TikTok Devotional Series Transcript:

April 2024

April 1, 2024 - Rewards for Generosity

Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (Romans 12:13)

What are the rewards if we trust God's promises, give lavishly, and open our homes to each other and the needy?

1. *The suffering of the saints will be relieved or at least diminished. We lift a burden. We relieve stress. We give hope. And that's a reward!*
2. *The glory of God is displayed. "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).*
3. *More thanksgiving to God is unleashed. "The ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God" (2 Corinthians 9:12).*
4. *Our love for God and his love in us is confirmed. "If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" (1 John 3:17).*
5. *Finally, we lay up treasure in heaven. "Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail. . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:33–34).*

Lavish giving and open homes are close to the centre of life in Christ. Our reward is the display of God's glory, the good of others, and the joy of treasuring Christ together forever.

April 2, 2024 - Our Great Comfort

He [Pilate] entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above." (John 19:9–11)

Pilate's authority to crucify Jesus did not intimidate Jesus. Why not? Not because Pilate was lying. Not because he didn't have authority to crucify Jesus. He did. Rather, this authority did not intimidate Jesus because it was derivative. Jesus said, "It was given to you from above." Which means it is really authoritative. Not less. But more. So, how is this not intimidating? Pilate not only has authority to kill Jesus. But he has God-given authority to kill him.

This does not intimidate Jesus because Pilate's authority over Jesus is subordinate to God's authority over Pilate. Jesus gets his comfort at this moment not because Pilate's will is powerless, but because Pilate's will is guided. Not because Jesus isn't in the hands of Pilate's fear, but because Pilate is in the hands of Jesus's Father.

Which means that our comfort comes not from the powerlessness of our enemies, but from our Father's sovereign rule over their power. This gives us our great comfort.

April 3, 2024 - Faithfulness on Earth

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Titus 2:11-12

The future must be won, and shall be won, by a renewal and development of our historic Christian liberty, by an emphasis on the fact: the basic government is the self-government of the Christian person, and by a recognition that an informed faith is the mainspring of victory. History has never been dominated by majorities, but only by dedicated minorities who stand unconditionally on their faith.

We need to sponsor a countermeasure to the prevailing trend, to promote and support, interest, and study, of a Christian Renaissance, to declare by these measures our belief that the answer to humanism and its statism is Christian faith and liberty. Our choice today is between two claimants to the throne of godhood and universal government: the state, which claims to be our shepherd, keeper, and saviour, and the Holy Trinity, our only God and Saviour. I trust you have made the right choice by both your faith and action. Your reward will be great in Heaven for your faithfulness on earth.

April 4, 2024 - Arsenal of Promises

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8)

When Paul says to put to death the deeds of the body "by the Spirit" (Romans 8:13), he means that we should use the one weapon in the Spirit's armour that is used to kill; namely, the sword, *"which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).*

Having promises at hand that suit the temptation of the hour is one key to successful warfare against sin. But there are times when we don't have a perfectly suited word from God in our minds. And there is no time to look through the Bible for a tailor-made promise. So, we all need to have a small arsenal of general promises ready to use whenever fear or craving threaten to lead us astray.

Here are four promises in fighting against sin:

Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Philippians 4:19, "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

And the promise implicit in Philippians 3:8, *"I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."*

Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Be constantly adding to your arsenal of promises. But never lose sight of the chosen few that God has blessed in your life.

April 5, 20224- Struggle for Holiness

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power. (2 Thessalonians 1:11)

Seeking the power of God to fulfill our good resolves does not mean that we don't really resolve, or that we don't really use willpower. The engagement of God's power never takes the place of the engagement of our

will! The power of God in sanctification never makes us passive! The power of God engages itself beneath, behind and within our will, not in place of our will.

The evidence of God's power in our lives is not the absence of our willing, but the strength of our willing, the joy of our willing. Anyone who says, "Well, I believe in the sovereignty of God and so I will just sit back and do nothing" does not really believe in the sovereignty of God. For why would someone who believes in God's sovereignty so blatantly disobey him?

When you sit back to do nothing, you are not doing nothing. You are actively engaging your will in a decision to sit back. And if that is the way you handle sin or temptation in your life, it is blatant disobedience, because we are commanded to wage a good warfare (1 Timothy 1:18) and resist the devil (James 4:7) and strive for holiness (Hebrews 12:14) and put to death the sinful acts of the body (Romans 8:13). People who believe in the sovereignty of God must not fear to engage their wills in the struggle for holiness.

April 6, 2024 - Doing Good to Them

"I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. . . . I will rejoice in doing them good." (Jeremiah 32:40–41)

This is one of those promises of God that I come back to again and again when I get discouraged. Can you think of any fact more encouraging than that God rejoices to do you good? Not just does you good. Not just is committed to doing you good — glorious as that is. But that he rejoices to do you good.

He doesn't begrudgingly fulfill the promise in Romans 8:28 to work everything together for our good. It is his joy to do you good. And not just sometimes. Always! There are no lapses in his commitment or in his joy in doing good to his children — to those who trust him.

That should make us so glad! But sometimes it is hard to be glad. Our situation is so hard to bear that we just can't muster any joy. You look your hopeless situation in the face and say, "You are not as strong as God! He can do the impossible. And I know he loves to do it for those who trust him. So, hopelessness, you will not have the last say. I trust God!"

God has always been faithful to guard that little spark of faith and eventually he fans it into a flame of happiness and full confidence. Oh, how glad we should be that what makes the heart of almighty God happy includes doing good for you and me!

April 7, 2024 - Turn from Self

"They do all their deeds to be seen by others. . . . They love the place of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others." (Matthew 23:5–7)

The itch of self-regard craves the scratch of self-approval. If we are getting our pleasure from feeling self-sufficient, we will not be satisfied without others seeing and applauding our self-sufficiency.

This is ironic. Wouldn't you think that self-sufficiency should free the proud person from the need to be made much of by others? That's what "sufficient" means. But evidently there is an emptiness in this so-called self-sufficiency.

The self was never designed to satisfy itself or rely upon itself. It never can be self-sufficient. We are not God. We are in the image of God. And what makes us "like" God is not our self-sufficiency. We are shadows and echoes. So, there will always be an emptiness in the soul that struggles to be satisfied with the resources of self.

This empty craving for the praise of others signals the failure of pride and the absence of faith in God's ongoing grace. Faith looks away from self to God. Faith is being satisfied with all that God is for you in Jesus.

If you would turn from self as the source of satisfaction (repentance), and come to Jesus for the enjoyment of all that God is for us in him (faith), then the itch of emptiness would be replaced by a fullness — what Jesus calls "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14).

April 8, 2024 - The Everlasting Arms

"The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deuteronomy 33:27)

You may be going through things right now that are painfully preparing you for some precious service to Jesus and to his people. When a person strikes rock bottom with a sense of nothingness or helplessness, he may find that he has struck the Rock of Ages. Remember this delicious sentence from Psalm 138:6: "Though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly."

You cannot sink so low in despairing of your own resources that God does not see and care. In fact, he is at the bottom waiting to catch you. Yes, he sees you trembling and slipping. He could (and often did) grab you before you hit bottom. But this time he has some new lessons to teach.

The psalmist said in Psalm 119:71, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes." He does not say it was easy or fun or pleasant. In retrospect, he simply says, "It was good for me."

Often only the wounded soldiers can serve. That's why I believe some of you are being prepared right now for some precious service of love. Because you are being wounded. Do not think that your wound has come to you apart from God's gracious design. Remember his word: "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me . . . I wound and I heal" (Deuteronomy 32:39).

May God grant a special grace to you who are groaning under some burden. Look eagerly for the new tenderness of love that God is imparting to you the everlasting arms will catch you.

April 9, 2024 - We Might Have Hope

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

How can we experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our church and ourselves that fills us with indomitable joy and frees us, and empowers us, to love those around us in ways so authentic that they are won to Christ? Answer: Meditate day and night upon the incomparable, hope-giving promises of God.

The full assurance of hope comes from meditating on the promises of God's word. And this does not contradict the sentence nine verses later that says that the Holy Spirit gives us hope (Romans 15:13). This is because the Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture. His word is the means of his work. It is no contradiction that the way he fills us with hope is by filling us with his own word of promise.

Hope is not some vague emotion that comes out of nowhere, like a stomachache. Hope is the confidence that the stupendous future promised to us by the word of the Spirit is going to really come true. Therefore, the way to be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with his word. The way to have the power of the Spirit is to believe the promises of his word.

For it is the word of promise that fills us with hope, and hope fills us with joy, and joy overflows in the power and freedom to love our neighbour.

April 10, 2024 - Spark into a Flame

A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench. (Isaiah 42:3)

Do you feel like "a bruised reed"? Do you ever feel like your faith is just a little spark instead of a flame — like that little red dot at the end of the wick after you blow out the birthday candle? Take heart! The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of encouragement: he will not snap off your flower; he will not snuff out your spark.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . . to proclaim good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). "The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings" (Malachi 4:2). "[He is] gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

It may be a grief to us that we are only a spark instead of a flaming fire. But listen! And be encouraged: Yes, there is a big difference between a spark and a fire. But there is an infinite difference between a spark and no spark! A mustard seed of faith is infinitely closer to being a mountain of faith than it is to being no faith.

Open the window of God's promises and let the Spirit blow into every room of your heart. The Holy Wind of God will not break or quench. He will lift up your head and fan your spark into a flame.

April 11, 2024 - Humble Yourselves

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:6–7)

Why is anxiety about the future a form of pride?

God's answer would sound something like this (paraphrasing Isaiah 51:12):

I — the Lord, your Maker — I am he who comforts you, who promises to take care of you; and those who threaten you are mere men who die. So, your fear must mean that you do not trust me — and even though you are not sure that your own resources will take care of you, yet you opt for fragile self-reliance, rather than faith in my grace. So, all your trembling — weak as it is — reveals pride.

The remedy? Turn from self-reliance to God-reliance and put your faith in the all-sufficient power of the promise of his grace.

Casting your anxieties on God is a way of humbling yourself under God's mighty hand. One way to humble ourselves is to cast all our anxieties on God. Which means that one hindrance to casting your anxieties on God is pride. Which means that undue worry is a form of pride. No matter how weak it looks or feels, so humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.

April 12, 2024 - The Lamb who was Slain

I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. (Revelation 5:4)

Have you ever thought of your prayers as the aroma of heaven? This is the picture we get when we read Revelation 5. Here is a glimpse of life in heaven. In Revelation 5, we see God almighty on the throne with a scroll in his hand. The scroll had seven seals. They all had to be pulled off before the scroll could be opened.

The golden bowls of incense in Revelation 5:8 are "the prayers of the saints." Our prayers are the aroma of heaven, sweet smelling before the throne of God and before the Lamb.

I am strengthened and encouraged to pray all the more often and all the more vigorously when I think that my prayers are being assembled and stored up in heaven and offered to Christ repeatedly in heavenly acts of worship.

Let's all bless and honour and adore Christ here below with our prayers, and then doubly rejoice that the worship council of heaven offers them again to Christ as sweet smelling incense before the Lamb who was slain.

April 13, 2024 - Mercy and Sovereignty

" . . . declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.'" (Isaiah 46:10)

The word "sovereignty" (like the word "Trinity") does not occur in the Bible. We use it to refer to this truth: God is in ultimate control of the world from the largest international intrigue to the smallest bird-fall in the forest.

Here is how the Bible puts it: "I am God, and there is no other. . . . 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose'" (Isaiah 46:9–10). And: "[God] does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35). And: "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases" (Psalm 115:3).

One reason this doctrine is so precious to believers is that we know that God's great desire is to show mercy and kindness to those who trust him (Ephesians 2:7; Psalm 37:3–7; Proverbs 29:25). God's sovereignty means that this design for us cannot be frustrated. It cannot fail.

Nothing, absolutely nothing, befalls those "who love God" and "are called according to his purpose" but what is for our deepest and highest and longest good (Romans 8:28; Psalm 84:11).

The mercy and the sovereignty of God should be the twin pillars of our lives. They are the hope of our future, the energy of our service, the best medicine in all our sicknesses, the remedy of all our discouragements.

April 14, 2024 - The Lord Is for Us

"Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles'?" (Isaiah 45:9)

The majesty of God is magnified when we see him through the lens of creation ex nihilo (out of nothing). He commands nothingness, and it obeys and becomes something.

Out of nothing he makes the clay, and out of the clay he makes us — the pottery of the Lord (Isaiah 45:9) — his possession, destined for his glory, in total dependence on him.

"Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psalm 100:3). It is a humbling thing to be a sheep and a pot that belong to somebody else.

In Isaiah there is another statement about God's majesty. Isaiah 33:21 says, "The Lord in majesty will be for us!" For us! The Creator is for us and not against us. With all the power in the universe and with absolute right to do as he pleases with what he made — he is for us!

“No eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him” (Isaiah 64:4). “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). Can you think of anything that is more comforting and assuring and delighting than that the Lord in his majesty is for you?

April 15, 2024 - Truth in Love

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15

Gemini Is Biased (and Lies About It). Google continues to face criticism for the implicit bias evident on its AI Platform Gemini. When asked to create images of Vikings or nineteenth century U.S. senators, Gemini generated images of people of all races except those who were actually Vikings and nineteenth century U.S. senators.

When asked by a reporter to generate content related to the abortion debate, Gemini refused to generate content that argued against abortion and for life, claiming it could not generate images or content of “sensitive or controversial topics.” However, when asked to generate depictions of pro-abortion rallies or in praise of pro-abortion writers, Gemini quickly generated the requested content.

Not only is Gemini biased, it lies about being biased. But the problem goes beyond programming. Gemini reveals that AI is not necessarily “intelligent” or committed to telling the truth. We though need to speak the truth as revealed in the Bible in love.

April 16, 2024 - Yes to God

All the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. (2 Corinthians 1:20)

Prayer is the place where the past and future are linked repeatedly in our lives. Paul links prayer with God’s Yes in this verse in a striking way. Therefore, because of Christ, we say Amen to God in our prayers to show that God gets the glory for the grace we are asking for and counting on when we pray.

If you’ve ever wondered why Christians say Amen at the end of our prayers, and where that custom comes from, here’s the answer. Amen is a word taken straight over into Greek from Hebrew without any translation, just like it has come into English and most other languages without any translation.

In Hebrew, it was a very strong affirmation (see Numbers 5:22; Nehemiah 5:13; 8:6) — a formal, solemn, earnest “I agree,” or “I affirm what was just said,” or “This is true.” Most simply, “Amen” means a very earnest Yes in the context of addressing God.

Now notice the connection between the two halves of our verse. When we realize that “Amen” and “Yes” mean the same thing, here’s what the verse says: In Jesus Christ God says his Yes to us through his promises; and in Christ we say our Yes to God through prayer.

April 17, 2024 - Triumph Is Sure

Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. (Isaiah 25:3)

Isaiah sees the day coming when all the nations — representatives from all the people groups — will no longer be at odds with Yahweh, the God of Israel and his Messiah, whom we know to be Jesus.

They will no longer worship Bel or Nebo or Molech or Allah or Buddha or utopian social programs or ancestors or animistic spirits. Instead they will come in faith to the banquet on God's mountain. The veil of sorrow will be removed and death shall be swallowed up and the reproach of God's people will be removed and tears shall be gone forever.

That's the setting for understanding the vision, God is stronger than the "strong peoples" and he is so powerful and so gracious that in the end he will turn ruthless nations to revere him.

The picture Isaiah gives us is one of all nations turned to God in worship, a great banquet for all the peoples, the removal of all suffering and grief and reproach from the nations, who have become his people, and the final putting away of death forever. This triumph is sure because God is doing it and we can be certain of it.

Not one life spent in the cause of world evangelization is spent in vain. Not one prayer or one dollar or one sermon or one letter of encouragement or one little light shining in some dark place — nothing in the cause of this advancing kingdom is in vain. The triumph is sure.

April 18, 2024 - Steward His Resources

The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. Romans 8:21

Seeing the world as God's creation, unlike secular environmentalists, Christians understand that this dazzling world we live in is no accident, but the handiwork of a Divine artist. Christian hope encourages us to love the creation for the sake of the one who made it. God called His handiwork "very good," and throughout Scripture, the majesty of this world is treated as a signpost pointing back to its Maker. Nothing in secular environmentalism parallels this or confers objective value on nature.

Christianity also assigns human beings a special place in creation, unlike secular accounts of history that often treat humans as a rogue species or a virus. In fact, Scripture portrays human beings as God's appointed stewards who not only belong in the world but have a vital role to play. We're not just another animal. We are the Creator's own representatives, "crowned with glory and honour" and responsible for tending His Garden and everything living in it.

Though the Fall of humans damaged God's creation and made our role as stewards much harder to fulfill, it never changed our job description. Nor is it the end of the biblical story. Not only does Christianity place real value on creation and real responsibility on humanity, but it promises that God's world will not be in bondage to futility forever. Creation has a bright future, not annihilation but miraculous renewal, and this long-term hope should motivate our everyday obedience to God's command to steward His resources wisely, not recklessly.

April 19, 2024 - Before the Time

When Jesus met the man filled with demons at Gadara, the demons cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" (Matthew 8:29)

Demons learned a mystery here. They knew they were doomed. They knew the Son of God would be the victor. But they didn't know until it happened that Christ was coming before the time of final defeat.

Christ is not going to wait for the end of the war to lead his troops into combat. He has begun to lead a subversive force into the territory of Satan. He has trained a "life-squad" to perform daring rescue operations. Christ has plotted many tactical victories before the time of the final strategic victory.

The resulting wartime mentality is this: Since Satan's doom is sure, and he knows it, we can always remind him of it when he tempts us to follow him. We can laugh and say, "You're out of your mind. Who wants to join forces with a loser?!" The church is the liberated enemy of Satan. We are the guerrillas. We are the insurgency against the rebel kingdom of "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2).

It is not safe. But it is thrilling. Many lives are lost. Satan's forces are ever on the lookout for our subversive activity. Christ has guaranteed resurrection for all who fight to the death. But he has not guaranteed comfort, or acceptance from the world, or prosperity in enemy territory. Many have gladly given their lives behind the lines running errands for the Commander before the time of final victory.

April 20, 2024 - It Cannot Fail

"This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14)

I don't know of any more inspiring missionary promise than this word from Jesus. Not: This gospel should be preached. Not: This gospel might be preached. But: This gospel will be preached. Rather than a great commission or a great commandment it is a great certainty, a great confidence. Who can dare talk like that? How does he know it will? How can he be sure the church will not fail in its missionary task?

Answer: The grace of missionary service is as irresistible as the grace of regeneration. Christ can promise universal proclamation because he is sovereign. He knows the future success of missions because he makes the future. All the nations will hear!

A "nation" is not a modern "country." "Nations" are ethnic groups with their own peculiar language and culture. Psalm 117:1: "Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!" Nations are peoples — people groups, as we call them.

As the sovereign Son of God and Lord of the church, Jesus simply took up this divine purpose and stated as an absolute certainty.

The cause of world missions is absolutely assured of success. It cannot fail. Is it not reasonable, then, that we pray with great faith, that we invest with great confidence, and that we go with a sense of sure triumph knowing that it cannot fail.

April 21, 2024 - Prayer for Help

All the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. (2 Corinthians 1:20)

Prayer is a response to promises, that is, to the assurances of God's grace. Prayer is drawing on the account where God has deposited all his stores of grace.

Prayer is not hoping in the dark that there might be a God of good intentions out there. Prayer banks on the promise of God and goes to the bank every day and draws on stores of grace needed for that day.

Don't miss the connection between the two halves of this great verse. Notice the "that is why". To make sure we see it, let's turn the two halves around: When we pray, we say Amen to God through Christ, because God has said a decisive Amen to all his promises in Christ. Prayer is the confident plea for God to make good on his promises of grace — for Christ's sake. Prayer links our faith in grace with the foundation of it all, Jesus Christ.

Which leads to the final point: “Amen” is a full and precious word in times of prayer. It doesn’t mean primarily, “Yes, I have now said this prayer.” It means primarily, “Yes, God has made all these promises.”

Amen means, “Yes, Lord, you can do it.” “Yes, Lord, you are powerful. Yes, Lord, you are wise. Yes, Lord, you are merciful. Yes, Lord, all grace comes from you and has been confirmed in Christ.” “Amen” is an exclamation point of hope and warranted confidence after a prayer for help.

April 22, 2024 - Know the Truth

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:32

Compromising truth for the sake of peer pressure doesn’t bring clarity. It only reinforces a murky view of the world. As C.S. Lewis warned, “If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end: if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth—only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin with and, in the end, despair.”

Lewis’ words are a necessary rebuke in our culture, too. Truth is objective, that which corresponds to what is real and ultimately grounded in the God who made the world and reveals what is true to humanity. To help students rightly understand the world in which we live, educators must first acknowledge the reality of the God who created the world and the objective basis for truth that He provides.

The surge in enrolment in Christian education over the past few years is an encouraging sign. In fact, both parents and educators have moved en masse from state-run options to private, Christian ones, a move that seems to point to a shifting mood about education itself as more seek to know the truth.

April 23, 2024 - Freedom Requires Virtue

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge. 2 Peter 1:5

In a new book called The Big Fail: What the Pandemic Revealed About Who America Protects and Who It Leaves Behind, reporter Joe Nocera painted a less-than-flattering picture of the way many American industries, from banking to healthcare, handled the COVID-19 pandemic.

Particularly troubling is his account of the for-profit hospitals. For example, The Wall Street Journal reported that hospitals in wealthy neighbourhoods of Los Angeles routinely refused to accept transfer patients from overrun community hospitals, not because they didn’t have any beds available but to save money. According to the head of a community hospital in LA’s south side, her hospital treated more COVID patients than wealthier hospitals four times their size.

Edmund Burke famously wrote, “It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free.”

For a market economy to remain free, businesses must operate with moral clarity. People must not be sacrificed for profit. What’s true for individuals is just as true for industries. We cannot serve both God and money

April 24, 2024 - Prayer and Action

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in

every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Recently, an X user tweeted a quote from the famous founder of the American Atheists, Madalyn Murray O'Hair: An atheist believes that a hospital should be built instead of a church. An atheist believes that a deed must be done instead of a prayer said. An atheist strives for involvement in life and not escape into death. He wants disease conquered, poverty vanquished, war eliminated.

This is most puzzling since Christians actually invented the hospital. We can also thank Christians for abolishing slavery, safeguarding and expanding education, and for countless contributions in physics, mathematics, and literature. Some even did it while also writing hymns.

Studies show that atheists are actually less likely to be civically engaged than their Christian counterparts. Christianity is a faith of action. After all, we believe that God created people to care for this world, and that in Jesus we are restored. Christians don't choose between deeds and prayers. We do both, Prayer and Action.

April 25, 2024 - Hold Fast Our Hope

When God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. (Hebrews 6:17–18)

God is not inconsistent. He does not exert himself with promises, and oaths, and the blood of his Son, simply to anchor down one end of our security while leaving the other to dangle in the air. The salvation Jesus obtained by his blood was everything it takes to save his people, not just part of it.

So, we are prone to ask, Why does the writer encourage us to hold fast to our hope? If our holding fast was obtained and irrevocably secured by the blood of Jesus which it was— then why does God tell us to hold fast?

The answer is this:

- What Christ bought for us when he died was not the freedom from having to hold fast, but the enabling power to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the nullification of our wills as though we didn't have to hold fast, but the empowering of our wills so that we want to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the cancelling of the commandment to hold fast, but the fulfillment of the commandment to hold fast.
- What he bought was not the end of exhortation, but the triumph of exhortation. So Hold Fast to our Hope.

April 26, 2024 - Free to Preach

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 2 Timothy 4:2

In a win for religious freedom, a U.K.-based pastor has won a settlement against local police who ordered him to stop "passing comments on any other religion or comparing them to Christianity."

Dia Moodley originally sought police protection after he was targeted with racial abuse. Officers attended his public preaching as a measure of protection but then issued him a warning.

Moodley stated, It isn't for the police to decide which religions or worldviews can be free from criticism. ... I am committed to speaking about the good news of Christianity in love, grace, and truth. ... The nature of a free and democratic society is that we can speak publicly about our beliefs.

Religious freedom is not just freedom to believe, but the freedom to speak and live in accordance with that belief. Our brothers and sisters around the world need our prayers, even in places like the United Kingdom, a place that used to protect religious freedom and you were free to preach.

April 27, 2024 - The Gospel

Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. (1 Peter 3:18)

Here's a summary of the gospel to help you understand it and enjoy it and share it!

1) God created us for his glory. "Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory" (Isaiah 43:6–7). God made all of us in his own image so that we would reflect his character and moral beauty.

2) Therefore every human should live for God's glory. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

3) "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). None of us has loved or trusted or thanked or obeyed or treasured God as we ought.

4) Therefore we all deserve eternal punishment. "The wages of sin is (eternal) death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

5) Yet, in his great mercy, God sent his only Son Jesus Christ into the world to provide for sinners the way of eternal life. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

6) Therefore eternal life is a free gift to all who will trust in Christ as Lord and Savior and supreme Treasure of their lives. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

April 28, 2024 - Same April 25

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April 29, 2024 - Profoundly Powerful

What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. Psalm 8:4

Today many people stand on the edge of something wonderful, in a world full of God-given wonder, but cannot look outside themselves long enough to figure out that it's really not about us. In our world of constructed selves, imaginary gods, and purposelessness, the true imagination withers and dies.

C.S. Lewis understood what is required to shape the imagination. “In reading great literature, I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. The man who is contented to be only himself, and therefore less a self, is in prison.” Lewis sensed a true grappling with what he called “the roughness and density of life.” How to account for things like personhood, good, evil, purpose, and meaning. By contrast, atheists like Shaw, Wells, and Mills seemed surprisingly thin to Lewis. Faced with “a desire nothing on Earth could satisfy,” Lewis concluded he was made for another, better world.

A revival of Christian imagination is desperately needed today. Not only because the next C.S. Lewis could be out there, but because imagination points to a vital aspect of what it means to be human. Only humans mirror the Creator in this way, with the ability to imagine what is not there and make it so. God, of course, created the world ex nihilo, out of nothing. We don’t have that kind of power, but we do have the capacity to create, and our words, too, are profoundly powerful.

April 30, 2024 - Grace Can Never Fail

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)

The most far-reaching promise of God’s grace is found here. This is one of the most precious verses in the Bible. Part of the reason is that the promise in it is so all-encompassing that it stands ready to help at virtually every turn in life. There never has been, and never will be, a circumstance in our lives where this promise is irrelevant.

By itself that all-encompassing promise would probably not make the verse so precious. There are other such sweeping promises such as Psalm 84:11: “No good thing does [God] withhold from those who walk uprightly.” It is difficult to overstate the spectacular sweep and scope of God’s promises.

But what puts Romans 8:32 in a class by itself is the logic that gives rise to the promise and makes it as solid and unshakable as God’s love for his infinitely admirable Son.

Romans 8:32 contains a foundation and guarantee that is so strong and so solid and so secure that there is absolutely no possibility that the promise could ever be broken. This is what makes it an ever-present strength in times of great turmoil. Whatever else gives way, whatever else disappoints, whatever else fails, this all-encompassing promise of grace can never fail.