

Devotion for Epiphany 3

Psalm 62

**My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken.**

How long will you assault a man? Would all of you throw him down—this leaning wall, this tottering fence?

**They fully intend to topple him from his lofty place; they take delight in lies.
With their mouths they bless, but in their hearts they curse.**

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation;
He is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

**My salvation and my honor depend upon God; He is my mighty rock, my refuge.
Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.**

Lowborn men are but a breath, the highborn are but a lie; if weighed on a balance they are nothing;
together they are only a breath.

**Do not put your trust in extortion or take pride in stolen goods;
though your riches increase, do not set your hearts on them.**

One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong, and that you,
O Lord, are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done.

*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*

Corinthians 7:1-39

Marriage among Christians

- 1) Why does Paul prefer celibacy to marriage?
- 2) What responsibilities to spouses have to each other in Christ?
- 3) How do believers sanctify (make holy) unbelieving partners?

Mark 1:1-20

The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry

What is the gospel according to Jesus?

How did John prepare people for Jesus' appearance?

What caused the disciples to respond to Jesus' call immediately and completely?

“Follow Me”

Would you follow if a stranger asked you to come with her or him? It would depend in part on the circumstance. We would be more likely to follow a stranger during an emergency, when we were in danger and afraid. If a firefighter called us to follow him out of a burning house, we wouldn't worry if we knew him or not. We would follow! We would trust him, because he was a firefighter and we were in immediate danger. We would think twice if a random person on the street walked past and said, *“Follow me.”*

The disciples whom Jesus called while they were fishing on the Sea of Galilee, may have had some contact with Jesus before He called them. John indicates that some of Jesus' disciples were previously the disciples of John the Baptist, or were at least present soon after Jesus' baptism. Regardless, their response to His call seems out of proportion to their previous association with Him. They hardly knew Him and were not in immediate danger, yet they dropped everything when He called, *“Follow me.”*

Jesus' call and the immediate, total response of the four disciples, identifies Jesus as an extraordinary person (the Christ) and shows the power of His words (God's Words) to accomplish what He desires. When God called creation into existence it was done, immediately and totally. Jesus shows Himself the Son of God by the power and effect of His words, especially their effect on the human heart. When Jesus' called Simon, Andrew, James and John, responded immediately and totally.

We listen when Jesus calls, because He is the word of God (John 1:14). He speaks God's word not as a prophet, but as the Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). His words not only bid us to follow, His words empower us to follow, by creating faith in our hearts and giving the Holy Spirit to dwell within us. We follow when Jesus calls, because He has the words of eternal life.

**“COME FOLLOW ME” the Saviour Spake (Public Domain)
“Come, follow Me,” the Saviour spake, “All in My way abiding.
Deny yourselves, the world forsake, Obey My call and guiding.
O bear the cross, whatever betide, Take my example for your guide.”**

**“I am the light, I light the way, a godly life displaying;
I bid you walk as in the day; I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show how you must sojourn here below.”**

**“My heart abounds in lowliness, My soul with love is glowing;
And gracious words My lips express, with meekness overflowing.
My heart, My mind, My strength, My all, to God I yield, on Him I call.”**

**“I teach you how to shun and flee what harms your soul’s salvation,
your heart from every guile to free, from sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul and lead you to your heavenly goal.”**

**Then let us follow Christ our Lord, and take the cross appointed,
and firmly clinging to His Word, in suffering undaunted.
For those who bear the battle strain, the crown of heavenly life obtain.**

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you have called us to follow through your holy word. Grant that we may listen to your word each and every day and follow your call. May the Spirit continuously nourish our faith through the hearing of your word. Inspire us each day to listen to your voice and follow your call, in faith and faithfulness, until the day you call us to rise and share in your resurrection to a new and eternal life. In your 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 Psalm 119:105

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Bible Knowledge Quiz

How was Ruth related to King David and Jesus?

What did Samuel say when he heard the Lord calling?

What were James and John doing when Jesus called them?

Answers to last week’s quiz

Baal. 1 Kings 18:17-19

Elijah. 1 Kings 18:20-21

Fire from heaven. 1 Kings 18:37

