

minister and be useful. I also want to fulfill my purpose and find satisfaction and fulfillment where God places me. I have made it about myself, rather than letting God lead me naturally into the areas of ministry He wants me.

It is about Him. He is my prize, my pleasure, my portion. It is about His timing, not mine. He will lead me and show me where to minister when glorifying Him is my first and foremost motivation.

Where are you serving for His glory and not your own?

Deuteronomy 31:7-13, 24—32:4; Psalm 17; Romans 10:1-13; Matthew 24:15-31

Saturday, July 11

Romans 10:14-21

And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” (v.20 NIV)

My grandson loves cats. He was playing outside one day and saw a cat hiding in a medium sized drainage pipe near his house. He ran inside asking his mom for some food to try and lure the cat out of the pipe. She had done this also as a child after having been instructed, “Whatever you do, don’t feed that cat. If you do, it will never leave.” She fed the cat. It stayed.

The same happened with the cat my grandson found. It progressed to hanging around their front door looking for food. He fell in love with that cat. Eventually, they took it to the veterinarian, getting a clean bill of health for it. It had been surrendered by the previous owner. So they became its new owners.

My daughter and grandson love to tell me the cat found them, not the other way around.

And that is what happened to us. God found me. God found you. Even when we weren’t looking for him. And He has been with us ever since we received Him into our hearts. Praise God!

Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalms 20, 21; Matthew 24:32-51

by Pamela Newton

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Sunday, July 5

Numbers 27:12-23 *Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go up on one of the mountains in the desert east of the Jordan River. There you will see the land that I am giving to the Israelites. After you have seen this land, you will die like your brother Aaron. Remember when the people became angry at the water in the desert of Zin. Both you and Aaron refused to obey my command. You did not honor me and show the people that I am holy.” (This was at the water of Meribah near Kadesh in the desert of Zin.) (vv.12-14 ERV)*

Good and angry. This is how some family circumstances, world issues and yes, even my husband, can cause me to feel—good and angry. My anger never brings about anything good as a result.

Moses is one of my favorite Old Testament prophets. I have always felt sad that Moses did not get to go into the Promised Land because of his anger. All those complaining, impossible to please Israelites! He was angry enough that he sinned against God by striking the rock twice, rather than speaking to the rock for water to gush forth.

Yet, Moses never complained, argued, or made excuses to God for his angry behavior. Instead, he prayed for the people and asked God to provide a new leader to take the people into the Promised Land.

Who or what are you good and angry about today? Confess it to God and receive forgiveness.

Psalms 146, 147; Acts 19:11-20; Mark 1:14-20

Monday, July 6

Romans 8:26-30 *And in a similar way, the Holy Spirit takes hold of us in our human frailty to empower us in our weakness. For example, at times we don’t even know how to pray, or know the best things to ask for. But the Holy Spirit rises up within us to super-intercede on our behalf, pleading to God with emotional sighs too deep for words. (v.26 TPT)*

I am a very enthusiastic advocate for my grandson who is on the Autism Spectrum. Especially when it comes to getting what he needs at school. He is in “regular,” mainstream public Middle School classes even though he has Autism. He has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which allows for accommodations and services for him to be able to remain in a typical public-school setting.

I understand, protect, and seek support for him under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and attend every meeting for his educational plan specific to his needs. I am his biggest cheerleader, supporter, and protector, other than his mom.

This is how the Holy Spirit works on our behalf in prayer. He “super-intercedes” for us in accordance with God’s will and plans. Wow! Now that is awesome in the truest sense of the word. Thank You, God, for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Numbers 32:1-6, 16-27; Psalms 1, 2, 3; Matthew 23:1-12

Tuesday, July 7

Romans 8:31-39 *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.* (vv.31, 34 NKJV)

In my sixty-some years of life, I have met with many therapists who have helped me navigate some difficult personal issues. You may call them Counselors or Psychologists or even a “shrink.” Personally, I have found each of them to be quite helpful.

One issue I have struggled with often is what therapists refer to as “self-talk.” For me, my self-talk tends to be more negative than positive. Okay, hyper-critical even. I can give much grace to other people but not to myself. I would never talk to my friends the way I talk to myself in my head sometimes.

God, through the Holy Spirit, often brings me back to Romans chapter eight. He does not condemn me. The Holy Spirit intercedes for me. Even Jesus sits at God’s right hand, interceding for me! This is God’s truth about me. And you.

What thoughts or negative self-talk do you need to replace with God’s truth? Ask God to help you think and speak His truth for yourself.

Numbers 35:1-3, 9-15, 30-34; Psalms 5, 6; Matthew 23:13-26

Wednesday, July 8

Matthew 23:27-39 *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem—you are the city that murders your prophets! You are the city that stones the very messengers who were sent to deliver you! So many times I have longed to gather a wayward people, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings—but you were too stubborn to let me.”* (v.37 TPT)

I like to think of Jesus as kind, loving, accepting, and non-judgmental. And then I read a passage like this. On the surface, it appears as if Jesus is being vindictive, mean, and unduly harsh to the religious leaders of His day. Yet, his words rang true. He spoke the truth.

Has anyone ever said something to you that took you aback thinking they were being offensive? And yet, deep down you knew what they were saying was true? I have had this happen. It is very uncomfortable and convicting. And honesty can be hurtful and painful and true all at the same time.

Jesus is all of the things I want and need, which can include brutal honesty of the condition of my inward spiritual life that may need correcting or changing. I can be stubborn or unwilling to listen or make necessary changes.

How about you? Is there something Jesus is saying that you are too stubborn to hear? Let him speak to you and gather you to Himself under His wings of love and protection.

Deuteronomy 1:1-18; Psalm 119:1-24; Romans 9:1-18

Thursday, July 9

Deuteronomy 3:18-28 *“Commission Joshua to replace you, and then encourage him, for he shall lead the people across to conquer the land you will see from the mountaintop.”* (v.28 TLB)

A while back, both I and a friend had applied for the same job at the same church. We were close friends. It was an excellent and desirable position we both wanted. I was offered the job and accepted. Needless to say, my friend was very disappointed and tried to be gracious and be okay and even happy I got the job. It was very awkward. We were able to work through it.

I wonder if Moses may have felt some awkwardness or tension with Joshua. God had just told Moses to stop asking to go into the Promised Land. God said no again in uncertain terms and even told Moses not to speak of it again.

This is one more reason Moses is one of my favorite Bible characters. He accepted God’s word to Him, never whined about anything, commissioned Joshua and even encouraged Joshua as the new leader. This took great strength and maturity.

Is there an awkward relationship you are aware of? Encourage that person today.

Psalm 18:1-20; Romans 9:19-33; Matthew 24:1-14

Friday, July 10

Psalm 16 YAHWEH, *you alone are my inheritance. You are my prize, my pleasure, and my portion. You hold my destiny and its timing in your hands. Your pleasant path leads me to pleasant places. I’m overwhelmed by the privileges that come with following you! The way you counsel me makes me praise you more, for your whispers in the night give me wisdom, showing me what to do next.* (vv.5-7 TPT)

My husband and I recently started attending a new church after having been at the last church for about thirteen years. This is a real challenge. We are in the process of finding people to connect with, learning new names, figuring out where to volunteer and serve.

I get impatient with God, wanting Him to show me where He wants me to use my gifts. I am a retired Pastor and Hospice Chaplain. I want to