



Like a Child

Heritage Day

Mark 9:30–37

*“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name
welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me
but the one who sent me.”*

September 20, 2015

Thoughts for the Week

Faith Is Assurance

Hebrews 11:1-7

Preparing My Heart – Thoughts to Ponder

I believe God is.

I believe God created all things.

I believe God is findable.

I believe God rewards those who look for Him with sincere diligence.

I believe that faith pleases God; without it, no one can.

I believe faith leads to faithfulness.

I believe faithfulness nourishes faith.

I believe that, without God’s work in my heart,

I can neither have faith nor be faithful.

Thankfully, God both calls me to faith and faithfulness
as well as empowers me to have faith and to be faithful.

Praise God!

Making the Bible Personal

How should I respond to those who don’t have this kind of faith?

How do I want people with stronger, more effective faith to respond to me?

In real-to-life terms, what does Hebrews 11:1 mean for me and to me?

In what ways has God rewarded my search for Him?

What can I do to not fear in trying and unstable times?
If I believe Psalm 46:9 to be true, what should my faith do?

Reviewing Basic Truths

Faith need not see to believe.
Pleasing God requires faith.
God is...and He rewards the diligent seeker.
I am called to exalt God (as Abel and Enoch and Noah were thus called).

Applying God's Word to Me

I do not understand how I can substantively touch something so intangible to me that it exists only as a hope.
Nor do I understand how I can have as hard evidence
something invisible and imperceptible.
It seems so strange and delusional and mind-bending; foolishness, really.
Yet God calls that faith.

***"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen."***

I even need faith to accept that and believe it!
So did Noah.
By faith he saw the ***"not seen"*** clearly enough
to act faithfully on the assignments
and commands given to him by The Unseen One.
For Noah, an assertion of faith would have been an unacceptable
(and ineffective) substitute for a life of faithfulness.

And so it is for me.
Faith that fails to produce faithfulness is sterile, fruitless, and useless.
I must have faith in order to be faithful; otherwise, I cannot please God.

I am so glad that God has made a way for me to please Him.
Faith is that way.
This faith believes that God is.
And this faith also believes that God rewards all who recompenses
each one who with diligence seeks Him.
Abel and Enoch and Noah believed with that kind of faith.
I want that kind of faith...because I want to please God...
and because I want to find God.

I hereby declare my belief that *He who is, rewards those who seek Him!*

Now may I faithfully live consistently with that declaration.
Doesn't that sound ostentatious?
Well, that truly is my heart's desire and my commitment.
But... What am I to do when "real life" intrudes and shakes my faith?
What am I to do when the "evidence" mounts
that my faith just isn't working the way it should?
To put it simply, what do I do with unbelief?

I state again that I believe that God is.
And I reaffirm that I believe that God will reward me when I diligently seek Him.
Then I set my heart again to seek Him yet more.
And I plead with Him, ***"Help thou mine unbelief"*** (Mark 9:24)

What else *can* I do?
Oh, yes — live faithfully by faith.
When my faith staggers,
may I still choose to live in faithfulness to the truth I know.

Happy Birthday Kim (9/20) & Ed (9/21)

Prayer for Peace - Hungary

God is great! God is good!
We praise you and thank you for our salvation, and the vision for all humankind to live at peace, one with another.
Lord God, we have not always been at peace, or even kind to one another.
Forgive us, we humbly pray, and open our minds and our hearts to see your will for our lives.

We lift the people of Hungary before you, grant them peace.
O Lord, there are so many nations at war today.

We pray for them.

We also pray for leaders who seek their own good to the detriment of their citizens.
Great God, we pray for the people of all nations who seek justice so they may have peace.
Bless their efforts with the Holy Spirit, we humbly ask.

Each of us has needs and concerns.

We ask your comforting spirit and your spirit of intelligence to direct our thoughts and actions.

We wish to be a people of peace.

Teach us peace this day we pray.

Accept our humble plea, O God. Help us to be at peace and to teach peace.

Amen.

Stewardship Thought

*“If anyone wishes to be first,
he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.”
(Mark 9:35)*

Jesus teaches us that we are called to serve one another.
Sacrifice is not a word that many people like to hear.
We think it means that we must give up something that we want.

Did you know, the literal meaning of sacrifice is “to make holy,”
from the words “*sacer*” = *sacred* and “*facere*” = *to make*.

So, in truth, we make our lives holy by sharing our gifts in the service of God.