

Providence Forge Presbyterian Church

Lenten Devotional Week Five: Peace

March 14, 2021

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

John 20:19-20 (NIV)

Peace be with you!

Ever since the resurrection, this has been My watchword to those who yearn for Me. As you sit quietly, let my Peace settle over you and enfold you in My loving presence. To provide this radiant peace for you, I died a criminal's death. Receive My Peace abundantly and thankfully. It is a rare treasure, dazzling in delicate beauty yet strong enough to withstand all onslaughts. Wear My Peace with regal dignity. It will keep your heart and mind close to Mine.

By Sarah Young

Submitted by Patty Robinson

The Prayer of Jabez

*And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying,
“Oh, that You would bless me indeed,
and enlarge my territory,
that Your hand would be with me, and
that You would keep me from evil,
that I may not cause pain!”
So God granted him what he requested.*

1 Chronicles 4:10

This reading was a concept totally foreign to me—praying to God to ask Him to “enlarge my territory.” On the face of it, it seemed a very selfish prayer. And yet, when we opened our business over ten years ago, I started to echo Jabez’ prayer and came to the realization that the verse has a much deeper meaning.

This verse is an affirmation of God’s goodness and His work in our lives. If we have the audacity to ask for God’s blessings, He will grant them to us. What a simple idea, but how many of us are too timid in our faith to ask for such personal blessings—not only the wealth Jabez requests, but also for God to be with him, keep him from evil and from causing pain.

The simple statement at the end of this verse—“so God granted him what he requested” speaks volumes to me. We have only to humble ourselves to God’s will and turn ourselves over to His care in order to live a blessed life. It’s a guarantee—because God grants our requests! Just as we are brave and audacious in running our own businesses, we have to be “brave” enough to ask for God’s blessings in prayer :)

By Marcia Gardy

God's Timing

Through all of life's ups and downs I have known Jesus was with me on my journey. God's timing is perfect. In November 2019 I had the once in a lifetime opportunity to tour the Holy Land for 2 weeks. Just a short 3 months later the United States and the world were closed due to the Covid 19 pandemic. In the year 2020-2021 of staying at home a lot I had the opportunity to write up my 4 notebooks of short hand notes and thus relive the experiences again through remembering. I especially recalled the sights and scenes from Jesus' journey toward the cross.

In the Sunday, February 14 sermon, Pastor Nancy invited us to recall a favorite mountaintop experience. She said she hoped our memories included Jesus. Well, all of my best memories from my Israel trip included Jesus and have made my Lenten Journey so much more meaningful. Now as I read the bible I recall the experiences I had in person. Jesus was with me on the Sea of Galilee, in the area of Capernaum and near the hills where the miracle of loaves and fishes could have taken place. Jesus was with me the length of the Jordan River from the quiet still waters for baptism to the rushing torrents, from the heights of Dan down to the Dead Sea. Jesus was with me looking at the rocky, steep terrain of the wilderness and the shepherds of today still keeping watch over their sheep. Jesus was with me on the top of the Mount of Olives looking down to Jerusalem for the last time. Jesus was with me as I toured a typical upper room where he had his last supper, through the very ancient olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the walk to Golgotha down the Via Delorosa. Ultimately Jesus and I met in the empty Garden Tomb. Hallelujah!

If you feel the need to enlighten and brighten your spiritual journey I would highly recommend: 1. The Chosen, a new series about Jesus, that brings many bible stories alive in a unique way. 2. Walkingthebiblelands.com with Wayne Stiles which are a series of virtual trips to the Holy Land with inspirational messages after each site. 3. If you are interested in the Adult Bible Sunday School books each quarter and are not already on the Sunday School mailing list contact Jane VanDyke or Patty Robinson.

By Jane VanDyke