

# Let's Visit

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## When Life Gets Hard

Pentecost broke upon the disciples of Jesus like a cloudless sunrise. Immediately there was a great victory that seemed relatively easy. On that very first day, 3,000 souls were added to the Lord. Then, in quick succession, other victories followed. It seemed to those early saints this young church was destined soon to conquer the world.

Yet, it did not take long for the storm clouds to gather on the horizon. Peter and John were going to the Temple at the hour of prayer. There was a lame man at the gate of the temple and Peter and John healed this man. Then, they preached from Solomon's porch. Well, the result of this miracle of healing and the preaching that followed is recorded in Acts 4:4. Dr. Luke writes, *"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand"*

This was more than the Jewish leaders could bear. Peter and John were brought before the council and commanded *"not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus"* (Acts 4:18)

So, after they had further threatened them, they let them go. Yet, look at what we read in Acts 4:23-30, *"And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the*

*Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus."*

Look especially at verse 29. *"Behold their threatening; and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word."* This experience is at once unique and universal. Life has a way of treating us in this same way. We go our trouble free and routine ways. We often are little touched by the tragedies that lay waste the lives of others. Then, suddenly the impossible happens to us. We are face to face with veils we cannot see through. We are pounding our fists at closed doors we have no key for.

Well, what did these early saints do when they were confronted by difficulty? Better still, what do we do. Be assured, others are watching to see where we take shelter in the storms of life. Often, what we do is more important than the storm itself. Our reaction to the storm determines whether the outcome is triumph or tragedy.

When the storms of life rush in, many turn to false remedies, the remedies of the world. Others,

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### In Search Of The Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry  
KSLA 12 – Shreveport -7:30 a.m. Sunday  
DISH channel 239-6:00 a.m. Sunday  
DIRECT TV channel 307 -6:00 a.m. Sunday

# Gathered Here and There



## Today's Sermon

### **"A Pious Rascal"**

**Our text comes from Genesis 32:24. It's the story of Jacob, and it shows us how a successful sinner becomes a new man.**

## **FOR THE PANTRY....**

### **Liquid Laundry Detergent**

#### **When Life Gets Hard – Continued from page 1**

refusing to surrender, grow harsh and hard. With great courage, they choose to stand and fight. Yet, all too often they fight in their own strength. Carrying on alone at times, they win a certain kind of courage, but without joy or sweetness.

Yet, others choose to follow the example of these early saints. They take their difficulties into the presence of God. When these early Christians found themselves beset by opposition, they could not meet in their own strength, they turned to God in prayer. How sane.

There are so many who make little or nothing of prayer. They do this in spite of the fact that prayer is all but universal. I doubt seriously there is anyone who has reached maturity that has not at some time prayed. That said, entirely too few of us find prayer a mighty help in the living of our daily lives.

If we are to pray effectively, one of the first essentials is a right conception of God. These people addressed him as the one who made heaven and earth and sea. They thought of Him as the God who had kindled every sun and lighted every star. In other words, to them He was a God of might and

power. He was the God for whom nothing was too hard.

Yet, notice something else about this prayer. It was a united prayer. They lifted up their voice to God with one accord. God promises great things to the man or woman of prayer. James tells us that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous is a very powerful force. Jesus tells us to pray in secret and our Father will reward us openly.

But, notice something else about this prayer, and this is important. Notice what they prayed for. We would have prayed for a change in our circumstances. We would pray that God would deliver us so we would not have to suffer.

Yet, these early saints prayed in a finer fashion than that. They prayed, "Grant to us thy servants that with all boldness we may speak thy message." They did not pray for an easy task. They prayed for strength to bravely do the task God had called them to do.

This is the kind of praying that is the most rewarding. This is the kind of praying that God delights to answer. Facing the cross, Jesus was human enough to want to escape. But there was something else that Jesus longed for even more. He longed to do the will of God. Praying for his friends that last night of his life, Jesus did not pray that they find comfort, but that they find character.

We read that when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together. They spoke the word of God with boldness and Jerusalem and the ancient world was shaken.

As we confront our dangerous and desperate day, we must face the fact that we cannot win in our own strength. Jesus says to us through our failures, "apart from me ye can do nothing". Yet, through prayer, like those saints of long ago we can become empowered. We can overcome through prayer and win great victories. We must make sure we are on praying terms with God. We do that by living God's kind of life and living it His way. We stay on praying terms with God by living our lives within the will of God. May God help us to examine our lives and be sure we are living within His will. Then we can be assured that God will hear and answer our prayers and empower us to do great things in His kingdom and in our world.

## Miscellaneous

**SUNNY GLEN CHILDREN'S HOME** -The truck from Sunny Glen Children's home will be here the week of November 19, 2020. They have specifically requested Liquid laundry Detergent specifically along with the other items we have in our pantry.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** – Sunday, December 6, 2020 we will be having a covered dish luncheon and celebrating birthdays and anniversaries for December, January and February. Make your plans to be here!

## Special Announcement

Remember, that even though we are not requiring the wearing of masks in our assembly, we do still want to do everything we can to be safe both for ourselves and for others. We would therefore ask that we all remain aware of social distancing and being respectful of other's personal space.

*-thank you*

## More Than Forgiveness

My father was fatally ill, and as I watched the precious life ebbing away, I was overcome with remorse at the thought that I must often have grieved that loving heart with my careless ingratitude and thoughtless disobedience. Penitently I begged his forgiveness for my wrongdoings in the past. With a look of ineffable love in his pain-dimmed eyes he said, "I can't remember that you ever did anything wrong." I had expected instant forgiveness but was not prepared for the full measure of pardon which I received. He could not remember my wrongs because of his great love for me. How like the Heavenly Father's love for us all. *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* (Hebrews 8:12)

*-Just A Moment*



## Those To Remember In Prayer

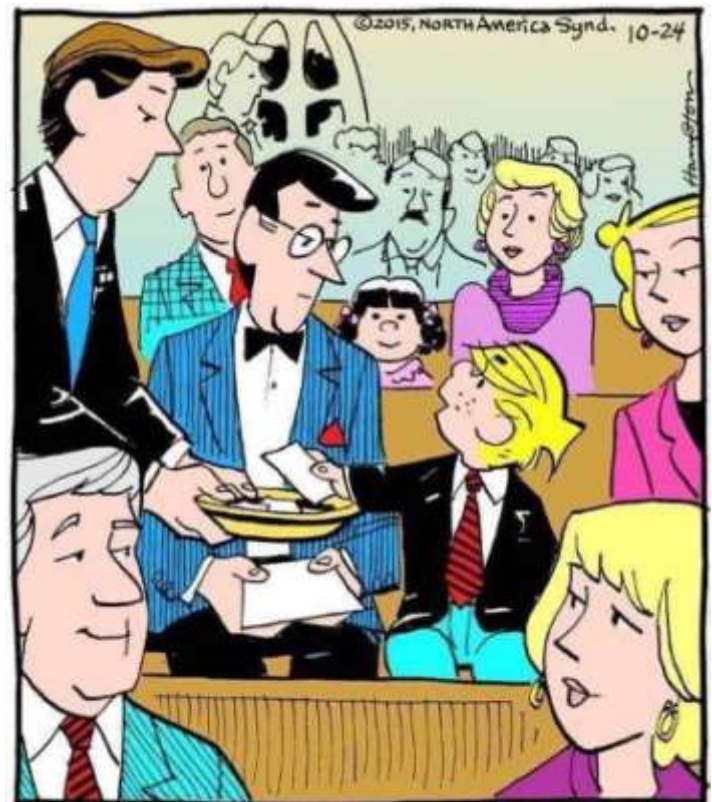
**THOSE WITH ONGOING NEEDS:**

**Roxie Bostick** (back issues), **Gene Bradshaw** (Pending surgery); **Wayne Sims** (cancer); **Cody Butler** (Debra Pate's grandson) **Gracie Elam** (2 month old baby born with heart defect) **Lamar McCormick** (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) **Pat Tate** (Jana O'Brien's mother, broken hip); **Myrtle Turner** (Norma Perkins' mother, broken arm) **Charles Williams** (Janice Williams brother-in-law, COVID 19)

**THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE :**

**Amanda Bradshaw, Andrew Bradshaw,  
Leland Bradshaw, Lucas Tate**

## On The Lighter Side.....



"CAN WE GET A REFUND IF THE SERMON ISN'T THAT GOOD?"

*When a little bird tells you something,  
don't repeat it until you find out whether or not  
the little bird is a little cuckoo.*

*Some people find fault  
as if it were buried treasure.*



## Across The Preacher's Desk

I can remember as a boy, watching the potter at work at the wheel at the old Marshall Pottery. I would stand mesmerized by the skill with which he would throw a lump of clay on the wheel and mold it into a work of art. They made many beautiful pieces of pottery in those days. They made pitchers, butter churns, strawberry pots, pickling crocks among other items. But they also made just plain, red clay flower pots.

It is the red clay flower pot I envision when I read what Paul wrote in II Corinthians 4:7. He said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." You and I are in that passage of scripture. We are the plain, red clay pots they made so many of at the pottery. Those red clay pots were nothing spectacular. They were only vessels in which to plant flowers, perhaps a beautiful lily or a magnificent hydrangea or some other flower of God's creation. With a beautiful flower in the pot, you focused on the beauty of the flower, not the vessel.

We are often easily fooled by containers. Cheap jewelry can often be found in elaborate boxes while expensive perfume may be in a plain bottle. The splendor of God can best be seen in plain settings. We must take ourselves out of the center of the stage so others can focus on the beauty of God. We are just plain, red clay pots.

*it's something to think about. . . .tbp*

**Great Churches are built with  
Commitment!**