

We should boldly go forth bearing the name of Christ.

Devotional: I Timothy 6:12 exhorts us to “fight the good fight of the faith.” Ephesians 6:10-18 reveals how we are to fight that fight. Pay particular attention to Ephesians 6:18. Prayer, it was the hallmark of the early church. It should also be the mark of our commitment to Christ.

Pray That your hearts desire would be to fight the good fight in a gracious, merciful and compassionate manner.

Saturday, 5/26

Through our study of Acts we have learned a great deal about the life of the early church. There is one overriding lesson that has arisen from this study. Because of the vitality found in the early church, “the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.”

Devotional: What excitement there is being part of a church that fervently follows the commands of Gods word. Reflect often on Acts 16:5. Reflect on what affect your faithfulness to God has on the church.

Pray Your role in the church will be one of fruitfulness through a proper

Be Thou My Vision

understanding of Gods word.
Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

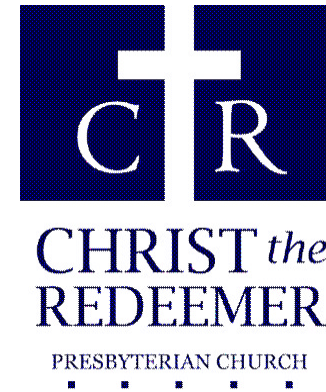
Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Taking Gathered Worship Home



Family and Individual Devotions Meditations in Acts

Week of May 20, 2007

The Essence of the Church

Daily Devotionals

The ministry of Paul is a great example to us. He did not hesitate to preach the gospel, going wherever necessary to spread the good news. Paul recognized the great calling that God had given him and realized his life in Christ was a life of purpose. During his ministry Paul worked arduously at the task before him, not losing sight of the needs of others in the process. There is a lot to learn as we look at the comments Paul made to the Ephesian elders.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Please pray that we as a community of faith will learn His ways and walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Throughout the week we encourage you to use the hymn, "Be Thou My Vision" found on the back page as your song, your prayer, and your reminder this week about what the church is all about.

Sunday, 5/20 The success of the ministry of Paul was founded in his attitude. With humility he acknowledged that all he did was done imperfectly, and what he did accomplish was done only through the righteousness of Christ. Paul was diligent, thankful, and never turned people or an opportunity away.

Devotional: Read Philippians 3:18. What attitude did Paul have about himself? To whom did he give credit for who he was? Review Philippians 2:3-4 and Philippians 4:4-7. What do these verses reveal about the demeanor of Paul? How does your attitude compare?

Pray For a humble heart that acknowledges the source of your being. That you would be able to rejoice, give thanks and live in the peace of Christ despite circumstances.

Monday, 5/21 The importance of preaching and teaching the message of Christ was evident in the ministry of Paul. Paul preached the things of God because he was commanded to preach those things. That command is also our command.

Devotional: Read Romans 10:17. What does this verse say about the reason for preaching? Now look at Matthew 10:7, Mark 16:15 and II Timothy 4:2. Do these verses speak clearly enough about the foundational need to preach and teach Christ?

Pray For a desire to eagerly and gratefully preach the message of Gods word.

Tuesday, 5/22 In order to properly preach the word of God you must have knowledge of that word. Scripture frequently instructs us to grow in our faith. Only through a clear understanding of the things we preach will we be able to effectively communicate Gods word.

Devotional: Study II Peter 1:3-8. Here, knowledge is given the highest of priorities. In fact, the Bible states we have "everything we need...through our knowledge of him." Compare II Peter 1:8 with Joshua 1:8. Do you have Christian qualities in increasing measure? Do you meditate on Gods word?

Pray You will seek opportunities to grow in the knowledge of Gods word. That your heart and mind would meditate on those words.

Wednesday, 5/23 Even armed with knowledge of Gods word, lack of courage and conviction can prevent you from effectively preaching and teaching. In Acts 20 Paul was ready to go to Jerusalem despite the known dangers. His heart was not in keeping himself free from danger, his heart was in keeping Gods command to preach His word to all nations.

Devotional: Read Acts 20:22-25. How does your attitude about preaching compare with that of Paul? Consider the command and the promise found in Joshua 1:9.

Pray For courage and strength as you endeavor to follow the path God has laid out for you.

Thursday, 5/24 In Acts 20:28-31 Paul warns about those who will come "even from your own number...and distort the truth." Defense against these wolves comes first from a church leadership that guards the hearts and minds of the church. Just as importantly, it requires that you also be alert to false doctrine and distortions of the truth.

Devotional: Read II Peter 3:17-18. Knowledge not only helps us accurately convey the word of God, it is instrumental in keeping us correctly focused. Without knowledge we will be ineffective and unproductive Christians. Lack of understanding leaves us open to the distorted teachings of others.

Pray That the wisdom of Gods word will keep you from the danger of being led astray.

Friday, 5/25 Paul spoke often of fighting the good fight. Protected by the breastplate of righteousness and armed with the sword of the Spirit we are already conquerors. Therefore we should not stand idle.