



# NEW YEAR SERIES

gracepoint NEW YEAR SERIES 2011

DEVOTIONS

Monday 7 February 2011

## **Created for relationship with God**

Scripture readings:

*Genesis 1 vs 26-31*

*Genesis 3 vs 8*

*Romans 8 vs 32*

*Colossians 1 vs 16*

We were created to be in relationship with God. That was His design from the very beginning and it remains true today. God created human beings to have fellowship with Him and to worship Him and when we do not engage in this relationship with Him, we are not spiritually alive.

In Genesis 3 vs 8, we read that God came to be with Adam and Eve, but because they had sinned, they were ashamed and were hiding. At the fall of humankind, relationship with God was broken and the rest of the Bible, from Genesis 3 vs 9 to Revelation 22 vs 21 is the story of what God did to restore that relationship between humanity and Himself.

Think of the price Jesus paid for your relationship with God to be restored. He sacrificed His life so that the distance between you and God could be removed and you could be in relationship with Him again. This relationship is the cry of God's heart. He is longing to speak to you and to spend time with you. He is waiting, expectantly, with open arms for you. Will you go to Him?

Tuesday 8 February 2011

## **The privilege of communion with a Holy God**

Scripture readings:

*2 Chronicles 5 vs 7*

*Matthew 27 vs 50-53*

*Hebrews 4 vs 16*

In the Old Testament, the revealed presence of God dwelled in the Ark of the Covenant, which was kept in the Holy of Holies – the innermost chamber of the temple into which only the high priest could enter once a year. The average person did not have access into the presence of God in all His holiness. When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the inner court of the temple was torn in two, symbolising that His sacrifice on our behalf gave us access into the most holy place.

The writer of Hebrews tells us that we can come boldly before the throne of grace. Those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ can come into the very throne room of God and have relationship with Him, not because we are worthy, but because Christ has allowed us to take His righteousness upon ourselves. As you talk with God today and set aside time to spend with Him, may you remember what a great privilege it is to be in that relationship and to run confidently into your Father's throne room, where He is waiting to speak to you.

Wednesday 9 February 2011

## **Time with God strengthens the inner person**

Scripture readings:

*Matthew 4 vs 4*

*Ephesians 3 vs 14-21*

We tend to spend a great deal of time and energy looking after our physical person. We try to eat right, exercise, dress well and generally ensure that our bodies are strong and healthy. How much time, however, have you spent recently ensuring that your inner person – your spirit – is strong and healthy?

When we do not engage in the discipline of setting aside time with God in which we earnestly and intentionally seek Him, our spiritual person starts to atrophy and die. When we are not feeding on the Word and engaging with God so that His word takes root in and becomes alive in us, our spirits begin to die of spiritual starvation. We desperately need fresh revelation from God to grow and to become more like Jesus. God can do abundantly more than we can ask or imagine. Are you opening yourself, through the discipline of seeking Him, to experience His abundance and miracles?

*“It is a glorious thing to get to know God in a new way in the inner chamber. It is something still greater and more glorious to know God as the all-sufficient One and to wait on His Spirit to open our hearts and minds wide to receive the great things, the new things which He really longs to bestow on those who wait for Him.” - Andrew Murray*

Thursday 10 February 2011

## Abiding in Christ

Scripture readings:

*John 15 vs 1-16*

*Galatians 5 vs 22-26*

God calls us to a fruitful life... a life that matters in light of eternity. He calls us to be people who display the fruit of the Spirit to others and who accomplish great things for Him. Jesus makes it clear in John 15, when he paints a picture of a vine for us, that in order to bear fruit – in order to do anything of real consequence – we must *abide* in Him. Without Him we can do *nothing*.

The Amplified Bible expounds on the word “abide” in this passage by adding the phrase: “being connected in vital union”. This is what it means to abide in Christ – to remain always in Him, to seek Him first, and to remain vitally connected to Him. As with any human relationship this vital connection to God requires time, commitment, communication and effort.

A quiet time is one of the primary ways we can ensure that we remain connected to God and receive from Him all that we need to bear fruit... much fruit... that will bring glory to God.

Friday 11 February 2011

## Regroup & Refocus

Scripture readings:

*Psalm 46 vs 10*

*2 Corinthians 4 vs 18*

*Hebrews 12 vs 1-2*

We live in a world that cries out for our attention every moment of every day. There are so many demands on our time and our attention that often, we feel overwhelmed and bombarded by pressures, people and problems. Our culture is screaming a million messages at us constantly from billboards, telephones, memos and meetings and so, we *must* prioritise time to become still before God. We need to stop and come before God, making sure the messages we are internalising are in line with His Truth and listening for His guidance. We need to ensure that amidst the chaos, we are listening to and seeking Him first.

A quiet time allows us to regroup and refocus. It is a time of realigning our priorities and choosing again to focus on the things that matter – the things that will last forever. It is a conscious decision to come back to a place at the feet of Jesus and to fix our eyes on Him again, rather than on earthly goals or other things that seek to distract us. With all that is clamouring for your time and attention, will you choose to put Jesus first?

*“People nowadays take time far more seriously than eternity.”*

*– Thomas Kelly*

Saturday 12 February 2011

## The still small voice

Scripture readings:

*1 Kings 19 vs 11-12*

*Jeremiah 29 vs 11-13*

We often want or expect God to speak to us in obvious, spectacular ways, but in reality, He usually speaks to us in a still, small voice. He speaks in a whisper to our hearts that we have to become quiet and still to hear.

It is in our quiet times when we seek God that we learn to hear His voice and to know His whisper. When we have earnestly and intentionally sought Him with all our hearts, we recognise His voice when He speaks to us.

Is your life ordered in such a way that you can hear and respond to the whispers of God? We need to practise the discipline of seeking God with all our hearts – intentionally, earnest and continually – so that we are able to hear and identify His still, small voice. We need to set aside time to become still before Him so that we do not miss what He wants to say to us.

Listen for the still small voice today that is speaking over your life. Hearing and responding to it makes all the difference.

*“Deepest communion with God is beyond words, on the other side of silence.” – Madeleine L’Engle*