

WHATCHA GONNA DO?

By Stacy Perkins

SCRIPTURE

James 1:27

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Psalm 41:1-3

“Blessed is the one who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble. The Lord will protect him and preserve his life; He will bless him in the land and not surrender him to his foes. The Lord will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness.”

OBSERVATION

These two scriptures focus on what is really important, encouraging us to live lives that reflect what God would have us do on a daily basis. Earlier in James 1, we are told that a man who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks in the mirror and then turns away from it, only to forget what he saw! But anyone who looks (stoops down and peers) into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does! Psalm 41 says that we will be blessed by helping those in need, and then follows with some of the promises of God we can cling to.

We are living in such uncertain times. Uncertain how this coronavirus, COVID-19, will affect us individually, as families, in our work, our social life, our church gatherings and fellowship, our finances, our country and then the world as a whole! But God...we MUST NOT forget those two words! Our God is in control of all of this, and we can trust Him perfectly. He never fails, and He wants us to lean on Him and draw near to Him in these days. We have the opportunity to show and share His love to so many who don't know this God of ours, the Great Creator, the Savior of the world! I believe He is giving us a window of opportunity to do what our church has adopted as a motto for these days— “We obey Christ by sacrificially serving others for gospel advancement.” Christ Himself came to serve, not be served, and gave His own life as ransom for us all! (Mark 10:45) That is a challenge to all of us on the Hill to be looking for those who are suffering during this time of crisis and help them however we can.

OBEDIENCE

The great evangelist Vance Havner said, “I used to say that civilization has gone to the dogs, but I have quit saying this out of respect for the dogs.” I can see what he means when I look around me and see all the ugly stuff the world has to offer. But I also see the incredible need of a world full of people who are lost and wandering, looking for peace, security, acceptance, hope and love. Our God offers all these and infinitely more. How do we get that word to the people?

First, I believe we meet people at their point of critical need. If they are hungry, feed them. If they need clothes, go to your closet and clothe them. If they have a physical need of any sort, don’t ask, just DO! Rarely will you get a reprimand from someone for doing something kind for them. Try it...

Second, as you are striving to meet their need, just share with them that you are doing this because you love the Lord and He has told us as believers to do it. Tell them this is from the Lord, and you are just His hands and feet. That speaks volumes to them about why you are helping them, and it also shows them that you “practice what you preach.” Gospel in action...

Next, take time to ask them if you can pray with them. If they say no, you can always tell them that you will be praying for them on your own and that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their life. Find a copy of God’s Word and give it to them if they don’t have one. Gideons International is a wonderful resource for receiving a copy of God’s Word to give to someone else. Underline your favorite scripture and share it with them and tell why it is so important to you. You are then showing them that you believe in God’s Word and trust it to guide your life. It is then that you might even have the opportunity to share the gospel with them. Use the Roman Road as an initial basic tool for sharing Christ. (Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10, 10:13, 10:17)

Lastly (at least for this devotion!), invite them to join us on the Hill. Tell them why you love to be here when we gather (at least when we are able to—online is our option right now, but we WILL meet again!) and tell them you will pick them up or meet them here and sit with them. We want them to feel welcomed and accepted as they come to experience LIFE on the Hill!

Our God is with us, for us and guiding us. Let’s do as these verses are telling us—look for those in need and help them—they are out there! Oh, yeah and about those promises—we will be delivered, protected, preserved, blessed, sustained and restored! Hallelujah! What a Savior!

PRAYER

Lord, we pray today for so many who are hurting, both in our church body and in our community. I pray that we will be obedient to Your Word and find ways to help these people however we can. Give us resources and strength to meet those needs in the name

of Jesus, showing people that we really do care about them. You cared enough for us to save us from our sins and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness through Your sacrifice on the cross. What is it that we can do to show others what You have done for us and how grateful we are? Guide us so that we can be Your hands and feet, Your mouthpiece and Your heart to a lost and dying world. Thank You for all you do for us and for supplying all our needs through Your riches in Christ Jesus. Help us to rely on You and not ourselves. We pray for our national, state and local leadership in the hard decisions they are having to make to help us stay safe in these critical days. May our nation be a shining light for the world to see as we reach out to the everlasting God and depend on You to preserve us.

Lord, as we forge ahead, may we do as the hymnwriter said so eloquently, “When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory He sheds on our way! Let us do His good will; He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey. Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet, or we’ll walk by His side in the way; what He says we will do, where He sends, we will go; NEVER FEAR, only trust and obey. Trust and obey, for there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.” Thank You for Your promises in Christ and Your love for every person you created. Help us to have and show that same love to them all. In Jesus’ precious and powerful name, we pray, Amen and Amen!