September 2020 No. 331

**THOUGHTS FROM JEREMY**

There are few vivid memories I have from before age five. I have several memories that are triggered by certain things. One trigger of a vivid memory is a bowl of chocolate pudding. Whenever I see a bowl of chocolate pudding, I am immediately taken back to the backyard of an old farmhouse a mile south of Bethune, Colorado. I was playing outside, and my sister came out of the house eating a big bowl of pudding. In an uncharacteristically kind gesture, she offered to get me a bowl.

My sister went back into the house and came out with a large bowl of pudding for me. When I took a bite, I immediately spit it out. It was not chocolate pudding. My sister had gone into the enclosed porch just before the kitchen and mixed me up a large bowl of mud!

My sister’s deception is like Satan’s attempts to deceive us. He puts something before us with a desirable appearance, but it is something awfully bad for us. We are all tempted by different things, but all must learn how to overcome temptation.

I want to encourage us with some suggestions to help us overcome temptation. First, we must be alert and aware. Had I been more vigilant when my sister gave me the pudding, I would have observed its identity. With temptation, if we look close enough and match it up with scripture, we will realize the potential danger. **1 Peter 5:8** says, *“"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."*

Once we have identified the temptation as sin, we must resist Satan. Satan has been defeated and his only power over us is the power of deception! **James 4:7** says, *“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

Though resisting the devil can be difficult, we know it is possible because of the help God provides for us. **1 Corinthians 10:13** explains how God helps us, *“**No temptationhas overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be temptedbeyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”*

Blessings,

Jeremy

**Elder’s Corner**

***The Man in the Clouds***

*But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again, the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”* *“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked.* Mark 14:61-63

If we explore all verses related to Jesus’ second coming, it is clear that the process will be quick. However, I would theorize, that if Jesus came again and people had any opportunity to do so, they would look quizzically into the sky and take a look at their cell phones. Perhaps they would be attempting a quick Google search to figure out what is happening, or perhaps they would text a friend, asking “do you see this?”

I speak with people often who seem to know a lot, but seem to know little about Biblical teachings, even those who attend services regularly. It puzzles me, but I think this has to do with the difficulty accepting some of the harder teachings of the Bible. And since some things are hard, people may find it easier to dwell in a state of knowing a little but struggling with Christian beliefs as something that fuels the conduct of their everyday lives. Perhaps they work hard to not seem religious because to them a religious person is off in their own mental space and is deemed to many as “unrelatable.”

Would it be the case that in that instant of time when Jesus returns on the clouds, many people would see the irony of being so connected to people and information, but not being connected to the man who returns on the clouds? At that future time, the savior, who has occupied differing places in people’s lives, would be paramount, unmistakable in his supremacy. But have we put him in a space in which we feel comfortable, but not the place he is required to be?

I say this as a person who is tethered to a device almost every waking hour. As I see various religiously themed messages on Facebook, I say to myself “that’s nice” and maybe even like the post and move on. I even work for a religious organization and see religiously themed messages at various times. But this is not the same as religion as it works in real life, in your life.

So, I would suggest asking yourself how you are connected. I have a gob of wires in my attic that was supposed to be connected to a “surround sound system” that is not connected to anything. Are you connected to Jesus at all? Secondly, you could be connected to people and Jesus, but the connections are separate. I saw a home improvement show where they found plumbing that was installed, but not properly connected. Is Jesus compartmentalized into a small block of time each week and not a factor in any other facet of your life? The ideal state of connectivity is first to God and then to people and things.

So much more to say on this but keep this in mind the next time you are in a conversation with someone or looking at a sunset or making one of your epic posts on Facebook.

Vince Formica, Hurricane Sally survivor

TEEN NEWS

**Hello family! And welcome to a version of youth ministry that none of us learned about in school! It's weird! It’s different! It’s challenging! But there is still joy, so much joy, in it. If there is one thing I have observed during all of this, it is that God is not observing the quarantine. He is still very much alive, very much working, and still doing what He always does, no matter our circumstances. There is a lot going on right now, and probably a lot of things you are wondering about, so I would like to take a minute to tell you about the things we are doing!**

**First up, Sunday Night Live! Every Sunday night our teens gather (masked and distanced) for a time of fellowship. Some Sundays this includes a devotional period, some Sundays we have a virtual area wide, and the other Sundays we just hang out together!**

**Next up, Save Your Wednesday! This is our Wednesday night Bible class. We gather for individually wrapped food and study God’s Word! Currently we are studying the Gospel of Mark!**

**We are currently working out the details for our Trunk or Treat at the end of October so be on the lookout on our social media and website!**

**I am sure I am leaving something out, but I will start wrapping up here... We know that things are weird and crazy and many of our students are struggling with everything that is going on right now. That being said, I am reminded of the words of Solomon the wise, *"There's nothing new under the sun."* We are no strangers to weirdness and craziness and struggles--this is just a form of weird and crazy and struggle that we are not used to seeing. If you, your family, or your students are struggling, know that you are not alone. We are here, as always, to serve you in the best way we know how. And it is a blessing to do so.**

**Your Partner in Ministry,**

**Paul**

***From a Woman’s Point of View***

**When Paul and I made our first prenatal visit to the doctor in January of this year, we were told that Miss Adleigh’s due date was September 11th. My immediate thought was that I certainly did not want my baby to be born on such a somber day in our history, although , I knew the chances of her making it to the official due date were slim. On September 11th Miss Adleigh was already three weeks old. I did some reflecting about her “due date” and this historically significant day, September 11, 2001, was a day that sparked a “rebirth” so to speak. It was a rebirth of Patriotism, unity as a nation, loyalty to a common purpose, refection on life and relationships, and a “drawing nearer” to God for many people in the United States. Although many lives ended that day, there were many lives that began again, started over, rebooted on 9/11.**

**After the tumultuous year we have had, I am not so sure that being born on September 11, 2020, would have been a “bad” thing, as I had initially thought. Adleigh represents the hope of a better future, a life with great potential to change the world, a brand-new start of someone who is fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God. I pray that our sweet baby girl and her brothers and sister always choose to be a bright light in the face of darkness. There was a lot of darkness on September 11, 2001, much like we have experienced throughout 2020, but can we all reflect on the good and positive that sprung forth out of the grief and chaos that day? May we always remember not only those who lost their lives on that historic day, but also the way we came together to heal as one beautiful nation. My prayer is that during these trying times we remain unified as the body of Christ and seek to be the light in a dark world.**

**Tammy Wisdom**