

**Date: October, 24th, 2009**

**Today's reading: Luke 1**

Verse 6 says "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." – wow, what a amazing commendation of Zacharias and Elizabeth! No child and they were already advanced in years but God was saving them for something special. They were to be the parents of John the Baptizer, one spoken of very highly by Jesus.



The angel Gabriel who appears to Zacharias in the temple tells him he will have a son and then goes on to quote part of a passage from Malachi.. chapter 4. Here is more of the passage.

**Mal 4:5** Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.  
6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse

God only sends one man to prepare the way for His Son and what an amazing man he was!

In verse 28 we have a second stunning commendation given in a greeting by Gabriel to Mary.. "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"

We don't have the opportunity to be the parents of John the Baptist or of Jesus our Lord but God still uses godly parents today to prepare their children to do great things for Him. Let's prepare our children and act in such a way that good things can and will be said about our lives that are dedicated to serving our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

May God bless the readers.

David Williams

Date: April 10, 2010

Reading: Luke 1-2

The birth of two baby boys is the subject of our reading. Circumstances surrounding their births were unusual. Both births were announced by the angel Gabriel. Both births were unexpected. One was unexpected based on age; the other was unexpected based on condition (the one having a child was a virgin). Both pregnancies were concealed after a fashion.

The boys were cousins. They were born six months apart. Their lives, although they didn't apparently spend much if any time together as boys, were intricately tied together. They were both fulfillment of prophecies in the Old Testament. Circumstances surrounding their births caused people to wonder in their hearts what kind of children they would be. Signs surrounded the births, and prophecies were made about the missions and destinies of these two boys. Both grew strong in body and spirit.

We know about these boys. One was the herald; the other was the King. One was the voice crying in the wilderness; the other was the Way out of the wilderness. Although neither came from affluence or prominent families nor lived to be forty years old, their impact on their time was profound. Never was one born of woman greater than John the Baptist (Matthew 11:11). But he was only the preparer for the One whose sandals he was unworthy to carry (Mathew 3:11). Jesus was the One who would save His people from their sin, including Gentiles (Luke 2:32).

Do you ever wonder if God cares? Consider the significance of these events. God became flesh and dwelled with men. He experienced what we experience. He cares! Oh what a Savior!

Tim

**Date:** October 26, 2009  
**Reading:** Luke 2-3

John the son of Zacharias would never have made a good televangelist! A preacher can rant about sin, but he will probably never attract a large television or radio audience if he allows his comments to get too pointed or too specific with his listeners. John was anything but vague!



His role as a prophet was to prepare the way for the Lord (3:4-6). Accordingly, he called the people to repentance. He was quite specific as he described the attitude of the people who came to him to be baptized. He called them a “brood of vipers”!

It was one thing to go out to the Jordan River to be baptized with a “baptism of repentance,” but quite another to actually repent. John commanded the people who came to be baptized to bear fruits worthy of repentance. John apparently was aware that some of the people were content to claim to be Abraham’s children, as though their identity as Jews was sufficient to guarantee their approval by God. John observed that God could raise up children to Abraham from the stones that lay on the ground!

Being Abraham’s descendants would not save them if they did not bear good fruit. If a tree (person) doesn’t bear good fruit, the ax is laid to the root, i.e., the tree is cut down.

When the people asked what they should do, John gave them specific suggestions. Those who had extra tunics or food needed to share with those who didn’t have any. Tax collectors were not to collect more than was appointed for them. Soldiers were not to intimidate or accuse falsely, but to be content with their wages (3:11-14).

True repentance bears fruit. Repentance is a change of mind; when the mind is actually changed, there is a change of conduct.

“What shall we do?” (3:10, 12, 14). What good fruit will we bear?

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 12, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 3 & 4**

In chapter 3 we are introduced to the preaching of John the Baptist. Notice that all the things he tells the people to do after repenting have to do with overcoming covetousness! It evidently was a problem with the Jewish nation at that time. Is it also my/your problem?

In verses 21 and 22 we find Jesus' baptism, the descending of the Holy Spirit on Him in the form of a dove and then God's statement that He was His beloved Son and that He was pleased with Him. John then shows that Jesus was of the lineage of David and then takes His lineage all the way back to Adam and then to God. The Christ was to be a descendent of King David and so John shows the fulfillment of this promise.



Chapter 4 begins with Jesus overcoming the temptations in the wilderness and the beginning of His ministry. John says the He taught in their synagogues and was glorified by all. When Jesus came home to Nazareth note the response He received from those who knew him as a child and could not get over it. Jesus tells them about how God rejected the Jewish nation at other times and blessed Gentiles. It angered them so much they tried to kill Him. What preconceived ideas do we have that make it hard for us to accept the truth? It is something we ought to ask ourselves anyway.

In verse 31 to the end of the chapter we find a very different response to Jesus teaching as he teaches with authority and then shows He has the authority by doing various miracles.

God bless the readers.

David Williams

**Date:**       **October 27, 2009**  
**Reading:**   **Luke 4-5**

“Teaching of hometown boy not well received in synagogue!”

Jesus entered into the synagogue at Nazareth where He had doubtless been many times before. After all, He had grown up in Nazareth. This worship service, however, was different. Jesus was handed the “book” of Isaiah and He opened it to a specific passage in Isaiah (61:1-2). After reading from the book of Isaiah, Jesus sat down and said the most startling words: “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”



How momentous was that?! Jews had been reading out of the book of Isaiah for generations, literally hundreds of years, but on this particular day, Jesus claimed that He was fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah that He had just read. Not fulfilled again...not sort of fulfilled...but the prophet Isaiah had written specifically about Jesus!

The people in the synagogue marveled at these “gracious words” (4:22; NKJ). The Greek text is literally “words of grace.” Were the “words of grace” a description of Jesus’ comment in verse 21 or when He read from Isaiah? The passage in Isaiah which Jesus read is all about grace – favor to the poor, the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind and the oppressed.

Were the people of Nazareth impressed? They had heard what Jesus had done in Capernaum (4:23). They were certainly surprised! After all, they all knew Jesus. He was Joseph’s son! How could Joseph’s son possibly be the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy?

Jesus spoke to their incredulity. Citing two occasions in the Old Testament when Gentiles were blessed instead of Israelites, He illustrated the consequence of a prophet not being accepted in his own country. The people of Nazareth understood His point perfectly...and they were filled with wrath (4:28). In fact, they wanted to kill Him, but were unable to do so. Later, others who were likewise offended by Jesus’ teaching handed Him over to the Romans who put Him to death...when His “hour” had come.

Blessings are reserved for those who receive God’s word. May we always be open to the teaching of our Savior!

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 13, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 5 & 6**

John jumps right in to the ministry of Jesus and describes one miracle after another and one teaching after another. These 2 chapters are full of things to ponder about all day long. For instance, what kind of influence must Jesus have had for Peter, James and John, all to leave their boats with the biggest catch of their life and immediately follow Jesus? And what about Matthew the tax collector, who was sitting at a tax booth and he too just left it all to follow Jesus?

Jesus was teaching a different doctrine than the people had been taught by the religious leaders of the day..... "Woe to you ...who are rich", "who are full", "who laugh now", "when all people speak well of you". Jesus is contrasting the physical with the spiritual and wants us to be humble (poor in spirit), desire the word, mourn for our sins, and care about what God wants and not what men want. Would you consider His teaching about how to react to our enemies something easy to accept? He ends his discourse with the illustration we all learned as children, to build our house on the rock. By rock He means the solid principles of His teachings. How do we do that? It starts by examining carefully what Jesus means by his statements and then comes the self examination and determination to change. What are our lives built on now?

John packs some powerful teachings and actions into these two chapters!

God bless the readers.

David Williams



**Date: October 28, 2009**

**Reading: Luke 6-7**

“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned....For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (6:37-38).



The “measure” which the scribes and Pharisees used to evaluate Jesus was hypercritical and based on rabbinical tradition. In the early part of our reading, we see the Pharisees criticizing Jesus and His disciples for supposedly violating the Sabbath. The disciples plucked heads of grain as they went through the grain fields, rubbing them in their hands and then eating them. “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?” asked some of the Pharisees (6:2).

On another Sabbath, they watched Jesus closely to see if He would heal on the Sabbath. Their purpose was not to confirm whether Jesus had the power to heal, but to find a reason to accuse Him (6:7). Never mind that His ability to heal in an obviously miraculous way said something about His relationship to God and God’s pleasure with Him! Their minds were so blinded by their conclusions regarding working on the Sabbath that they could not see the evidence (in the form of Jesus’ miraculous healing) of their misunderstanding! When Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, rather than be convicted about His identity by His power and rejoice in the divine blessing bestowed on the afflicted man, they were “filled with rage” and even discussed what they might “do” to Jesus! How close-minded can one become?!

One of the Pharisees, Simon by name, invited Jesus to eat in his home (7:36, 40). We might conclude that this Pharisee was different from those who waited in the shadows to find an opportunity to accuse Jesus of breaking the law, but his invitation to Jesus was tainted with suspicion. Simon didn’t really believe that Jesus was a prophet and his failure to perform even the customary acts of hospitality suggested that his motive in inviting Jesus may have been suspect (cf. 7:39, 44-46; 6:7).

Jesus responded to Simon’s unspoken criticism in an interesting way (7:39-42). He told a short parable of two debtors, both forgiven by their creditor, and asked Simon to determine who would love the creditor more. Simon answered that the one forgiven of more debt and Jesus confirmed the wisdom of his answer. Jesus then compared Simon’s behavior to that of the woman who was a sinner in order to point out which of them had shown the greater love (7:47).

Simon had the very Son of God in his home with the opportunity to be blessed by His presence, but all he could do was criticize.

What a shame that these Pharisees, because of their unwillingness to see Jesus for who He really was, forfeited the blessings of the Savior! May we open our hearts to the truth of the Scriptures lest we likewise miss the blessings God has placed within our reach.

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 14, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 7 & 8**



So much of what Jesus says has to do with what kind of a person we or those in His hearing are. Of the Centurion who believes that Jesus can heal his servant without coming into the house, He declares that He has not found such great faith in Israel. In speaking of the religious leaders he compares them to children who want everyone to do whatever they want – “we played the flute for you, and you did not dance”, condemning John the Baptist for not eating and drinking and then condemning Jesus for eating and drinking. He describes the woman who anointed His feet as one who loved much because much was forgiven and the Pharisee host as the one who loved little. In the parable of the soils (or sower as many call it) Jesus describes the different soils and compares them to people's hearts and how that effects the end result of bearing fruit for God or not. He even plays down His own family to say that those who hear God's word and do it are His real family! What is our attitude about our physical family

in comparison to our spiritual family?

John also describes many of the miracles that Jesus did. Did you catch how many miracles Jesus did the day that John's disciples came to Him to ask if He was the one or should they be looking for another? In these 2 chapters Jesus raises 2 people from the dead. See if you can count how many different kinds of miracles are in just these 2 chapters. The reason they are there is so that we may believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

God bless the readers.

David Williams

**Date:** October 29, 2009

**Reading:** Luke 8-9

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” Jesus concluded the parable of the soils with those words. The parable addresses one of the most fundamental issues of our relationship to God – the manner in which we hear.



Some explain that the different soils of the parable represent different kinds of hearts and that seems to be a reasonable way to interpret the story. Note that, in Jesus’ explanation of the parable, “hearing” is mentioned with each type of soil (8:12, 13, 14, 15). In His explanation of the parable, Jesus spoke of the heart only in reference to the fourth soil. The “good ground” represents people who hear with “a noble and good heart.” A connection is made by the Lord between the way that a person hears and the character of his heart.

So...should I get a heart check-up or a hearing test?? At least in spiritual matters, if my heart is healthy, my ears will work fine!

All the nails he could possibly need do a carpenter little good if he has no hammer. In a similar way, the availability of lots of good information regarding spiritual things is of little use if it is not received in the proper way, i.e., “with a noble and good heart.” It makes a world of difference how we hear. How the teaching of the Scriptures is received accounts for the vastly different results in people’s lives as a consequence of Bible study. It is the same seed, but not all hearts are the same!

How’s your hearing these days? I have a childhood friend who can actually wiggle his ears without the typical eyebrow gyrations common to those who make the claim. But even he doesn’t have to “open” his ears. We humans literally have to open our eyes to see, but our “ears” are always “open.”

Well, perhaps anatomically. Jesus conveyed His spiritual truths in parables because some people’s ears are actually NOT open, metaphorically speaking. “Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand” (8:10).

Having invited us to hear at the conclusion of the parable, at the conclusion of His explanation of the parable Jesus cautions us about the way that we hear – “Therefore take heed how you hear” (8:18).

How is your hearing?

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 15, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 9 & 10**

Can you put yourself in the place of a typical Jew in the time of Jesus? .... You have heard some wild stories about a man from Nazareth who goes from city to city doing all kinds of miracles. It has even been claimed that he has raised people from the dead. He and John the Baptist are not accepted by the religious leaders but maybe they are just jealous. Now there are two of his disciples who have come to your town and are saying that the kingdom is almost here and they are doing miracles. They cast out some demons and cured those who were sick and they say Jesus will be coming to our town and that we should repent. What do these things mean? Herod certainly had a problem figuring Jesus out.



If you were one of His disciples you would get a bit more information but you would still be in the dark as to what Jesus really had planned. He was saying something about suffering and dieing but how can that be because He has to be a king and bring back Israel's glory. And what did Jesus mean when He said we had to take up our cross daily and should lose our life in order to save it! And you would wonder how great a position you would receive when Jesus is made king – but Jesus was saying something about being the least in order to be the greatest...like a child...you just don't quite get it. But those miracles do show you He is the Son of God so you will follow no matter what.

Notice how the people react and how His close followers react to His teachings and miracles. Would we have been any different? I doubt it. I wonder if I would have been influenced by the religious leaders or would I have done my own thinking and realized that something great was happening and want to hear Jesus for myself.

God bless the readers.

David Williams

**Date:** October 30, 2009  
**Reading:** Luke 10-11

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was often traveled by those who served in the temple. According to McGarvey (The Fourfold Gospel, p. 476), there was a large priestly settlement at Jericho. It was, however, a dangerous road to travel. Known as the “bloody way,” it was an eighteen-mile stretch of road which descended 3,500 feet through a series of ravines. Because of the desolate nature of the area, the road became a favorite site for robbers.



Jesus told a story about this stretch of road, a story we know as the parable of the good Samaritan. According to the story, a man had been assaulted by thieves and left half dead. Two men passed by – first a priest and then a Levite. These were men who should have known the Mosaic Law and its demand for the assistance of those who need help.

Amazingly, neither man helped the wounded man! Fortunately, a Samaritan also came by and had compassion on the wounded man. He gave him immediate aid and then took him to an inn and arranged for him to receive additional care.

It is interesting that Jesus chose a priest and a Levite to fail to render aid to the man in need. To understand why, we need to remember that the story was told in response to a lawyer’s question. The lawyer began the conversation with Jesus, testing him, and asking what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. When Jesus turned his question back to him, the lawyer answered his own question with a precise summary of a man’s responsibility toward God and his fellow man (10:25-28).

The lawyer, however, “wanting to justify himself” asked another question which elicited the story of the good Samaritan from Jesus. At the conclusion of the parable, Jesus asked the lawyer which of the three men in the story “was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves.” The lawyer indicated the Samaritan, although he wouldn’t even say “Samaritan” (10:37).

There is a striking similarity between the lawyer and the two men who passed by the wounded man without helping. The priest and Levite knew their responsibility, but failed to do it. The lawyer likewise had knowledge of the law (note again his exceptional answer to his own question!), but was looking for a way to avoid his responsibility (10:29).

May our lives truly reflect our understanding of the Lord’s word!

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 16, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 11 & 12**

In chapter 11 Jesus is asked by one of His disciples to teach them to pray. Jesus then gives them what most of us know as the "Lord's prayer" and we hear even little children praying this prayer. I think it is pretty evident that Jesus did not mean for His followers to quote it word for word but it was meant as an example of a prayer. He prays for God's kingdom to come. It had not come at that time but now it has. Remember the 72 that were sent out in chapter 10 were to tell everyone that "the kingdom of God has come near to you"? Jesus goes on to make the point that God loves us and will give us things that are good for us and will hear us when we pray. When Jesus compares the neighbor who comes and knocks on his friend's door at night, to us praying to God, is He saying that God may think it is an inconvenient time to answer but if we persist He will answer anyway? I don't think so. I think Jesus is encouraging us to be persistent knowing that God always loves us and will answer our prayers at the proper time.

Jesus again addresses the inner man in these 2 chapters with the discussion about the unclean spirit who returns with seven others to inhabit the man who had not filled his heart and mind with good things. And the idea that there is light inside us (or darkness) and wants it to be complete light. It has to come from our heart. He then condemns the Pharisees for not having a pure heart. Well not in so many words but it soon becomes clear what the Lord is speaking about. He gives the same admonition to the lawyers.

In chapter 12 Jesus begins with hypocrisy (the inner man) of the Pharisees and then transitions into discussing fear. Why should we have courage? Luke tells you in verses 5 – 7 and they are powerful reasons. He reinforces these points again in verses 22-33. Do you feel loved yet? You should.



When he gets to the story of the rich fool again Jesus is telling us that our hearts (our inner man) is much more important than riches. That point is driven home as He tells us not to be anxious but to trust in God. He ends the "don't be anxious" dialogue with the reason not to follow after riches but after God.. in verse 34 "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

Speaking of where our heart is, Jesus tells us to keep watching and be ready always for His return.

Jesus says he brings division! Not our normal picture of Him, is it? Dividing families and friends because of the way each man accepts the truth (the inner man). The last paragraph is about settling with your accuser before you are brought before the judge. Could Jesus be talking about making peace with God before the judgment? I'll let you decide.

God bless the readers.

**Date: October 31, 2009**  
**Reading: Luke 12-13**

Of all the things to ask of Jesus – “tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me”! Jesus taught spiritual truths crucial to eternal life and this person from the crowd is concerned about getting his fair share of his father’s goods.

As a response to the request, Jesus warned against covetousness (12:15) and told a parable about a rich farmer. The ground of the rich farmer yielded plentifully and he didn’t have room to store the harvest. He decided to tear down his barns and build larger ones so that he could store all of his crops and goods. In his planning, he could see himself provided for many years. In the story, however, God spoke to him, calling him a fool, and informed him that his soul would be required of him that very night.



The error of the rich farmer was not that he was rich; it was that he laid up his treasure for himself and was not rich toward God (12:21).

The rich farmer was worried about what he would eat for the rest of his life. Jesus warned His disciples not to be anxious about their lives, about their food and clothing (12:22). God will take care of His own (12:28-30).

The principle that should guide us is that “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses” (12:15). Those who recognize this fact, who understand the truly important “things” in life, aren’t anxious about food, clothing or other things.

As Jesus said later, “life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.”

What does your life consist of?

Happy reading,  
Allen

**Date: April 17, 2010**

**Today's reading: Luke 13 & 14**



Pilot had killed some Galileans and mingled their blood with the blood of their sacrifices. That had definitely caused a stir in Israel. By Jesus response we can conclude that the Jews relating the story to Jesus or those listening to them thought that they had been punished by God for their sins. Jesus lumps in the Tower of Siloam that fell on eighteen in the same way and asks the question “do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?” He then tells them No and that if they did not repent they too will perish. At first glance it seems that Luke then relates a parable that addresses a different subject all together but this parable is in response to this idea of the Jews perishing if they do not repent. The fig tree (Jewish Nation) has been given a little while to produce fruit and if it does not it will be cut down. Remember the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70? I believe this punishment of the Jewish nation is what Jesus is referring to. He addresses this same problem at the end of chapter 13 when the Pharisees came and tried to get him to leave

Jerusalem. His response was one of regret that Jerusalem was rejecting Him...”O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken.” In the same chapter Jesus speaks of a narrow door that many would seek to enter by to get into the kingdom but would not be able. Toward the end of that discussion, after talking about judgment, Jesus says that they will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but they themselves would be cast out. Then He says that people will come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. In other words the Jews would be judged for rejecting Jesus as the Christ and for the way they treated God and the kingdom would be opened to the Gentiles!

Chapter 14 does not revisit the judgment on Israel but does discuss what it takes to be a disciple of Christ. See if you can find humility, compassion and commitment in this chapter.

So we have the example of the Jews who rejected Jesus and now some admonitions as to how hard it will be to enter the kingdom and finish our service to the Lord. At the end of this chapter Jesus discusses salt. If it loses its taste what good is it? In application Jesus is summing up what he had just discussed saying we need to persevere as Christians and continue acting as God wants us to act, thus seasoning the world so it is palatable to God. The idea here is not to be enticed back into the world thus losing our ability to season.

God bless the readers.

David Williams

Date: November 2, 2009

Reading: Luke 14-16

Are you a disciple of Jesus?

The term “disciple” carries with it the idea of one who is a learner. However, it goes beyond just learning – it also includes imitating and adhering to a teacher/teaching (see Luke 6:40).

Our reading today spells out some responsibilities of disciples:

**14:26:** “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” No love or relationship that we have can get in the way of our service to and love for the Lord.

**14:27:** “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” We must be willing to sacrifice and suffer in the service of our Lord.

**14:28-32:** “For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it—<sup>29</sup> lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him,<sup>30</sup> saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’? <sup>31</sup> Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.” A disciple must “count the cost” of discipleship. He must be willing to not only “start the race” but also prepare himself to finish it.

**14:33:** “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” A disciple must be willing to forsake all for Jesus. Nothing can be so valuable to you that you will forsake Jesus for it – be it job, family, riches, or recreation.

These brief verses at the end of Luke 14 offer challenges to each of us. What can you and I do today to make us better disciples?

Are you a disciple of Jesus? Take care how you read.

Tim

Date: November 3, 2009

Reading: Luke 17-18

“Your faith has made you well.” On two different occasions in our reading today Jesus made this statement.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter we’re told of the blind man begging by the side of the road near Jericho. His insistence that Jesus (Son of David) have mercy on him was heard by all. The crowd sought to silence him to no avail. His cries reached Jesus, who commanded him to be brought to Him. At this point Jesus asked specifically what he desired. The blind man simply wanted his sight. Jesus healed the man, telling him his faith had made him well.

The other occurrence of this statement is in the account of the healing of the ten lepers in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter. These men cried for mercy and Jesus showed mercy by healing them. Nine continued on their trek to the priests even after being cleansed; one (a Samaritan) turned and glorified God, giving thanks. Jesus, after observing that only one of the ten had returned, told the Samaritan to go on his way – his faith had made him well.

In both cases the men were healed. For the blind man, receipt of his physical sight brought about awakening of his spiritual vision, for he immediately followed Jesus (18:43). His healing resulted in many glorifying God. For the leper, he had already been healed when he turned and gave thanks to God. The other nine were healed of their leprosy just as the Samaritan had been. However, when Jesus told the Samaritan that his faith had made him well there seems to have a deeper connotation – a spiritual healing connotation.

Let’s learn from these two examples of faith to trust that Jesus can heal us. The Great Physician can heal us of the disease that threatens all of us – sin.

Enjoy the reading.

Tim

Date: November 4, 2009

Reading: Luke 19-20

What will you do with Jesus?

The scene of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is instructive. He was treated as royalty and given the "red carpet" treatment as the common people spread their clothes before Him on the road. They began to praise Him and acknowledge Him as King. This incensed the Pharisees, who chided Him from the crowd, trying to shame Him into quieting them. Jesus' response? "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

There are some things that we can learn from these few verses.

- 1) Jesus' actions (His mighty works they had seen) evoked praise and worship.
- 2) Some can be in the presence of God and not recognize it based on their prejudices.
- 3) Jesus is deserving of praise as King!
- 4) Jesus will receive the praise He deserves, even if we don't praise Him (but we will be the loser). Nature sings His praise! (Psalm 19:1)

The question for each of us is: "What will I do with Jesus?" Will we praise Him and enthrone Him as King in our lives? Or will we reject Him? The choice is yours and mine. Choose wisely.

Tim

Date: November 5, 2009

Reading: Luke 21-22

Are you disappointed that you can't do some "great" thing for God? Consider some contrasts from the reading today.

Peter was convinced that he could do something great for Jesus. He was apparently part of the dispute over who would be considered the greatest (22:24). Jesus challenged this view of greatness – indicating that greatness is based on serving. Peter indicated that in contrast to his fellow-disciples, he was willing to suffer and die with Jesus. Jesus told him that he would deny Him three times that very night. Peter's insistence was punctuated with action – the swinging of a sword to protect the Lord. But when he was rebuffed by Jesus, he fled. Later, Peter's denials complete, the Lord looked at Peter. This prompted the memory of Jesus' statements to him earlier, and he was remorseful.

There is another person introduced, though not by name, early in our reading. She didn't do anything great. She only put a couple of coins into the temple treasury, which paled in comparison to the rich who placed significant gifts in the treasury. Yet she was singled out as one who had "put in more than all." Why was she given that distinction? It was because she had given her all, and not just from her abundance.

Peter would later "redeem" himself and learn that greatness in the kingdom is the by-product of serving others and our Lord. Remember what greatness in the kingdom is – not something based on position – but rather it is based on serving.

Tim

Date: November 5, 2009

Reading: Luke 23-24

“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

I have remarked a number of times how I would have loved to hear Jesus as He spoke to the two on the road to Emmaus and “He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” What an amazing instructional period that must have been! How rapt would be my attention as He unfolded the Old Testament story and showed God’s remarkable plan to redeem mankind. There would probably be utter amazement as He revealed the subtle meaning that I hadn’t grasped from prophecies I had read and studied all my life.

Or would this be the thrill that I imagine? How do I treat the words of Jesus now? Are they the message that I can’t get enough of? Or are they old words in an old book that I’m supposed to read or the preacher or the elders or my parents will be disappointed in me?

You see, there is probably a reason that Jesus’ discourse is not written down. The words that He drew His message from are available to us now – and they are for our learning (Romans 15:4). If we want to understand Jesus revealed from Scripture, we can do that. But we have to want to hear the message.

Does your heart burn within you when you read and study the Scriptures?

Enjoy the reading.

Tim