

## DAILY BIBLE VERSES AND PRAYER THOUGHTS:

**MONDAY** - VERSES: Matthew 5:43-48 PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to be able to look past the way others have treated me and to love them because of their everlasting soul.

**TUESDAY** - VERSES: John 13:34-35; 15:12-17 PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to imitate Jesus in my love for others so they can experience His love through me.

**WEDNESDAY** - VERSES: Romans 12:9-10 (dissimulation means hypocrisy) PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to remember that my brothers and sisters in Christ are Your children and deserve and need my love just as I do theirs, and help me to love without hypocrisy.

**THURSDAY** - VERSES: Romans 13:8-10 PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to understand true love better so that I can show it better in my life.

**FRIDAY** - VERSES: 2 Corinthians 2:1-8 (this passage is most likely based on the command to discipline the man who was living with his father's wife) PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to reject selfishness and truly feel for others, but help me to be strong enough to confront sinful situations when it is necessary.

**SATURDAY** - VERSES: 2 Corinthians 8:7-11 PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you for the love you have shown me, and help me to share it with others and prove my love by my actions and not with lip-service.



The Devil's Beatitudes – Blessed is he who professes to love God but hates his brother and sister, for he shall be with me forever. --

Douglas Parsons, Pulpit Helps



### ASSIGNMENTS

1. Daily read over this material and read or sing the song.
2. Place the scripture where you will see it often each day.
3. Imagine what the love in heaven will be like and think of what you can do in the church to make it more like heaven
4. Pray for God's help to have the power to overcome the human tendency toward selfishness and hypocritical love, and add true love to your life.
5. At the close of each day write down the difficult situations that you faced and whether you reacted with true love or not.

## SPIRITUAL HEALTH REGIMEN - WEEK 31

### SINCERE LOVE - 2-17-13 to 2-23-13

**SCRIPTURES** - 1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

**COMMENT** – Do you ever feel like a hypocrite for smiling and shaking hands with someone that you don't like? God calls on us to have a sincere love for each other, not a false friendliness. Jesus asked us to go beyond what the average sinner does in loving those who love him back. We need to truly love others not just say that we do.

### SONG - HOW SWEET, HOW HEAVENLY

- 1) How sweet, how heav'nly, is the sight, When those that love the Lord In one another's peace delight, And so fulfill the Word.
- 2) When each can feel his brother's sigh, And with him bear a part; When sorrow flows from eye to eye, And joy from heart to heart.
- 3) When, free from envy, scorn and pride, Our wishes all above, Each can his brother's failings hide, And show a brother's love.
- 4) When love in one delightful stream Thru ev'ry bosom flows; When union sweet and dear esteem In ev'ry action glows.
- 5) Love is the golden chain that binds The happy souls above; And he's an heir of heav'n who finds His bosom glows with love.

### THOUGHTS

Could there be anything more pitiful than the following statements taken from a conference on how to make women's lives better. Their concept is to destroy love, the very thing that makes life worthwhile and promote selfishness, the very thing that makes life most miserable.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION, NOTES FROM THE SECOND YEAR – We must destroy love. Love promotes vulnerability, dependence, possessiveness, susceptibility to pain, and prevents the full development of woman's human potential by directing all her energies outward in the interest of others.

### THE PAIN OF LOVE

A lady visiting the Holy Land came upon a sheepfold located high on a hilltop. Her attention was drawn to one poor sheep lying by the side of the road bleating in pain. Looking more closely, she

discovered that its leg was injured. She asked the shepherd how it happened. "I had to break it myself," he answered sadly. "It was the only way I could keep that wayward creature from straying into unsafe places. From past experience I have found that a sheep will follow me once I have nursed it back to health. Because of the loving relationship that will be established as I care for her, in the future she will come instantly at my beck and call."

The woman replied thoughtfully, "Sometimes we poor human sheep also want our stubborn ways and as a result stray into dangerous paths until the Good Shepherd sends sorrow and pain to arrest us. Coming then into a sweeter and closer communion with our Savior, we at last are conditioned to hear His voice and follow His leading."

Sometimes the church is required to inflict pain on wayward members as well. It is never a pleasant task, but the results make it worth the pain of love.

#### LOVE -- WITH SKIN ON

Frightened by the clamor of thunder in the night, a little child cried out. Holding her securely in his arms, her father explained that she needn't fear. God would take care of her because He loved her greatly.

"I know God will take care of me and love me," she replied. "But right now, Daddy, I want someone with skin on to love me." We are to be God's love, with skin on!



#### PEARLS: A HEALED WOUND

We are told that pearls are the product of pain. When the shell of an oyster is chipped or pierced by a worm or boring parasite, a foreign substance, usually a grain of sand, gets in. The inside of an oyster's shell is made up of a lustrous substance called nacre. When a grain of sand gets into a shell, the nacre cells get busy. They cover the grain of sand with layer after layer of nacre in order to protect the soft body of the oyster. The result is that a beautiful pearl is formed. An oyster which has not been hurt does not grow a pearl -- for a pearl is a healed wound.

Have you been hurt by an unkind word of a friend? Have you been accused of saying that which you have not said? Have you

worked hard in the church and had no one express appreciation? Have your ideas been rebuffed? Then grow a pearl. Cover your hurts and your rebuffs with layer after layer of love. Just remember that an oyster which has not been hurt does not grow a pearl -- for a pearl is a healed wound. -- The Lamplighter

#### MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION

An incident is told about two soldiers who had recently been released from a prison camp in Siberia following World War II. "We did our best," said an officer, "to repatriate the men as fast as possible, but many were still there when winter threatened to close up the port." Only a limited number could board the last small boat. Among those waiting to be transported were two who had been chums all through the war. One of them was selected, but the other seemed doomed to remain behind. An order was given that those who were leaving could take only one important item of luggage. The heart of the man who was chosen went out to his buddy, so he emptied his dufflebag of its prized souvenirs and his personal belongings and told his companion to get into the canvas sack. Then carefully lifting the bag on his shoulders, he boarded the ship with his friend as his single, most precious possession. This man truly loved his neighbor as himself.



A flower cannot blossom without sunshine, and man cannot live without love. Max Muller



#### THE ETERNAL HOUSEGUEST

INTRODUCTION - PSALM 23

LEAD STATEMENT - LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION TO...

I. HOW WE DEFINE AND PRACTICE LOVE & HOSPITALITY

II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PSALM

III. HOW GOD DEFINES AND PRACTICES LOVE & HOSPITALITY

CONCLUSION

## THE ETERNAL HOUSEGUEST - Psalm 23

### INTRODUCTION:

A. Psalms 23:1-6 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (2) He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. (3) He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (4) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (5) Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. (6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

B. When you read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm do you think of Jesus the good shepherd? Do you think of God's love? Do you think of God's providence? Or his comfort? Or us being his sheep?

C. Have you ever thought of hospitality when you read that Psalm? Hospitality was certainly not the first thing that came to my mind in connection with Psalm 23.

D. As I thought of hospitality and Psalm 23, I began reading it. The first line says, "the Lord is my shepherd" that means I am his sheep. If the shepherd shows hospitality to a guest it's often by serving a lamb from his flock. That's not a pleasant thought.

E. As I looked more closely at Psalm 23 I noticed that the shepherd is being hospitable to the sheep. The sheep in this Psalm are more than the shepherd's livelihood They are his guests.

**Lead statement - Let's turn our attention to...**

### I. HOW WE DEFINE AND PRACTICE LOVE & HOSPITALITY

- A. Buying someone dinner.
- B. Inviting someone to a fellowship meal.
- C. Inviting someone over for dinner.
- D. Giving a family member a bed for the night.
- E. Giving a fellow Christian a bed for the night.
- F. Calling to book the hotel for a visiting preacher, as long as the church pays for it.
- G. Benjamin Franklin said, "fish and guests both stink after three days". This is the epitome of the American attitude toward hospitality. This bad attitude toward hospitality often works its way into the church as well.

## II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PSALM

A. At first glance it may seem like only the end of Psalm 23 has anything to do with hospitality. Preparing a table and dwelling in the Lord's house make us think of hospitality, but the rest may not. However, the entire Psalm deals with God's hospitality toward us.

B. We may be tempted to divide this Psalm in half because of the use of the third person pronouns in the first part and the second person pronouns in the latter half. It is more likely that this difference is simply a distinction of two separate verses within the Psalm. Even though we may have six verses in the Psalm the psalmist did not write it with six verses as we have them. We have many songs in our songbook that use different personal pronouns in different sections of the song or indifferent verses. "Far and Near" for example: the 2nd verse speaks of sending them, the 3rd verse addresses the one being sent as thou, and the chorus addresses the Lord of harvest himself.

### III. HOW GOD DEFINES AND PRACTICES HOSPITALITY Introductory statement - A good host provides...

A. For all needs- I shall not want - Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

B. Rest- makes me lie down

C. The best- green pasture

D. For the thirst of his guest- still waters- Jesus provided living water, John 4:14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

E. Spiritually as well as physically- restores my soul -

1. Philemon 1:20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

2. Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

F. A godly example to follow- leads in paths of righteousness - John 13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

G. Protection- fear no evil -

1. Psalms 94:22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

2. Zechariah 12:8 In that day shall the LORD defend

the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

H. Companionship- thou art with me - Matthew 28:20

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I. Structure, stability and help- Rod and staff comfort me, the rod was used to defend and discipline the sheep. The staff was used to help the sheep out of difficult situations, when the sheep fell in a pit the crook of the staff could be used to lift the lamb out.

J. Physical nourishment and service- prepare a table - Abraham served, Genesis 18:6-8 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. (7) And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it. (8) And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

K. Comfort in the midst of discomfort- in the presence of my enemies -Revelation 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

L. For the good health and hygiene of guests- anoint my head with oil - Luke 7:46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

M. Generously- cup runs over - John 10:10-11 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (11) I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

N. Some for the road- goodness and mercy shall follow me - Ephesians 2:4-5 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

O. Beyond expectations- dwell in house for ever - John 14:1-3 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also

in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

### **CONCLUSION:**

A. Remember Ben Franklin's quote? It's a very different attitude from God's. The Christian's love and hospitality should be more like God's and less like Ben Franklin's attitude.

B. Nathan describes a man who treats his lamb like a child. God treats us this way. His sheep are part of his family. - 2 Samuel 12:1-4 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. (2) The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: (3) But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. (4) And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

C. What changes do we need to make to be loving and hospitable more like God?

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