

Whispers of the Spirit



Meditations for January 23rd to January 29th

Whispers of the Spirit is a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell and friends.
This week's selections have been written by Deacon Carolyn.

Sunday, January 23rd Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 / Psalm 19 /
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a / Luke 4:14-21

1 Corinthians 12:13 *For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

Picture this: it's a hot dry day and you have been working in the yard pulling weeds since early in the morning. Your spouse comes out with a cold bottle of water and insists you have something to drink. You reach out your hand, take the first refreshing sip and suddenly realize just how thirsty you were. Before you know it, you have gulped down half the bottle. In the blink of an eye, the water is suddenly the best tasting thing you can imagine. When Paul writes to the people of Corinth and says we were all made to drink of one Spirit, my mind goes to that bottle of water. Jesus told the woman at the well that he would give living water. Thirsty?

Lord, fill me with your life-giving Spirit. Amen.

Monday, January 24th Genesis 14:(1-7)8-24 / Psalm 41, 52 /
Hebrews 8:1-13 / John 4:43-54

Hebrews 8:11 *And they shall not teach one another or say to each other, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.*

In our country the bible is readily available on-line and in brick-and-mortar stores; in fact, it remains a best seller of all times. Even if someone is not financially able to purchase a copy, many churches and even a few businesses will gladly give out a free copy, and at the very least they are also in libraries. Therefore, in a certain sense we have no excuse to not have an opportunity to read God's word. But

we're not to the point yet where we all "Know the Lord." Why is that? The saying, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," comes to mind. If I never open my bible to read anything, I will not enjoy the gift it has waiting for me withing its pages. Yes, sometimes it can be confusing - but persistence pays off.

Thank you, Lord, for your written word. Amen.

Tuesday, January 25th (Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle)

Acts 26:9-21 / Psalm 67 / Galatians 1:11-24 / Matthew 10:16-22

Galatians 1:13-14 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

You may have heard it said that the teachings of the Anglican communion, of which the Episcopal church is a part, rests on a three-legged stool of Bible, Reason and Tradition. Take one of those away and the Church cannot stand. Give more length to one over the other two and the seat of the stool will be lopsided. Paul had gotten lopsided, and the Lord literally knocked him off his (high) horse to get his attention. The Lord is still in the business of getting the attention of His people. Sometimes we're lopsided, other times we just can't stand at all. When we find ourselves in that condition, it would be good to look at what we're standing on.

Lord, help me to stand straight in your presence. Amen.

Wednesday, January 26th Genesis 16:1-14 / Psalm 119:49-72 / Hebrews 9:15-28 / John 5:19-29

*Psalm 119:66 Teach me discernment and knowledge, * for I have believed in your commandments.*

Our daughter and son-in-law have a puppy named Freya that's about 3 months old now. In her first few months she has had to learn many things; first how to feed from mom and then that she could trust these two humans to take care of her. Freya is being trained to

signal her special people to do things like open the back door so she can go outside to do her business, but also to sit, stay, come and the like. One of the things she will develop is a discernment between her two special people and other humans and may even become a bit protective of them. We, as humans, also need to learn things as we age, and one of those pieces of knowledge is how to discern what is from God and what isn't. A good test is to line what you think is from God up against the bible. Another is to ask a trusted spiritual friend. Freya will eventually learn what her humans want her to. I wonder if we ever learn what God wants us to know.

Lord, teach me your ways. Amen.

Thursday, January 27th Genesis 16:15–17:14 / Psalm 50 /
Hebrews 10:1-10 / John 5:30-47

Psalm 50:15 *“Call upon me in the day of trouble; * I will deliver you, and you shall honor me.”*

Action and reaction: if I decide to play a game of volleyball, I will most likely end up with bruising on my hands and wrists – that’s just the way my body operates. If I decide to go for a long walk on a warm day wearing jeans and a long sleeve shirt, I will probably get a bit sweaty along the way. Again, action and reaction. In our verse for today God tells us to “Call on Him” (action) and He will “deliver us” (reaction). It’s up to us to do something first, and oh by the way, once He delivers us He says we will then honor Him, that is, give Him the credit. Sounds easy enough.

Lord, help me to remember to call upon you. Amen.

Friday, January 28th Genesis 17:15-27 / Psalm 40, 54 /
Hebrews 10:11-25 / John 6:1-15

Psalm 54:2 *Hear my prayer, O God; * give ear to the words of my mouth.*

As I write this, in today’s comic strip there is a little boy who has an important message to share. First he goes to his father, then his mother and after he is told by both, “Not now, I’m busy” he tries his

sister and finally his baby sister. No one would listen to him. In the last panel he says, “O well, I guess nobody cares that the toilet is overflowing.” I can recall times, when as the youngest child in the family, people regarded me as not knowing what I was talking about. It was frustrating then and when it happens today, it continues to be frustrating. Fortunately for us, we have a heavenly Father who is very willing to listen to us when we speak. No longer do we have to endure times of being ignored; instead He is willing to listen whenever we seek His ear, even if it’s to complain about something or someone. Then listen to what He has to say back.

Lord, open my ears that I may understand your words to me. Amen.

Saturday, January 29th Genesis 18:1-16 / Psalm 55 /
Hebrews 10:26-39 / John 6:16-27

(Today’s meditation was written by Deacon Bob Quinnell)

John 6:25 *When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?”*

Years ago, I listened to a lesson given by a guest priest to the Youth Group which Carolyn and I were leaders of. The man drew a circle on some paper, drew a line cutting it in half, and spoke about the differences between the left and right halves of the human brain. The right brain is said to house the creative, imaginative side of our abilities, and the left houses the logical, reasoning side. The priest placed a small Jesus figurine in the right half circle and the students were asked to comment on that placement and what it might mean in understanding who Jesus is. Next, he placed the figurine in the left half and the engineer/scientist in me nearly fainted. It took that simple illustration to remind me that Jesus is truly Lord of all, including my private realm of understanding how things work. He is, after all, the Creator of all that is, including science, engineering, and even math homework.

Lord, wherever I am, you are there with me. Thank you! Amen.

