



Reside in the Now

¹ *Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*

² *I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."*

⁴ *He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge;*

His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵ *You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,*

⁶ *nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.*

¹⁴ *"Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him;*

I will protect him, for he acknowledges my Name.

¹⁵ *He will call on Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble,*

I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶ *With long life I will satisfy him and show him my Salvation."* (Psalm 91)

Hey, good morning, guys! Here we are at our virtual table and glad to be together again. Good to be with guys who trust in Him and His character. His love for us is greater than we could ever imagine, though we live in a world where we face trouble every day. We also find blessings and beauty and His greatness revealed in the dark times. People helping people and making meals for shut-ins. In times of grief, crime, depravity, illness, and death of loved ones; times of shattered hope, and broken dreams – we find God right here with us. He is here in the now.

As we approach Resurrection Sunday, I am reminded that on the third day, after Christ was buried, He arose out of the dark, out of the dust and out of the tomb! (Matthew 28: 6) He is here with us and we can know beyond a doubt, He will never leave us nor forsake us (Deut. 31:6). His Glory and beauty shine forever thru every dark time and trial that we have struggled with.

The ashes will fall away, Brothers; they don't stay forever, *to console the mourners in Zion—to give them a crown of beauty for ashes, the oil of Joy for mourning, and a garment of praise for a spirit of despair. So, they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.* (Isaiah 61: 3) We can sing praise and defeat despair. We can take our eyes off circumstances and see to the needs of others. We can put Jesus on display and show unwavering 'foot-washing' Love (John 15: 9).

When you start caring for others, Peace begins to flood your soul. Jesus promises that.
(Pastor Karl Clausen, 180 Church, Chicago, WMBI morning host)

Loving Him and loving others (Romans 12: 10) brings Peace to our hearts and serving others is a declaration of our trust in Him. We won't have our Peace stolen away by fear, rather we give time and effort to others. We try to offer generosity and think of other folks in a time when the world tends to be self-consumed – woe is me, why me?? Keep in mind, the enemy tries to use our fear to increase his victory.

Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in your Faith and in the knowledge that your Brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all Grace, who has called you to His eternal Glory in Christ, will Himself restore you, secure you, strengthen you, and establish you. To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5: 8-11)

Since our earliest days on the eastern seaboard, Americans have dealt with hardship, lockdowns, pestilence and generally tough times. We have found that we can 'drag behind the curve' and comfort ourselves with self-lies and denials. Or we can 'run ahead of the curve' with false bravado and pride, "I don't care if I catch the virus." Or, we can reside in the now. We can be aware of God's Presence and our dependency on His Presence. We learn from yesterday and plan for tomorrow; but mostly live in the now. Give today our attention and not worry about tomorrow. Life is short and today has problems of its own (Matthew 6: 34). Appreciate the now, *for you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes* (James 4: 14). Appreciate blessings now and, *do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?* (Matthew 6: 25) And appreciating the now requires discernment: *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the Will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect* (Romans 12: 2).

We have Peace, the Peace of God, because we rejoice in the Lord always. When? Always. That means now. Don't make Him wait for your worship. We practice the discipline of God-sighting so that we can rejoice in Him now. *Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice! Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ.* (Philippians 4: 4-7)

I must confess that I spend too much of my thought with: oh, when will the YMCA reopen? When can we return to Eli's and get my Florentine omelet and a big hug from David S? And, ultimately, when can I go to Heaven and see my old buddy, Steve? Shame on me for fussing over these things (dare I say, idols?) and missing the blessings He bestows in the now. How about that amazing rainbow the other

day, talk about a mist. We can't see tomorrow and yesterday has faded; stay alert for His beauty with eyes open to the now. That is how we will weather this coronavirus storm and glorify Him.

Living in the now takes discernment, great Faith and focus. Noah built with single-minded intensity, a boat, amid the ridicule and mockery of his neighbors. With Faith, he drew his strength from God and focused on what needed to be built today. Joseph looked ahead 14 years; but built and prepared, working today and not worrying about tomorrow. He trusted God and served Him and did not defer to the world's predictions, 'models,' or figures.

Where is this all going to go? We learn so much about finding Peace in the plight by studying these reports from the Word. Do not fear. Trust Him. He's got this. We learn from the Hebrews who withstood so much trouble and trials. We are the grafted branch. We share the commonality of a caring God. We draw value from their reports as the Hebrews have been, 'thru the rapids and over the falls.' They endured invasions, sieges, famine, death and deportation to Babylon as well as God's Glory leaving the Temple ([Ezekiel 10: 18](#)) and the destruction of the Temple. What they faced helps us with perspective on what we are facing – big challenges are not uncommon to Christians.

God offers us guideposts to steady ourselves along the way. We see this throughout the Scriptures as God's is immutable and unchanging. His character is unchanging and so are His intentions for His people. He will not be thwarted by a virus nor His purposes impeded by anything the world has to offer.

*And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known, I will guide them. I will **turn the darkness before them into light**, the rough place into level ground. **These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them.** (Isaiah 42: 16)*

As Believers, we keep going because we have a firm grasp of the goodness and Love of God. we know His intentions for us are good and trials are there to shape us and prepare us. We are not removed at Salvation from the challenges of the world. Rather, we enter 'boot-camp.' Sanctification is hard; but it is His perfect workmanship for His Glory. These tough times of confinement and sacrifice are part of the honing process. If all is 'hunky-dory,' we would never learn, grow or change. The master Potter molds, directs, encourages, motivates and impels us to the finish-line. He considers our emotions and responses and instructs and corrects. He does it for our maturity into eternity and for His Glory.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you.
(1 Peter 5: 6)

But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are the potter; we are all the work of Your hand.
(Isaiah 64: 8)

*Your Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven (Matthew 6: 10) is a prayer of **belief**. True Faith is in God alone. God wants us to look at Him as our source of Faith – not in the images of Him.*
(Pastor Josh)



Let's go into prayer.

P.U.S.H. Pray Until Something Happens

Prayer: a passion for the Presence of God!



Be joyful in Hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Romans 12: 12)

*Prayer is more powerful than all your self-efforts. Pray **big** and watch God work.*

When prayer becomes your habit – miracles become your lifestyle.

Thru prayer, we are reassured that, 'He's got this.' We draw Peace from His mighty, capable hand as we study the many dark times He sustained the Hebrew nation.

Thru prayer, we talk to Him now and know that He loves us now. He calms our hearts and brings patience to our souls. We who wait upon the Lord know that His timing is perfect and God makes all things beautiful in His time.

Unshakable Peace: *When I think of the preciousness, the precious experience, of being free from fear, free from anxiety, full of Peace, full of contentment in the face of danger, my question is this: Who is it that can have a warranted, well-founded, justifiable, God-given, God-sustained freedom from fear and freedom from anxiety and **unshakable Peace and sweet, abiding contentment**? Who can lay a rightful claim to these treasures? It's crystal clear in God's Word that He commands, and He offers a life of fearlessness and Peace.*

The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me? (Hebrews 13: 6)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4: 6, 7)

I have learned in whatever situation I am (coronavirus or not) to be content. (Philippians 4: 11)

No fear, no anxiety, supernatural peace, supernatural contentment in every circumstance, whether horrible or happy: that's what God offers. And the question is: to whom is such an amazing supernatural experience of fearlessness and Peace given?

Rooted in Reality: *In other words, in a pandemic or not in a pandemic, I'm not interested in the mirror psychological experience of fearlessness and contentment that is not based on reality. The aim of our lives is not to have a psychological state of mind that is **pleasant without reference to reality**. The aim is to have for ourselves, and for others through us, psychological, spiritual, physical states of happiness that are **based on reality that make much of our Maker**, and that will be true in a million years. That's the only kind of fearlessness and contentment I care about. (John Piper, Pastor, author, chancellor, desiringGod.org)*

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

(1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)



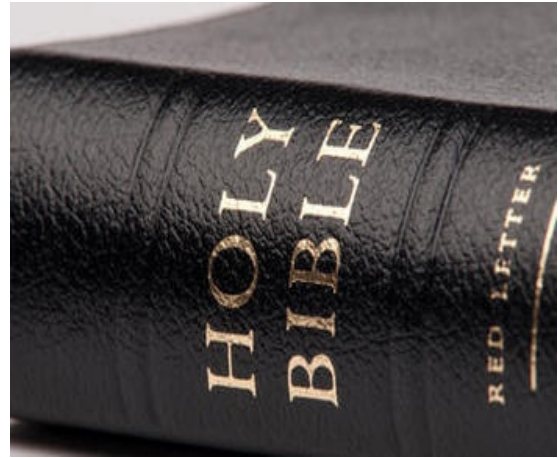
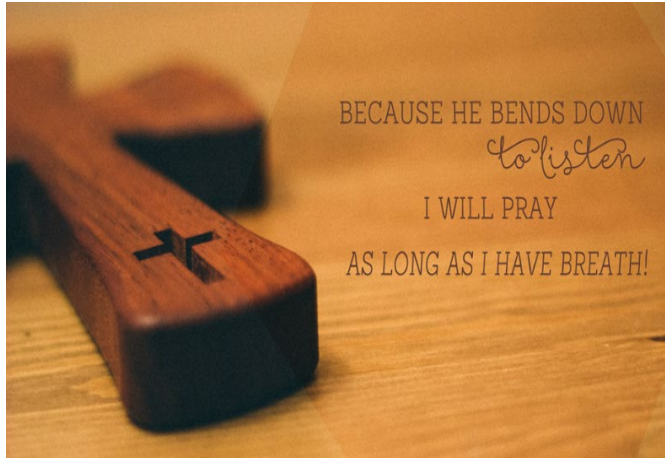
Men ought always to pray, and not to faint. (Luke 18: 1)

Prayer is our powerline.

Prayer is the intimate, honest expression of the soul's dependence on God.

Who can you pray for today?

Who might God be putting in your path?



*In the morning, Lord, You hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly.
(Psalm 5: 3)*

Let the fragrance of our prayers arise



I constantly remember you in my prayers. (2 Timothy 1: 3)

God Sightings/God Residing

See God thru His amazing creation. Embrace God thru the work He is doing inside you.

Stop and consider God's wonders. (Job 37: 14)

*I believe in Christianity as I believe in the rising sun;
not because I see it, but by it, I can see all else. (C.S. Lewis)*

Lots of sharing this morning, glimpses of God:

Frank was encouraged as President Trump is hoping we can all return to Church on Easter Sunday. Probably will not happen; but good to see it as a priority of the President.

Jay Miller is encouraged as his CEO has announced that he doesn't plan to do layoffs anytime soon. Jay has noticed God in action as he sees people helping people.

David S. was inspired, and saw God's character revealed, as he re-read Pastor Steve Dewitt's book, '*Eyes Wide Open.*' Our discipline is to keep our eyes wide open (our radar antennae out, so to speak) to see God's Presence everywhere around and near us.

*Oh, kingdoms of the earth, sing to God; sing praises to the Lord, to Him who rides in the heavens.
Behold, He sends out His voice, His mighty voice.
Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel, and whose power is in the skies.
Awesome is God from His sanctuary; the God of Israel.
He is the One who gives power and strength to His people.
Blessed be God!! (Psalm 68: 32-35)*

David B. was encouraged by a helpful, knowledgeable employee at Big Lots.

Mike Scheffer is aware that these are heady times. As people are confined and coping with testy nerves and potential flair-ups; it is good to see many turning to Biblical precepts.

Rich Hilgert is heartened as Vice President Mike Pence continually refers to Scripture:

*If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and I will forgive their sin and **will heal their land.** (2 Chronicles 7:14)*



God sightings stir us to worship. And I stand in awe of You.

Have you seen God, lately?

*There are days I've taken more than I can give, and there are choices that I made, that I wouldn't make again.
I've had my share of laughter, of tears and troubled times. This has been the story of my life.*

*I have won and I have lost. I got it right sometimes; but sometimes I did not.
Life's been a journey; I've seen joy, I've seen regret.
And, oh, You have been my God through all of it.*

*You were there when it all came down on me, when I was blinded by my fear, and I struggled to believe.
But in those unclear moments, You were the one keeping me strong. This is how my story's always gone.*

*I have won and I have lost. I got it right sometimes; but sometimes I did not.
Life's been a journey; I've seen joy, I've seen regret.
And, oh, You have been my God through all of it.*

*And this is who You are, more constant than the stars up in the sky.
All these years of our lives, I look back and I see You.
Right now I still do and I'm always going to.*

*I have won and I have lost. I got it right sometimes; but sometimes I did not.
Life's been a journey; I've seen joy, I've seen regret.
And, oh, You have been my God through all of it.
You have been my God through all of it.*

Watch for Him and you will see Him through all of your Journey.



Near Dale's house, God showing off His luminous beauty for us.

Focus on Faith

Faith is not a cushion for me to fall back upon – it is my working energy. (Helen Keller)

It's not the strength of your Faith that saves you, but the strength of Him upon whom you rely.

(Charles Spurgeon, Pastor, author, 'Prince of Preachers')

*We are in the midst of the turbulent storm of life. The believing saints of God are on board the ship. Someone looks to the horizon and warns, "we are directly in the path of the typhoon! It seems we are as good as dead. We will surely be dashed to pieces on the rocks!" But calmly someone else advises, "look down, look down! We have an anchor!" We look, but the depth is too great. We cannot see the anchor. But the anchor is there. It grips the immovable rock and holds fast. Thus, despite the howling turbulence, the ship outrides the storm. The Holy Spirit has assured us that we have an Anchor, **steadfast and sure**, that keeps the soul. Jesus – our Saviour, Redeemer and our great High Priest – He is that Anchor. He is the One who has gone before us (Deut. 1: 30). He has already entered into the calm and quiet harbor, the inner sanctuary behind the curtain. Where Jesus is now, there we will be – forever. The Spirit is saying to us, "keep on believing. Pursue holiness. Show diligence and hold **full assurance of Faith** to the very end. Follow those who through Faith and patience inherit what has been promised." (A.W.Tozer, Pastor, author, mentor)*

*We have this **Hope as an Anchor for the soul**, firm and steadfast.
It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus our forerunner has entered on our behalf.
(Hebrews 6: 19, 20)*

*The Lord your God who goes before you, will Himself fight on your behalf.
(Deuteronomy 1: 30)*

Faith is: to Hear (Romans 10: 17), to Believe (Hebrews 11: 6), and to Obey (James 1: 22)
the Word of God (Matthew 6: 33, 34).

Faith is the currency of God's economy.



Conclusion

When the chips are down, substitute gods fail us; our own personal 'idols' don't help us much. But we know that He brings beauty from the ashes (Isaiah 61:3); He brings purpose to our pain and He walks us thru the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23: 4). We do not fear because we live in the now and we focus on what has to be done today to defeat this evil upon us and we have an Anchor. *Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the Name of the Lord our God (Psalm 20: 7)*. Some tend to deceit and denial, while others tend to bravado, pride and vanity. But we tend to trust in the now. We trust and put our Faith in His Presence and His promises; in the God who is with us now and always (Matthew 28: 20).

We are the grafted branch; we are not in the blood line – but the Faith line. We glean to what Father taught the Hebrews in their trials and know that He will bless us thru ours. Empowered by His Holy Spirit, the challenges that we face today make us stronger for tomorrow.

These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them (Isaiah 42: 16).

Hey guys, looking forward to seeing you all thru my lap-top screen on Saturday. Praise God for technology that helps us do good. Have a great week; live in it and love it and come tell us all about it.

You'll be glad you did, your Bro. in Christ, Dale.

Questions or problems with the 'Zoom' app, please call Jay at (412)719-0950 or Mike at (219)808-7893.

*The Lord is my light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1)*



Breakfast Benediction

May you all be Blessed real good!

⁷ *But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*

⁸ *We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; **perplexed, but not driven to despair;***

⁹ *persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. (2 Corinthians 4: 7-10)*

*Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the Glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in Heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the Kingdom;
You are exalted as head over all.*

(1 Chronicles 29: 11)

.....and may the dust of your Rabbi's feet cover your clothing.

This might hurt, it's not safe; but I know that I've gotta make a change.

I don't care if I break; at least I'll be feeling something.

Because, just okay is not enough. Help me fight through the nothingness of life.

I don't wanna go through the motions.

I don't wanna go one more day without Your all-consuming passion inside of me.

I don't wanna spend my whole life asking:

What if I had given everything, instead of just going through the motions?

No regrets, not this time. I'm gonna let my heart defeat my mind.

Let Your Love make me whole; I think I'm finally feeling something

Because, just okay is not enough. Help me fight through the nothingness of this life.

I don't wanna go through the motions.

I don't wanna go one more day without Your all-consuming passion inside of me.

I don't wanna spend my whole life asking:

What if I had given everything, instead of just going through the motions?

*Take me all the way; take me all the way,
Take me all the way, because I don't wanna go through the motions.
Take me all the way; I know I'm finally feeling something real. Take me all the way.*

*I don't wanna go through the motions.
I don't wanna go one more day without Your all-consuming passion inside of me.
I don't wanna spend my whole life asking:
What if I had given everything, instead of just going through the motions?*



*You, God, are awesome in your sanctuary;
the God of Israel gives power and strength to His people.
Praise be to God! (Psalm 68: 35)*