

Bible study for this week 1/12/09~1/18/09

January 12 (Monday), 2009** { [Revelation 2:12-17](#) } Key: I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. (Revelation 2:17) "Your Name Is Safe***" Bible In One Year: [Matthew 7~11; Proverbs 5:1~14](#)

There's an old saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." It isn't true. Words can hurt us most of all.

In my case the hurtful word was "Skinny-bones," a name I was given in the 4th grade. I chuckle now when I think of it-no one would call me "Skinny-bones" these days. But back then the name wounded me. It became the way I thought of myself.

My father and mother, however, had the grace and wisdom to have given me another name, David-a name that means "beloved" in Hebrew. Despite the taunts I received on the schoolyard, I knew I was loved at home.

Perhaps you were one of those children whom people called names: "Dummy," "Idiot," "Fatso," or some other cruel epithet. Perhaps people still call you names or use your given name with contempt. I believe that God will one day give you a new name, a term of endearment known only by your heavenly Father and you ([Revelation 2:17](#)). His voice will convey tenderness, love, and acceptance. Your name is dear to Him.

As a little child once put it, "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. Your name is safe in their mouth." You-and your name-are safe with God.

Meditate: The Father knows your name-but more than that, He knows your heart and all you think and do; With Him your name is safe-that will not change-But one day He will write your name anew.

Aphorism: Your name is precious to God.

January 13 (Tuesday), 2009** { [Esther 4:10~17](#) } Key: I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish! (Esther 4:16) "The Greatest Honor***" Bible In One Year: [Psalms 3~5](#)

The king of Persia had signed a document calling for the extermination of all Jewish people under his rule. When the Jewish captive Mordecai heard the news, he challenged his niece, the newly crowned queen Esther, to plead for the lives of her people.

To approach the king uninvited could bring a sentence of death. Yet, for the sake of God's people, Esther took that risk.

During the 20th century, millions of Christians died as martyrs. This is a terrible tragedy, but we can take comfort in the knowledge that those who are killed for their devotion to Jesus die with the highest honor.

Corrie ten Boom's father saw this truth clearly. During WWII, a Dutch clergyman refused shelter to a baby, saying, "We could lose our lives for that Jewish child." Father ten Boom took the baby into his arms and said, "You say that we could lose our lives for this child. I would consider that the greatest honor that could come to my family."

Most of us will never face a test like the ten Boom family and like Esther did. But all of us can take courage from their example. They knew that there is a fate worse than death.

To die for our service to God and our love for Him is indeed the greatest honor.

Meditate: Life's labor done, as sinks the clay, Light from its load the spirit flies, While heaven and earth combine to say, "How blest the righteous when he dies!"

Aphorism: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body.” -Jesus

***January 14 (Wednesday), 2009** { [Psalm 2](#) } Key: He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. (Psalm 2:4) “*What Makes God Laugh?*” Bible In One Year: [Genesis 28~30; Proverbs 5:15~23](#)

I was washing my car one evening as the sun was preparing to kiss the earth goodnight. Glancing up, I impulsively pointed the hose at it as if to extinguish its flames. The absurdity of my action hit me, and I laughed.

Then I thought of God’s laughter in Psalm 2. Wicked nations were plotting to overthrow God’s anointed, thus ultimately opposing the Almighty Himself. But He sits in the heavens, calm and unthreatened. Man’s boldest efforts to oppose such awesome power is ludicrous. The Almighty doesn’t even rise from His throne; He just laughs in derision.

But is this a heartless or cruel laughter? No! His same infinite greatness that mocks man’s defiance also marks His sympathy for man in his lost condition. He’s the same God who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked ([Ezekiel 33:11](#)). And He was the incarnate Savior who wept over Jerusalem when His own people rejected Him ([Matthew 23:37-39](#)). He is great in judgment but also in compassion ([Exodus 34:6-7](#)).

God’s laughter gives us the assurance that Christ will ultimately triumph over evil. Any defiance of Him and His will is futile. Instead of opposing the Son, we should submit to the Lord Jesus and take refuge in Him.

Meditate: God dwells in light and holiness, In splendor and in might; It’s godly fear of His great power That helps us do what’s right.

Aphorism: Mankind’s limited potential highlights God’s limitless power.

***January 15 (Thursday), 2009** { [Psalm 4:1-5](#) } Key: Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. (Ephesians 4:26) “*No Grudges After Sunset*” Bible In One Year: [Genesis 31~33; Proverbs 6:1~11](#)

A little boy got into a fight with his brother and the whole experience left him feeling bitter. When his brother wanted to make things right, he refused to listen. In fact, he would not speak to his brother all day.

Bedtime came, and their mother said to the boy, “Don’t you think you should forgive your brother before you go to sleep? Remember, the Bible says, ‘Do not let the sun go down on your wrath’” ([Ephesians 4:26](#)). The boy looked perplexed. He thought for a few moments and then blurted out, “But how can I keep the sun from going down?”

He reminds me of some Christians. They’re angry at certain people and hold grudges. When they are confronted with their unforgiving attitude and urged to make things right, they sidestep the issue and refuse to heed the clear instruction of Scripture. True, we cannot change another person’s heart, but we are responsible for our own attitude. The Bible says, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” ([Ephesians 4:32](#)).

No, we can’t keep the sun from going down. But we can keep it from setting-on our anger. And that means we must forgive.

Meditate: Anger, malice, and ill will Can leave a stain of sorrow; Ask forgiveness by His grace Before it is tomorrow!

Aphorism: For every minute you are angry, you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

***January 16 (Friday), 2009** { [Exodus 23:1~9](#) } Key: You shall not follow a crowd to do evil;

nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice. (Exodus 23:2)“**Doing Justice**”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 34~36; Proverbs 6:12~19](#)

In the decades since the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the US national holiday established to commemorate his birth has also become a day to remember the cause in which he gave his life.

During the ‘50s and ‘60s, Dr. King led a nonviolent struggle against racial discrimination and issued a plea for the civil rights of African-Americans. His goal was justice and equality based on human dignity, not skin color.

From Old Testament days until now, God has commanded His people to exercise justice in their dealings with others. “You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice” ([Exodus 23:2](#)).

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” ([Micah 6:8](#)).

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for doing their religious duties while neglecting “justice and the love of God” ([Luke 11:42](#)).

To treat people with fairness and integrity is part of our responsibility as Christians. Standing publicly for what is right is required of us as well.

May we honor God by living out truth in action in our world today.

Meditate: Justice is the clarion call for Christians-We cannot step aside from what God said; He has told us how to treat our neighbor, And we must follow in the path He’s led.

*Aphorism:*God’s standard of justice leaves no room for prejudice.

***January17(Saturday),2009**{ [Luke 19:1~10](#) }Key: The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)“**Loving The Unlovable**”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 37~39; Proverbs 6:20~35](#)

Zacchaeus was easy to dislike. As a tax collector for an oppressive occupying government, he made himself rich by overcharging his countrymen. Yet, to the consternation of the crowd, Jesus honored him by going to his house and eating with him.

A judge with a reputation for toughness tells how he learned to relate to unlovable people. In a Sunday morning homily his clergyman urged the congregation to try to look at people through the eyes of Jesus.

A few days later the judge was about to give a stiff sentence to an arrogant young man who kept getting in trouble. But then he remembered what the minister had suggested. The judge said, “I looked this young man in the eye and told him I thought he was a bright and talented human being. And then I said to him, ‘Let’s talk together about how we can get you living in more creative and constructive ways.’ We had a surprisingly good conversation.”

Jesus saw Zacchaeus as a sinner with an empty hole that only He could fill, and through His kindness Zacchaeus was transformed. The judge could not report any such change, but who knows the long-term outcome? He set a good example for all of us, because he saw the man through the eyes of Jesus.

Meditate: We need to see through Jesus’ eyes Our neighbors who are lost; For then we will reach out to them, Regardless of the cost.

*Aphorism:*True compassion will put love into action.

***January18(Sunday),2009**{ [Galations 2:11-21](#) }Key: A man is not justified by the works of the law. (Galatians 2:16)“**Get The Point!**”Bible In One Year: [Genesis 40~42; Proverbs](#)

7:1~5

One thing you have to say about the apostle Paul-he was not a man to mince words. It didn't matter who it was-a judge, a ruler, or his fellow apostle Peter-Paul said what had to be said. In Galatians 2:16, he made the same point three times: No one is justified by the works of the law.

The law was a critical issue in the early church because many of the converts were Jews. Although they believed in Jesus, some of them just would not let go of their legalistic ways. I imagine hearing them say, "A person can't be saved unless he is circumcised and refuses to eat meat offered to idols. And no Jewish believer should ever eat with Gentiles." But Paul told them in no uncertain terms that they were wrong. Being made right with God comes by faith, not by any requirements a church or individual adds.

As the author of confusion, Satan finds all kinds of ways to corrupt the gospel by giving us the impression that faith is not enough. He plays into our desire to be in control and to do something to save ourselves-adding anything from tithing to perfect church attendance to clothing styles to entertainment choices. Each of these is important to the believer, but none is essential to salvation. The point is: Salvation is by faith.

Meditate: Lord, I know that salvation is by faith because of Your grace. Help me not to require anything else from myself or others, so that I cannot boast in my goodness-but only in Yours. Amen.

Aphorism: Justification: Our guilt gone; Christ's goodness given.