

PRAYERS & ENCOURAGEMENT

Those who are sick or need our prayers — Joe, Turner, Kaylee Dolan, J Hughes, Linda Reagan

Continue to remember in your prayers those who are unable to attend worship services regularly: *Faye Roberts, Freda Dunn, Romona Stokes, and Marjorie Barringer, J. Hughes, Billie Sue Atkins.*

Please pray for those who have forsaken the Lord that they may be reconciled to God.

READING THE OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS IN ONE YEAR

Monday - Job 28-30; Revelation 18

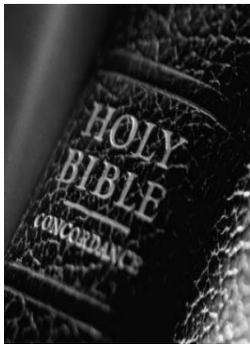
Tuesday - Job 31-33; Psalm 102; Rev 19

Wednesday - Job 34-36; Rev 20

Thursday - Job 37-39; Psalm 103; Rev 21

Friday - Job 40-42; Psalm 150; Rev 22

*Week #52
Dec. 25 – Dec. 29*



VISITORS - We would like to get to know you better, and ask that you stay a while after services. We encourage you to visit our website at <http://www.parkhillchurchofchrist.com> where you will find sermons, articles, and daily bible studies to encourage you in your daily walk with God.

QUESTIONS? *We Welcome the opportunity to study God's word with you any time.*

*All sermons are recorded on CD & DVD -
If you would like a copy, please ask one of the men.*

ELDERS

Carl Dolan....479.414.1972 ~ Ron Roberts479.452.0347 ~ Randy Sexton.....479.763.4524

DEACONS

Wayne Carson...479.648.1087 ~ Luke Dolan.....479.357.9547 ~ Joe Dugas479.629.4046 ~ David Meek.....479.459.0820 ~

PREACHER

Bryan Loughmiller.....479.434.3939

December 23, 2017

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Welcome to the Park Hill Church of Christ

3536 GRINNELL AVENUE FORT SMITH, AR 72908 479.782.2415

It is our desire to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to glorify Him in all we do.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNING

Bible Study.....9:30 am

Worship.....10:15 am

SUNDAY EVENING

Worship..... 5:00pm

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study.....7:00pm

Hope Beyond Failure



Rarely will one of God's heroes appear in scripture without experiencing failure. As soon as you read the name, you remember the story. Peter experienced the extreme highs and lows of life. From days spent in blessed fellowship with Christ, to the heart-wrenching erosion of loyalty when he denied the Lord in the temple courtyard. Not once. Not twice. But three times. Once he realized his failure, "he went out and wept bitterly" (Lk. 22:62).



Can we remember a failure that was dramatic and so tearful that we hardly need to be reminded of the feelings? "There is no pit so deep but that He is not deeper still" (Betsie ten Boom). As dark and as deep and as tragic as your failure may be, the Lord is willing to go to the depths of it with you.

This was true of Peter, too. Following the surprising warning of Satan's attack, Jesus gave Peter a statement of fact. "I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail" (Luke 22:32a). Then there was a veiled reassurance, "And you, when once you have turned again... Strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32b). Doesn't this suggest that Peter was going to fall? "Once you have turned again," Jesus said, "then use it to strengthen your brothers." He knew Peter would fall, but He prayed for him that he would not remain fallen. Jesus loved Peter – even at this point of deepest weakness.

How did He prove that love? After the resurrection, while the women were standing at the tomb, an angel told them, “Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen. He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid him. But, go tell his disciples and Peter” (Mk. 16:6-7). “Don’t forget Peter. He’s the last one who thinks that I’ll ever want to see again. Tell Peter!” What grace!

living
hope

Somewhere between the time Peter fell and this angelic announcement, there was a process during which Peter wallowed in remorse, wishing he could, if possible, correct his error. But, he could not. And somewhere in the midst of it, he heard the Lord say to him, “Peter, I forgive you. I understand. Use it to strengthen your brothers.” That is why Peter is able to write, “May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection” (1Pet. 1:2-3). Why did this mean so much to Peter? Because it was at the resurrection Peter’s name was called, and the Lord in tender mercy said, “Tell him I’ve come back.”

When Peter writes his first letter he writes as a man who has experienced great hope. By the time he wrote this letter, Peter had come to the place where he was not only back on the scene but he was aggressively engaged in the formation of the early church.



It can happen to us too. Just like fallen and forgiven Peter, we can find new hope despite our failures. Believers are born to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ for the dead (1 Pet 1:3). What tender mercy! What triumphant grace! Failure is not forever. God specializes in forgiveness and hope. He can use even your worst failures in a mighty way.

by Rickie Jenkins, via Focus Magazine Online

Ears That Do Not Hear



“But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets” (Zechariah 7:11,12).

HOW DO WE ACCOUNT FOR THE FACT THAT MANY DO NOT “HEAR” THE MESSAGE OF GOD? Out of all the thousands who personally heard Jesus speak, for example, relatively few believed Him to be speaking the truth, and out of those few even fewer actually did anything about what they said they believed. All heard the same words, but not all responded the same way. Was the message not clear enough? Was it not sufficiently convincing? Are some individuals by nature simply incapable of understanding?

These are ancient questions that go far back in the history of our world, and they have to do with the freedom of our will. The long and short of the matter is simply that we sometimes abuse our freedom in such a way that our “hearing” ceases to function. We *refuse* to hear God because His word is not agreeable to us.

To one of His less-than-receptive audiences Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life . . . I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you” (John 5:39,40,42). Some of these individuals were lifelong experts in the contents of the Scriptures, yet for all their detailed searching of the Scriptures they had not found the correct answers to their questions. They had not really “heard” what they had studied so scrupulously, and Jesus did not mince words as to the reason why: their intent was not honest.

But before we criticize people who fit this description, we need to ask whether our own hearing is as honest as it should be. If we fail to keep ourselves open to God’s message and to listen with a real intent to obey, then we will lose the ability to recognize the truth even when it is clearly and convincingly presented to us. “Therefore,” said Jesus, “take heed how you hear” (Luke 8:18).

“O my God, how does it happen in this poor world that you are so great and yet nobody finds you, that you call so loudly and yet nobody hears you, that you are so near and yet nobody feels you, that you give yourself to everybody and yet nobody knows your name? Men flee from you and say they cannot find you; they turn their backs and say they cannot see you; they stop their ears and say they cannot hear you” (Hans Denck).

Gary Henry – WordPoints.com
