

The Word Comes Alive in Everyday Life

For the week of January 3 through January 9, 2016

Sunday – January 3, 2016

John 1:1-5 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

Reflection: Is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word for you? What are some ways that God's Word comes to you? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God's Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Monday – January 4, 2016

John 1:14-18 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'" From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

Reflection: Here we see the human (Jesus) and divine (Word) coming to everyday life with skin on. Is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word for you? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God's Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Tuesday – January 5, 2016

Luke 4:14-21 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come." He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!"

Reflection: This story comes right after the story of Jesus facing three huge temptations in the wilderness. Having wrestled with them and struggled through them he comes back to his everyday life stronger and full of the Holy Spirit. As you struggle with and through your own temptations is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word for you? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God's Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Wednesday – January 6, 2016

Luke 14:1-6 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat dinner in the home of a leader of the Pharisees, and the people were watching him closely. There was a man there whose arms and legs were swollen. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in religious law, “Is it permitted in the law to heal people on the Sabbath day, or not?” When they refused to answer, Jesus touched the sick man and healed him and sent him away. Then he turned to them and said, “Which of you doesn’t work on the Sabbath? If your son or your cow falls into a pit, don’t you rush to get him out?” Again they could not answer.

Reflection: Seemingly Jesus was always challenging the religious leaders on the real intent of their laws. He always refocused the intent of the laws on the great commandment – love God, love others and love yourself. If the law didn’t fulfill that command, then Jesus drew the law into question. When it comes to your own view and understanding of religious laws, doctrine and/or dogma, is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God’s Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Thursday – January 7, 2016

Luke 15:1-7 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them! So Jesus told them this story: “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away!”

Reflection: Jesus continually brought lofty rules down to very practical understanding. Both the people outside the religious system and the common people inside loved him for doing so. However, the religious leaders were threatened by it. Seemingly they loved their laws most of all, while Jesus didn’t disregard the laws he loved people most of all. When you think about what Jesus did, is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God’s Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Friday – January 8, 2016

Luke 18:9-14 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don’t cheat, I don’t sin, and I don’t commit adultery. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’ But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Reflection: The whole idea of thinking that we are better than anyone else is something Jesus saw as very dangerous to oneself and to the community. Could it be that Jesus is saying to think that you are without sin is in itself a sin? When you think about how you see and relate to others is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God's Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*

Saturday – January 9, 2016

Luke 20:20-26 (Read these verses slowly 2 or 3 times. Imagine it as a conversation with God.)

Watching for their opportunity, the leaders sent spies pretending to be honest men. They tried to get Jesus to say something that could be reported to the Roman governor so he would arrest Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you speak and teach what is right and are not influenced by what others think. You teach the way of God truthfully. Now tell us—is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" He saw through their trickery and said, "Show me a Roman coin. Whose picture and title are stamped on it?" "Caesar's," they replied. "Well then," he said, "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God." So they failed to trap him by what he said in front of the people. Instead, they were amazed by his answer, and they became silent.

Reflection: Jesus saw everything belonging together. By doing so it was near to impossible to trap him by asking him to put politics, religions, people or anything else into this or that categories. When you look at how you view politics, religions, people or anything else is there guidance, reassurance, challenge or invitation in this living Word? Is God speaking to you personally in these verses? If so, what are you hearing?

Breath Prayer: Inhale: *God's Word...* Exhale: *is a light unto my path*