

# Wake Union Baptist Church Sunday School Devotion



**Opening Prayer**

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*We thank you for your love and forgiveness, and for the help and mercies which you extend to us each day. We pray for all that are lonely, depressed, sick, or grieving and ask that they feel your comfort and know that you are near. We pray for safety during this current virus and ask that we soon be able to meet with one another again. Please use the scripture here today to strengthen and encourage us in our daily walk and to help us mature in our faith.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Welcome and Announcements**

This is now the 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of cancelled services. I miss being in church and seeing each of you.

If you have not yet received your new church directory or Sunday School literature for June, please reach out to Bart (919-556-7397) or Craig (919-556-2103).

**Memory Verses**

*<sup>1</sup>Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. **John 14:1-3***

In times of trouble I'm reminded of the words found in Romans 15:4, "...we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Our new memory verses from John 14 is such an example. For the next few weeks, I plan to consider how these 3 verses give us hope. Today we'll focus on verse 1.

**Troubling Times**

Life in this world can be hard as we're confronted with moral decay, sickness, suffering, and burdens of various types that each of us must bear. Currently the weight of this virus and our present state of social distancing just adds to our concerns, and the combination of all these can understandably cause our heart to be troubled.

*<sup>1</sup>This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. **2 Timothy 3:1***

Paul warned of ungodly behaviors and difficulties we will face "*in the last days,*" which we are living in until our Lord returns.

The book of Job is known for its lessons of suffering and how those that love God are not exempt from trouble. As Job's trial unfolds, we find:

*<sup>20</sup>Then Job arose, and rent his mantle (tore his robe), and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, <sup>21</sup>And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked*

*shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. Job 1:20-21*

Job had just learned that he had lost all his earthly possessions, including his children. His emotions showed his love for his family and his broken heart. While grief stricken, he still honors God. Job proved that people can love God for who He is, not for what He gives. Verse 21 is a good verse to recall when stressed about the economic impact of this current virus.

<sup>8</sup>*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed (crushed); we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

<sup>16</sup>*For which cause we faint not (we do not lose heart); but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; <sup>18</sup>While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:8, 16-18*

Here Paul reminds us that at the end of our rope, we are not without hope 😊. God does not abandon us. Because Jesus won the victory, we have eternal life and He provides inner strength to us through the Holy Spirit. Our present afflictions are opportunities for God to demonstrate his power and presence, opportunities for us to grow in our relationship with Him, and opportunities for us to prove and witness of our faith to others.

### **Trust in the Lord**

Psalms remind us that God never ignores our cries for help, but is a refuge in times of trouble to all that trust Him.

<sup>9</sup>*The LORD also will be a refuge (stronghold) for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*

### **Psalm 9:9**

<sup>1</sup>*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1*

May we ever trust in God's ability to save and provide the strength we need in any circumstance.

<sup>7</sup>*The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. Nahum 1:7*

It is a great comfort to know that our Heavenly Father "knoweth them that trust in him" and He knows what we need (Matthew 6:32).

<sup>39</sup>*But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.*

<sup>40</sup>*And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. Psalm 37:39-40*

It is important to remember that even as we trust God, we will not always be free from troubles as verse 39 states He is our "strength in the time of trouble." Jesus himself was troubled at times such as the death of Lazarus (John 11:33-35), when considering his betrayer (John 13:21)

and as he faced the cross (Matthew 26:37-38). However, God's love for us and our salvation is certain when we trust in Jesus' finished work at the cross.

<sup>3</sup>*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.* <sup>4</sup>*Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:*

### **Isaiah 26:3-4**

The official motto of the United States as adopted by Congress in 1956 is "In God We Trust" and many people even have this on their license plates. We should consider, is this just a slogan or our sincere heartfelt belief. When we truly trust in God, the end result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives allows us to know "*perfect peace*" even in our troubles.

### **Rest in His Peace**

<sup>27</sup>*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* **John 14:27**

Unlike worldly peace, which is generally considered as the absence of conflict, the perfect peace of God provides confident assurance in the midst of any trouble or circumstance. Here Jesus says He will give us that peace if we are willing to trust and accept it from Him.

<sup>33</sup>*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation (troubles, trials, sorrows): but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

### **John 16:33**

We must remember that this life, with its trouble, is not our final destiny. The ultimate victory has already been won, allowing us to experience eternal peace in Jesus.

<sup>6</sup>*Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication (petition) with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* **Philippians 4:6-7**

Worry is a natural reaction to trouble. Here Paul advises us to turn our worries into prayers. Stop worrying, and start praying "*with thanksgiving.*" The "*peace of God*" which the world can't understand comes from knowing God is in control, He loves us, He can be trusted, and for the believer our victory over sin is certain and our eternal destiny is secure.

<sup>1</sup>*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup>By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience (perseverance);* **Romans 5:1-3**

We enjoy the peace that comes from being reconciled to God through faith in Jesus' atoning death on the cross and "*rejoice in hope of the glory of God*"; but until then we still face troubles which we should view as opportunities that help us to grow and mature in that faith.

<sup>7</sup>*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,* **2 Thessalonians 1:7**

We can take comfort in viewing trouble as opportunities for growth, but also in knowing that Jesus will return and receive us unto himself (John 14:3).

### **Our Blessed Hope and Call to Comfort Others**

<sup>13</sup>*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; <sup>14</sup>Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar (His very own) people, zealous of good works. **Titus 2:13-14***

Christians can look forward to Jesus' return and "that blessed hope." We should meanwhile be "zealous of good works" such as sharing the Gospel with the lost (Mark 16:15) and comforting one another with the peace and hope of our Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18).

<sup>3</sup>*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; <sup>4</sup>Who comforteth us in all our tribulation (affliction), that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4***

### **Closing Prayer**

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*You know our troubles and our weaknesses. Thank you for hearing our prayers and for your help, comfort, and strength when we are troubled. May we each rest in your peace and be faithful in your service until your return.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*