

Whispers of the Spirit



Meditations for January 9th to January 15th

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 9th Isaiah 43:1-7 / Psalm 29 / Acts 8:14-17 /
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Luke 3:22b *And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."*

Between the two of us, my husband and I have five children. Each of those five like to hear they are loved and that we are pleased with them. They are not unusual. I don't know of a single person who does not want to hear those words from someone. Jesus, and the crowd around him, heard these words when he came up from the waters of baptism. But we might say, Jesus is THE WORD of God, as John's gospel reminds us. True, but he was also very much human and that part of him would have longed to hear those precious words from his Father. If you have children who need to hear they are loved, I urge you to tell them; to validate them. If you do not have children, tell a loved one – spouse, friend, whatever. We all need to hear it from someone.

Father God, thank you for your love. Amen.

Monday, January 10th Genesis 2:4-9(10-15)16-25 / Psalm 1, 2, 3 /
Hebrews 1:1-14 / John 1:1-18

Psalm 2:1 *Why are the nations in an uproar?* Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?*

Today we were passed by a car on the interstate that had a bumper sticker on the back window that read, "Make America *Kind* Again." My first thought was, "Isn't that the truth." Then I began to think, why just America? Why not the world? Only later did I wonder if either the world or America has ever been kind. That may depend on who you talk to. Even in the earliest of times there were

certainly conflicts over who was going to live where and nations conquering nations. It would seem our uproar goes back a long way (think Cain and Abel). We want what we want, quite frankly, because that is how we've been taught. What would happen if we said "NO" to the conniving forces of the evil one and "YES" to following the words of Jesus? It's a radical experiment; and a daily battle. I'm willing to give it a try.

Lord, help me to follow your word in all that I do. Amen.

Tuesday, January 11th Genesis 3:1-24 / Psalm 5, 6 /
Hebrews 2:1-10 / John 1:19-28

Genesis 3:9-10 *But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."*

Not only did the serpent introduce the idea that it was OK to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he also introduced fear into the world. Up to this point, neither Adam nor Eve had anything to fear. One bite, just one bite was all it took to change everything. Of course, that is exactly what the serpent had in mind. I am reminded of a person who gives drugs to the young for the express purpose of getting them addicted so he/she can then charge exorbitant prices for what was originally free. I'm also reminded of a little child who learns that if they tell a fib and get away with it, it's OK to lie. The good news is the Lord God still calls out to us saying, "Where are you?" Are you brave enough to answer today?

Lord, I am here. Forgive me my wrongdoings. Amen.

Wednesday, January 12th Genesis 4:1-16 / Psalm 119:1-24 /
Hebrews 2:11-18 / John 1:(29-34)35-42

Genesis 4:9-10 *Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said,*

“What have you done? Listen; your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground!”

In only a few short verses, the Lord has twice asked a man, “What have you done?” It would seem to me that once we have done wrong, the Lord wants us to tell Him about it. Why? Yes, there may be consequences for our actions, but there is also a freeing aspect of confessing our sins, receiving absolution, and accepting that forgiveness. If we keep our transgressions to ourselves, eventually they weigh us down and drag us into darkness. That’s exactly the condition the evil one would like us to be in. Jesus, our savior, died for those sins once and for all. Let His light shine into your darkness.

Come, Lord Jesus, and shine your light into my dark places. Amen.

Thursday, January 13th Genesis 4:17-26 / Psalm 18:1-20 /
Hebrews 3:1-11 / John 1:43-51

Psalm 18:17 *He reached down from on high and grasped me; * he drew me out of great waters.*

Can you picture this scene? A man trapped on top of a house with flood waters rushing by at great speed. Fearing for his life he prays to the Lord. All of a sudden, a giant hand comes down out of the sky, picks up the man and sets him down on dry ground. I don’t think so. More likely the Lord will send someone in a boat or helicopter to rescue the man. The thing is, will the man recognize the rescuer as being used by the Lord, or will the man just think it was a lucky break? Are you in need of a rescue today? It may be that the Lord will send someone your way. Or the flip side, perhaps the Lord will put you in the path of someone who needs help. Are you willing to be used?

Lord, open my ears to your voice. Amen.

Friday, January 14th Genesis 6:1-8 / Psalm 16, 17 /
Hebrews 3:12-19 / John 2:1-12

John 2:1 *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.*

This is, of course, the beginning of the account where Jesus turns water into wine, thereby signaling the start of His earthly ministry. But there is a subtle exchange going on here between a mother and son. If you have had children, did you ever have a “Just do what I say!” moment with them? You were tired, maybe in the middle of doing something or perhaps even a bit stressed and your offspring gave you some backtalk about what you told them to do. I know I’ve been there. And because I have been there, I can empathize with Mary as this story unfolds. But I wonder, if she had known at that moment that in just 3 short years her son’s public ministry would be cut short, would she have insisted on this moment being the beginning?

Jesus, thank you for turning the water into wine. Amen.

Saturday, January 15th Genesis 6:9-22 / Psalm 20, 21:1-7(8-14) / Hebrews 4:1-13 / John 2:13-22

Hebrews 4:9-10 *So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God’s rest also cease from their labors as God did from his.*

When I was growing up, anytime I got grumpy my Dad would say, “Someone needs a nap.” I had learned at an early age to not backtalk to him, so instead I would think how much I despised those words. The truth is, he was usually right. I do tend to get grumpy when I get overly tired, though I think I am much more willing to take a nap at my current age than I was way back then. The adage, “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” is very true. God knows we need regular times of rest, ergo the commandment to keep the Sabbath. Jesus said the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. It’s not about keeping a bunch of rules, it’s about taking a step back from the world and toward the arms of our creator.

Lord, help me to put my duties aside and glorify in your presence. Amen.

