

February 25th 2024



Luke 4:14-15: And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.
15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

“He who, through the grace of God, resists and overcomes temptation, is always bettered by it. This is one of the wonders of God’s grace, that those very things which are designed for our utter ruin he makes the instruments of our greatest good. Thus Satan is ever duped by his own proceeding, and caught in his own craft.” (Adam Clarke)

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.” (James 1:2-8)

Prayer: Pray for whatever you think you are lacking to overcome the trials and temptations by the power of the Spirit in your life, so that by trials and temptations your faith is strengthened. If you think you are lacking wisdom, pray for wisdom. If you think you are lacking faith, pray for faith. If you think you are lacking strength, pray for strength.

February 26th 2024



Luke 4:16: And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.

“Many Christians today feel that their walk with God is private and independent. They see no need for joining a church or making themselves accountable to other believers. Some view the church in terms of how it can help them accomplish the ministry God has given them personally, rather than seeking how their lives fit into the larger work the Lord is doing in the congregation. The Bible teaches that our walk with God is personal, but it is not private. Sin makes people independent. Salvation makes us interdependent on one another. Scripture teaches that the church is a body in which each member is vitally important to the others. While Christians have personal access to God through Christ as their one Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5), God created the church as His redemptive agent in the world.” (Henry & Richard Blackaby, Experience God).

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:19-25)

Prayer: Pray for Christ’s church, both the universal Church and our local expression at UBC. Pray that God will continue to lead us as a church towards His vision and purpose for us.

February 27th 2024



Luke 4:17-19: And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

“Some people picture God as a harmless doddering grandpappy in heaven. But in truth, he’s more like an impassioned young lover swinging his bride across the dance floor. Jesus didn’t arrive on earth to debate theology but to propose marriage. Christianity is wild. It’s intimate. It’s heartbreaking, and soul mending. (Steven James, *Flirting with the Forbidden* p. 89)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.” (John 8:31-38)

Prayer: Pray thanksgiving that Jesus has set you free from death, and continually sets you free from circumstances and pitfalls of this world. And pray further that you would continue to receive His saving grace in any ongoing struggles in your life.

Luke 4:20-21: 20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, **“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”**

““Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.”
(Deuteronomy 7:9)

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.
(2 Peter 3:1-17)

Prayer: Pray that your life reflects God’s faithfulness. That your attitude and actions will testify to the truth of God’s promises as we await for Jesus to return again. Pray that you will not be caught unaware but that you will live prepared for the fulfillment of God’s promise of Jesus’ return.

February 29th 2024



Luke 4:22 And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph's son?”

“The words of the Lord were uttered with such graciousness, power and conviction that the first reaction on the part of the hearers was particularly favourable and they testified to His ability. But then came the turning-point when they reflected that, after all, He was only the son of Joseph whom they had already known as an ordinary person. And so their initial enthusiasm was chilled into indifference and scepticism” (Norval Geldenhuys, Gospel of Luke, p 168).

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. (Isaiah 53:1-3)

Prayer: There is power in the ordinary - and yet we can so often be lured into laziness by routine. Yesterday seems the same as today and this week feels the same as last week. And yet God is always at work. Pray for God's power to break through the appearance of what is ordinary as God demonstrates His power through our weakness.

March 1st 2024



Luke 4:22 And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”

“If we believers choose to forget that everyone - even the shrunken soul lying in the doorway - is made in the image of God, can we say we know our Creator? If we respond to others based on their outward appearance, haven't we entirely missed the point of the gospel?” (Mike Yankoski, Under the Overpass, p.113)

“Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.” (Romans 3:27-31)

Prayer: Pray that our heart will be stirred for those on the outside. Those who we are so easy to dismiss because they seem strange and foreign, even hostile to us. Pray that our hearts will weep for the lost and pray eagerly for their salvation.

March 2nd 2024



Luke 4:28-30 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away.

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. (John 15:18-20)

Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:18-25)

Prayer: Pray for the strength to walk in Jesus’ example, as suffering servants. Embracing persecution in all forms as we bear witness to God’s love and His gospel.