

EVERY DAY WITH JESUS (October 12 – October 18)

Savor a segment of the gospel each day so that you may...

“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.” “II Peter 3:18)

October 12 Luke 13:31-35 Don't you just love it when people say, “We're just looking out for your best interests” when they really mean “my best interests”? It was not too hard for Jesus or us to see through the intent behind the Pharisees' advice to Jesus. Yet note what he did, out of love for them and us, in spite of their hypocrisy, he said, “I must go on to Jerusalem and finish my work.” And he did. His was a real heartfelt concern for this people as shown by his tears and his lament, “You would not.” Jesus was concerned for and wept over those who reject him. Am I? Do I?

Prayer: Savior who weeps over those who are destroying themselves by their unbelief, give me a heart like unto yours that cares for and weeps over for those needlessly dying. Open my mouth to speak your Word to them so that by your grace and Spirit's powerful working they too may repent, turn, believe and live. Amen

October 13 For the next four days we will see “lessons at a dinner party” Today we read **Luke 14:1-6, a.** Which is easier to heal, dropsy (excessive fluid buildup in the body), or hardness of heart?¹ Why was that hardness there?²

Prayer: Healer of body and soul, work within my heart. Heal what is spiritually amiss there, that even though my body may fail, my faith does not. Amen.

¹Dropsy, because Jesus could heal that with a command. Unbelief, on the other hand, refuses to be healed even when standing in the presence of Jesus and bathed by his Word. It is sad to note how dumb ‘nature’ knows how to submit to God, but mankind does not. Such is the depth and the horror of sin. ²They hardened themselves by preferring to believe in and honor man rather than God. Thus they trusted in their own righteousness, long held traditions, and themselves. Being hardened toward God and his Word, they were hardened to a man and his need.

October 14 Luke 14:7-11, b Oh, how we love to be honored, be noticed, given the best seat in the house, and to have our ‘greatness’ acknowledged so we get the accolades we deserve. (How is it that we know how to spell ‘accolades’, when other words’ speling fails us?) Jesus' advice to us is so simple, so logical, but so hard to follow, even when we note that he did this very thing himself and we know and believe he received eternal praise for it (Philippians 2). Why is it so hard to humble self before man and God?¹

Prayer: Humble Savior, forgive my arrogance and pride that so often refuses to bow before man, let alone before you. Crush my stony cold heart with your Word and by the sight of you and your Cross. Help me be a faithful and humble student to you my Teacher and Master. Then, let me show true love and humility to all who are around me. In so doing let me honor – you. Amen.

¹The answer is quite simple; we simply love ourselves too much. That's how pathetic we are, for that reason we often can't and don't see our need for a Savior, because we think, “Others need one, but not me, I'm too good.”

October 15 Luke 14:12-14, c With whom do I spend most my time? Whom do I invite to my house, parties, and other functions? Family, friends, associates at work and church members that I get along with, you know, those that have the right *je ne sais quoi*. As for the smelly, ugly, sarcastic, rude, obnoxious, poor, uneducated, negative spirited, dim witted, disagreeable, unsocial, drunks, spineless, druggies, low class, those with ‘issues’, etc. etc. well them not so much. Well, what does Jesus have to say about that?¹

Prayer: Master, Gate Keeper of heaven, forgive me, for arrogance and pride that thinks, “I deserve,” and then drive off or ignore those who need my love and compassion more than my attitude. Open my eyes to see all that you in undeserved love, grace, have done for me; then open my eyes to see to those who need your and my love. Give me a heart that cares for them as much as you care for me. Amen.

¹Nothing good. *They* might not have the right social *je ne sais quoi*; I certainly did not have the right one spiritually. Therefore to have an attitude about ‘that group’ is to forget that Jesus did not have such an attitude about me, despite my sin and being spiritually dead. As a matter of fact it was exactly *because of* my spiritual unacceptability that he in grace came to save me, call me, invite me to be his own, and opened his house to me that I might ever live with him. In that light, to show less than the same love and concern to and for the *those* is shameful beyond description.

October 16 Luke 14:15-24, d You know, Lord, you make me uncomfortable with your dinner lessons you’ve given us in the past several days. First it was about being merciful. Then it was about seeking the lower seat. Third it was about who I should invite to parties. And now, now you are asking to see if my priorities are straight. I am uncomfortable because, no they are not always straight. You invite me, and I ignore you, or find better things to do, or just make up excuses because, well, I just would rather not be around you. I don’t like being uncomfortable, to have to look at myself and to have to admit that more often than not, - - - actually, always, you are right when you point out my sinful weakness. YOU are the great King, YOU are God. Let me not be so foolish as to ignore your invitations, or worse find something ‘better’ to do.

October 17 Luke 14:25-35 Lord, when will it stop? When will your incessant demands to have you be #1 in my life stop? “Taste and see that the Lord is good,” the psalm says. Lord, it costs a lot to taste and see that you are good. Leaving family; taking up my cross of spiritual struggle and trial by daily crucifying my flesh, saying no to the allurements of the world, saying no to satan’s offers; and on top of that renouncing all I have. Then, as previous readings said – being merciful, humble, dealing compassionately with all people, and again, having you be first in my life. Why all this pressure? Don’t you realize your words are like salt that burns my soul? Why are you doing this to me? Oh, you say, “Because I love you; as such I desire what is good for you in time and for you to be with me in eternity.” O Lord, open my ears to hear that and believe it. Keep salting me so I see and realize everything around me and in me that promises peace, but instead robs me of peace and puts me in a spiritual stupor. In your great love keep on troubling me until I find my rest in you. Then let me be salt so others are troubled until they too find rest in you. Amen

October 18 Luke 15:1-32 How joyful am I about the lost *being* found. How concerned am I that the lost *are* found? What do my prayers show? What do my actions and words about and toward the lost show? My offerings? Again, it is so incredibly easy to criticize the Pharisees and scribes in their heartless and loveless grumbling. But. . . , but at least they grumbled! So often today the lost and their hopeless, helpless and pathetic condition are simply ignored, and sadly by me. As Christians the lost are our business. D. L. Moody understood that:

"On his way home from meeting one night Mr. Moody saw a man leaning against a lamp-post. Stepping up to him and placing his hands on his shoulders, he said: "Are you a Christian?" The man flew into a rage, doubled up his fists, and it seemed for a moment as if Moody might be pitched into the gutter. "I'm very sorry if I have offended you," said Mr. Moody. "Mind your own business!" roared the man. "That is my business," Moody replied quietly, and went on his way.

Prayer: Jesus, why is it I so easily begrudge that you desire me to show the same compassion and mercy to others that you have shown to me? Why is my heart so cold and hard? Is it possibly because my love for you has grown cold that I have so little love for others? King of love, Shepherd who sought me when I was lost, kindle within me the fire of your love. Father, give me a father’s heart that aches over my dead and the lost brothers and sisters, and which rejoices when by your grace and Word’s powerful working, the dead are made alive and the lost are found. Spirit, help me to care and then share. Amen