

Food for Thought

For the week of July 7, 2013

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. This weekend we saw Joseph yanked out of prison with no real time to prepare for a meeting with Pharaoh, yet he was ready. Like Joseph, some of our greatest opportunities to serve God come when we least expect them. Read through the following Scriptures and write down any actions you see that could help you be ready to be used by God at any time.

1 John 1:9

Romans 6:13

Hebrews 12:1-3

1 Peter 4:1-2

Matthew 5:16

How could Philippians 3:13-14 help someone who wants to be used by God, but may feel unworthy due to their past?

2. In his first meeting with Joseph, Pharaoh commented on seeing the “spirit of God” in him. This was evidence that Joseph had come a long way from some of the poor choices of his youth where he sought to glorify himself. In the book of Acts, Peter and John give a similar example of pointing their successes to God. How could the following verses guide someone who wanted to make a strong distinction between glorifying themselves and glorifying God?

Acts 3:1-16

Acts 4:1-14

How does 1 Peter 4:11 incorporate the concept of giving God the credit as a way of witnessing to others?

3. What details emerge in the following Scriptures that point to God being at work in our lives even when we don't feel his presence?

Philippians 1:3-6

Romans 8:28

Psalms 46

Which of these verses is most encouraging to you and why?

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1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. [NIV]

Romans 6:13

13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. [NIV]

Hebrews 12:1-3

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. [NIV]

1 Peter 4:1-2

Living for God

4 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. [NIV]

Matthew 5:16

16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. [NIV]

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Philippians 3:13-14

13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. [NIV]

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Acts 3:1-16

Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

6 Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. 9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter Speaks to the Onlookers

11 While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. 12 When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. 14 You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. 15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. 16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see. [NIV]

Acts 4:1-14

Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin

1 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

5 The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest’s family. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: “By what power or what name did you do this?”

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is

“the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.”

12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

[NIV]

How does 1 Peter 4:11 incorporate the concept of giving God the credit as a way of witnessing to others?

1 Peter 4:11

11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. [NIV]

3. What details emerge in the following Scriptures that point to God being at work in our lives even when we don't feel his presence?

Philippians 1:3-6

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. [NIV]

Romans 8:28

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. [NIV]

Psalms 46

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamo. A song.

1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
3 though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
5 God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
7 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
8 Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
9 He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
11 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. [NIV]

Which of these verses is most encouraging to you and why?