

Prayfaithfully

.....Daily Devotions

May 14 – 20, 2017

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Sunday, May 14, 2017

Text: Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.

This past summer I observed trust in action. My grandson Justin M., great-grandson Justin Z., great-granddaughter Jocelyn, granddaughter Krista, great-granddaughter Leslie and great-grandson Michael came to the Calumet area to spend time camping and visiting with my daughter.

I went up one day to spend some time with them. When we went to Lake Superior it was interesting to see how father Justin encouraged son Justin to take off his shoes and socks to walk and run on the sand. Slowly he led his son closer to the water and then into the water. The other three kids came over to where Justin Z. was wading and his father encouraged him to go farther into the water with his sister and cousins. They took good care of him. He couldn't see what was happening around him and they'd wade in the water with him. When a wave was coming to shore they'd tell him to go out of the water and then as it receded, they'd all go in the water again. It became a great game.

Before it was time to leave the lake Leslie decided she needed to pick some rocks to take to school on the first day to show to her fourth grade teacher. The other kids decided they needed rocks, too. Again they made sure Justin Z. was able to join them. Someone would make sure he "saw" nice ones to pick up.

From the lake we went to Hungarian Falls. A "leash" was put on Justin and Daddy held the other end or the middle, depending on the situation. At the top of the falls Justin had his son kneel and feel the water rushing to the edge of the cliff. They listened to the water as it dropped.

Walking down the path Justin would tell his son what was ahead: a rock, a hole, a ridge, whatever might be a hindrance to his next step. Thus Justin walked steadily down the path secure in his father's care.

Halfway down a friend of ours asked if he could hold the "leash" and help Justin. The instant response was, "No. Daddy do it."

Daddy told Justin, "It will be okay. Hal is a nice man. He likes you. He wants to help you."

“No. Daddy do it.”

“It’s okay. Hal is a good friend. He will be very careful and I’ll be right next to you. I’ll make sure nothing bad happens.”

“Okay.” And the journey to the bottom continued.

I was amazed at the faith and trust that four-year old boy had in his father. No fear or doubt as long as daddy was there. Justin Z. did not lean on his own understanding; he simply trusted daddy to take care of him.

That is the way my heavenly Father wants me to trust Him. It is the way He wants you to trust Him.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, help us to trust You with all our heart and not lean on our own understanding. You are the One who knows the future. We can take only one step at a time. Help us take it according to Your leading. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen



Monday, May 15, 2017

Text: Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who trust in Him.

Text: Psalm 150:2 & 6

Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

On March 10, the house Justin was renting burned down. Krista and all the children got out safely. Krista called him and let him know they were all safe, but the house was a total loss. When he knew everyone was safe his first words were, “God is good. God is great!”

Justin is a long distance trucker and when he is on a run, Krista and her children stay with Justin’s children. On week days Krista gets the children to school and daycare before she goes to work. When her brother is home, Krista and her children stay in their home.

On this night as soon as he heard the news, he called his boss and told him he (Justin) was turning around and going to his children. His boss called another driver to take the run.

On March 12, Justin called me and during the conversation he commented, “It is good that Krista moved and got her own house or we wouldn’t have a place to stay. God is so good.”

They are living together again whether temporarily or permanently we’ll have to wait and see. God will lead them.

Let us pray: Almighty God, Everlasting Father, thank You for leading us through every situation. Grant us the faith to follow and praise You in hard times as well as good times. In our joys and in our sorrows may we know You are with us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Text: Psalm 117

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him all you peoples! For His merciful kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!

On Wednesday night January 10, 1961, as I knelt by my bed praying, the room filled with peace fully enveloping me and remained until I fell asleep.

Thursday morning an expected telephone call from a friend was from a VA hospital doctor. I called my aunt and told her I'd be down to get her to babysit. My appearance at the hospital room doorway created anger at the doctor, "I told you not to call and worry her," heart stoppage and an adrenaline shot. After the doctor left I brought a chair next to the bed and our on again off again 28 hour or so visit began.

Friday afternoon Tom told me to go home, the kids needed me more than he did. Rather than upset him again, I went home.

Saturday morning I was back at the hospital. Tom was his normal good natured self, joking with the nurse. My thought was, "This is it." We had a good visit with normal conversation, mostly about the kids. Around noon the change began and at 10:30 he died.

Before I left the hospital, shortly after midnight, a VA official had come to the hospital and took care of all the VA and Social Security forms that needed filling and filing. Two important tasks were done.

Just as I got to the lounge my father and our friend Bill were coming in from outside. The fact that I had refused to go to answer a telephone call from Tom's sister-in-law alerted her to the seriousness of Tom's condition and she called my father. He called Bill. They arrived right to the minute. God's timing is perfect.

Bill drove home ahead of us. My father drove my car though I was sure I could have.

Sunday morning I had to tell my children. The two older ones reacted each in her own way. The youngest didn't understand and was happy I was home. Their faith was not shaken and they've never expressed anger toward God. They've had their own God-given peace experiences through the years.

Let us pray: *Lord, we pray that Your peace that passes understanding will be with all Your children during their times of difficulty and sorrow. Holy Spirit, breathe on us and encourage us to be faithful and praise God in all circumstances. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*



Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Text: Proverbs 6:4, 6

Give no sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids...Go to the ant you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise.

I was quite proud of myself this morning. I woke up extra early and went right to doing my morning exercises and thinking about Paul writing to the Corinthians, "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection" (I Corinthians 9:27a). Oh yes, I was being so good doing the rehab stretches so regularly all these five years. I was really disciplining my body and bringing it into subjection (a bit of tongue in cheek here).

When I finished, instead of being awake and energized I was still sleepy and went to bed. I slept for more than an hour. Consequently I was off schedule, unprepared for doing our project when my neighbor arrived. She was forgiving and we'll meet next week to work on it. *But*, that's a week's progress lost.

So here I am living with the consequences of a little sleep to my eyelids. Was it worthwhile? I don't think so. Now I'm rearranging my priorities so I can perform my afternoon obligations on time in an orderly fashion. With God's help I'll be able to do it.

Let us pray: *Our Father who art in heaven, thank You for having mercy on us when we fail and for giving us second chances. Help us stay alert in recognizing Your will for us and enable us to do it. May we Your church see our opportunities to serve You by serving our neighbors. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen*



Thursday, May 18, 2017

Text: Nahum 1:3b

The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm.

In the darkness of April 3 and 4, I woke to a sound almost like a train going by. It was a really strong wind blowing over and alongside of the house. Then hail assaulted the roof. I prayed that the house would not be damaged. As in times before, God's peace calmed my fears. After the wind and hail passed I fell asleep.

The kitchen clock had stopped at 1:05. Without electricity, we were without heat, lights and water. Rachel brought a five gallon bottle up from the basement, part of our emergency supply.

There were phone calls to make. Electricians would be here at 8:00 Tuesday morning. Power company men would come when the electricians were done. TV service would be back on Wednesday and the insurance adjuster would come later in the week.

The only damage to buildings was the barn door partially broken off. Trees were blown down, either uprooted or broken off, on three sides of the yard. The electric line from the pole to the house was taken down by one of the trees. Lots of clean-up work to be done when the snow and rain stop. Hopefully that will be soon.

Friends invited, insisted, we stay with them overnight. They were wonderful caring hosts. We had good fellowship, in a warm house, a delicious hot supper, comfortable beds and breakfast the next morning.

Three or four inches of snow covered the cars and ground. At home it was just below knee deep on me in front of the garage door and eight to ten inches over the open yard. All of the workers appeared as promised. The power line men were the last to leave, finishing their work at 9:30 p.m.

God does indeed have His way in the whirlwind and the storm. I see our experiences as another series of God's miracles.

“He calms the storm so its waves are still” (Psalm 107:29).

Let us pray: Thank You Almighty God that You calm the storms of our lives. Remind us when we permit turmoil to overtake us we only have to return to the security of Your presence. In Jesus' name w pray. Amen.



Friday, May 19, 2017

Text: Psalm 7:10

My defense is of God, who saves the upright.

Athena was three and a half when on the hottest day of summer four men and I were tamping concrete in the forms for the basement of our new house. I happened to see Athena gleefully riding down the hill in the stroller. I was off the form and running down the hill faster than ever in my life. Praying hard. About three-fourths of the way down, I caught up to the stroller, grabbed the handle and swung the stroller to the side of the street.

At that moment Dr. Earl, our neighbor, drove around the corner and started up the hill. A matter of a few seconds and Athena would not have been safe on the side of the street. God is good. One grateful mother pushed her daughter up the hill.

She had no idea of potential danger in riding down the hill free of any restraining hands on the handle. The stroller was there. The hill was there. No one ever told her not to do it. No one even thought of the possibility of her doing such a thing.

Have you had “just around the corner experiences”? You know, those times when you simply decided to do something without thinking about possible outcomes? Or those times when you didn’t have the experience or know how but tried to accomplish a goal and the outcome could have been dangerous because you couldn’t see around the corner, but God intervened and saved you?

Athena doesn’t remember the entire adventure. She remembers the joy of speeding down the hill, feeling the wind on her face. Even now, knowing what could have happened, she enjoys her memory of the ride and is grateful that she can.

Let us pray: *Dear Lord, as we recall times in our lives when You protected us from unpleasant results of our thoughtless actions we thank You for Your mercy on us. Help us to learn not only from our experiences but from those of other people as well. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.*



Saturday, May 20, 2017

Text: II Corinthians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.

For the past six days I’ve shared a few of the mercies God has shown to my family and me. It has been my desire to give God the glory for all He has bestowed on us. We have not deserved these mercies. We could never buy them. We could not earn them. We can only thank God for His grace, mercy and love.

While it may take hindsight a long time in some instances to see how God worked, we can learn and give thanks for the love and mercy we have received from our faithful God.

My thoughts for today go way back to my early childhood when I knew nothing about God or that He existed. My parents never spoke about God and we never went to church. Somehow without being told, I developed the idea that death was a part of life and we accept it.

My grandmother, when I stayed overnight, would have me fold my hands over my chest and repeat after her, in Finnish, “The Lord bless us and keep us.” That was it. No explanations.

As children do, early on I learned not to talk about home to my grandparents or about them to my parents. In school I learned some kids went to church on Sunday. They never said what went on there.

The nearest I came to knowing about the Bible was when we studied some psalms and parables as examples of different types of literature. Yes, they were printed in textbooks back then.

My parents moved to Detroit when I was in Pinecrest Sanatorium because I had tuberculosis. When I was discharged I was taken to live with my grandparents and my favorite aunt. There I learned about church, going every Sunday to Finnish services. When English services were introduced, once a month, I learned what my grandmother taught me. Thankfully I continued to attend church and teach Sunday School after my parents returned and I was living with them again.

Through different experiences my faith grew and continues to do so. We're never too old to learn about and grow closer to God. That is one experience I hope we share.

Receive this blessing:

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace;

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

