

DEVOTION for PENTECOST 15

PSALM 146

**Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.**

Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.

Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is the Lord his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—the Lord, who remains faithful forever.

He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free,

**The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,
the Lord loves the righteous.**

The Lord watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but He frustrates the ways of the wicked.

The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

James 1:1-27

Faith that is pure

How does God use trials to strengthen our faith?

What can we do to stop the cycle of temptation and sin?

What is the most important thing we can do to be doers of the word?

Mark 7:24-37

Jesus heals two Gentiles

What did the testing of her faith do for the woman's faith?

Why did Jesus use saliva and touch the man's ears and tongue before healing him, instead of simply saying the word?

Why did Jesus tell people not to speak about what He had done?

“PURE RELIGION”

Religion is the way in which we express our beliefs about God. James says that a living faith in God expresses itself in love towards others, especially the neediest. He says, “*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction...*” We can't claim faith in God while abandoning our responsibility to love our brothers and sisters.

In the second chapter of this letter, he writes: “*What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can that faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*” His point being that a real and living faith, naturally expresses itself in loving actions, directed toward other human beings in terms of their physical and spiritual needs.

He is not saying that our love and acts of kindness save us. He is saying that they are signs that we are saved! Good deeds are the barometer of faith. Even as a healthy apple tree produces apples, so a living faith manifests itself in actions of love directed toward others. The fruit of faith is, “*To look after widows and orphans in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*”

“THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT”

CCLI #453681

This is my commandment that you love one another that your joy may be full. That your joy may be full.
That your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you love one another that your joy may be full.

This is my commandment that you trust one another that your joy may be full. That your joy may be full.
That your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you trust one another that your joy may be full.

This is my commandment that you serve one another that your joy may be full. That your joy may be full.
That your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you serve one another that your joy may be full.

This is my commandment that you love one another that your joy may be full. That your joy may be full.
That your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you love one another that your joy may be full.

PRAYER

Holy God, we praise you for your glory. We thank you for your love. Bless us always with faith to believe so we may continue to receive your love in Christ our Saviour. Open our hearts to the needs of others that by the power of your Holy Spirit we may help one another in our needs and build one another up in faith. In Jesus' Name. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Hebrews 13:20-21

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Bible Knowledge Quiz

What is the most difficult member of the body to control?

Why did Eutychus fall from a window while Paul talked to the Ephesian church?

What did the Lord give Paul to keep his pride in check?

Answers to last week's quiz

Sharp enough to divide soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12).

Faith is the shield by which the devil's darts are repelled and extinguished (Ephesians 6:16).

The gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15).