

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 4 (January 22-28, 2017)

If I say to you, “May you rest in peace,” I’m probably standing near your grave. Actually, I **really do** want you to rest in peace in 2017, because both rest and peace are gifts that only God can give. Let’s explore that statement together in the next few weeks.

Sunday, January 22 (read Psalm 127)

In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for He grants sleep to those He loves. (Psalm 127:2)

Have you ever considered what a wonderful gift sleep is? You can go to bed exhausted and wake up refreshed, even though you didn’t contribute to the process. Actually, Psalm 127 is all about the joys of raising children. The worse thing you can do for your physical health or for your children’s emotional health is to become a workaholic, while trying to accumulate the finer things in life (v. 1-2). For the children, time with you and your spouse **are** the finer things! Your job is to thrust the children out into the world in the same way that a warrior thrusts the arrow from a bow (v. 3-5). When Satan snips the bowstring, the child is left without the proper guidance. Maybe a New Year’s resolution should be to accomplish **less** on the job in 2017, giving you time to rest your body and interact with your kids/grandkids.

Monday, January 23 (read Matthew 6:19-24)

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21)

In yesterday’s devotion, I introduced a subject (workaholic) that potentially cripples many homes. Jesus expands on that subject during the Sermon on the Mount, part of which I will use for the next two devotions. The Lord says that earthly treasures can be lost to moth, rust and thieves. Obviously, a moth can get the clothes, rust can ruin your vehicles and thieves can steal anything that’s left (v. 19-21). He tells you to focus on eternal things (v. 20), not on earthly things! Focus on the light, not the darkness (v. 22-23)! You must make a choice between serving God and serving money! You can **have** both, but you cannot **serve** both (v. 24)! How are your work ethics affecting your family? Your health? Your future? God has something to say to you!

Tuesday, January 24 (read Matthew 6:25-34)

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

What a promise we have printed above, directly from the mouth of Jesus! The Lord commands us to refrain from worrying about clothes, drinks or food, because we can observe from nature that He supplies all the needs of plants, animals and birds (v. 25-31). Can’t we trust Him to do the same for His greatest creation, mankind? The pagans run after these worldly things, because that is all the hope they have, but we should follow the command in verse 33, printed above for your convenience. “Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday,” so allow Him to supply your daily bread one day at a time (v. 34), just as He taught you to pray in Matthew 6:11.

Wednesday, January 25 (read John 14:25-27)

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27)

If you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit lives in you and promises to do two vital ministries: 1) Teach you all truths, and 2) Remind you of truths He has already taught you. Never think that you have learned everything; you've only just begun! And don't worry that your memory is not as sharp as it once was; He promises to enhance that too! What does He promise to those who will allow His Spirit to have right away in their hearts? Great question! The answer is in the printed verse above! He promises **peace** that the world cannot give or take away! He promises **peace** in the midst of your storms. I'm sure you think that you believe that. If so, what are you worried about today?

Thursday, January 26 (read Ephesians 2:13-18)

For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility . . .” (Ephesians 2:14)

Can you remember when you were far away from the Lord? Can you remember being afraid that He would come back and that you were not ready. His blood shed on Calvary united you with Him forever! He lives in you and He is your peace! It's hard to stay calm when the world seems to be caving in around you. In fact, it's impossible for you in the flesh! That's why “He Himself is our peace” (v. 14a). He removed the penalty from the law that was constantly condemning us, and replaced it with grace and truth (see John 1:17). As a result, we all now “have access to the Father by one Spirit” (v. 18). That's the message of Jesus Christ! That's the truth that will hold you steady in the worst storms of life!

Friday, January 27 (read Colossians 3:1-4)

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)

My motto for the past 15 years has been KLUFROG (Keep looking up—fully rely on God). Today's text is one of the best reminders of that concept. God's command is for both our hearts and our minds to be focused on Him. To the extent that we do that, we will have **peace** and enjoy **rest**. It took me a long time to realize that He goes before me and that He will clean up after me! I sometimes act as though I have to make something good happen, instead of depending on the One who sent me. A dead person can't accomplish a single thing (v. 3); therefore, it is time to focus on eternal matters and not on earthly things. We will be glad we did when He appears in His glory (v. 4)!

Saturday, January 28 (read Ephesians 3:14-21)

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. (Ephesians 3:14-15)

Today's reading is one of my favorite prayers recorded in the Bible. I would like for you to read it over several times, at least until it has some lasting impact on your soul. Paul wants you to understand that God's Spirit dwells in each believer through faith (v. 16-17). He wants you to know the height, depth, length and width of the love of God so that you can kneel in awe of Him as you pray to be led into His **rest** and **peace** (v. 18-19). If we could, for a moment, experience the fullness of God, we would know that He is able to do far more than we could ever ask or even imagine (v. 20-21). Will you join me in this endeavor to seek His face in 2017? If so, the best is yet to come!