow the body to grow and build it up in love?
- 4) What might be your part in the body – to
 - a) safeguard
 - b) build up
 - c) grow the Church?

PRAYER

Dear Lord,

Please keep my eyes off me and fix them on you. Only then, will I not be concerned about what others think, good or bad of me - but just look to follow and serve You. Only then will I not be seduced by Satan' s tricks – to be proud; because whatever the result it is your hands and will. Lead me on Lord, I pray in Jesus’ name.

THURSDAY MARCH 19TH ROMANS 12:1-8

Key Verse vs 2 **DO NOT CONFORM ANY LONGER TO THE PATTERN OF THIS WORLD, BUT TO BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND. THEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TEST AND APPROVE WHAT GOD' S WILL IS – HIS GOOD, PLEASING AND PERFECT WILL.**

- 1) In what ways do you tend to conform to the world?
- 2) What are some of the world's major influences in your life?
- 3) Paul says in vs1 “our bodies are living sacrifices- holy and pleasing to God ‘What does this mean to you?
- 4) How can you present your body as a living sacrifice in everyday life?
- 5) How does this relate to using your spiritual gifts in the body?

PRAYER

Dear Jesus,

It is so easy to conform to this world. You know how hard it was for you, to not live like the Jewish leaders; the Zealots: to walk obediently to the cross! Lord, we can’t stand against the world and walk in humility, truth and love without Your Holy Spirit. We pray for courage and faith to walk a life that reflects your gospel – not the worlds expectations. Please, Lord. Amen

FRIDAY MARCH 20TH 1CORINTH 12: 12-27

Key Verse vs27 **NOW YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST, AND EACH ONE OF YOU IS A PART OF IT.**

- 1) Of these body parts mentioned, which one is the most important to you? Your feet? Your hand? Your ear? Your eye? Your nose?
- 2) What is Paul's key word? How many times is it mentioned?
- 3) Summarize the word picture in vs 15-20. Now vs 21-26
- 4) What would happen if everyone had the same gift?
- 5) In Paul's illustration, is there such a thing as a hierarchy of gifts?
- 6) What is the purpose of the gifts in the Church?

PRAYER Father, I confess at times I feel I have no part in the church. I feel I have nothing to offer but then at times I feel overwhelmed with the needs in the Church. Lord, I come before you to seek your direction. What part do I have in your body? Lord, may I serve You, with sincerity, enthusiasm and attitude of love. To bring glory to Your name.

SATURDAY MARCH 21ST COL3:12-17

Key Verse vs 13,14 **BEAR WITH EACH OTHER AND FORGIVE WHATEVER GRIEVANCES YOU MAY HAVE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGIVES YOU. AND OVER ALL THESE VIRTUES, PUT ON LOVE, WHICH BINDS THEM TOGETHER IN PERFECT UNITY.**

As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved – clothe yourself: compassion, kindness: humility; gentleness; patience.

- 1) How do these compare to Gal 5:22?
- 2) What is our motivation to forgive others?
- 3) What enables you to forgive others?
- 4) What prevents you from forgiving others?
- 5) What is the value of the Word of Christ? Vs 16a
- 6) Paul tells us to 'put on love' Is this a choice? Will we submit to Christ – or hold on to the grudge? For to 'put on love', it binds us together in perfect unity.

PRAYER : Praise You Lord, for our Body of Christ which I am part. I am so thankful! Jesus, I pray the Word of Christ will teach and admonish me. Lord, may I sing songs of praise in worship to you, with gratitude. Whether it be by my words or deeds, I pray I will bring honour to You Lord Jesus.