

A Bible Within The Bible

July 17, 2022

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled A Bible Within the Bible. Thank you to Ed, Glynnis, Alan and Don for being part of the video. The scripture reading is Psalm 78 verses 1 to 6.

Welcome

Morning, everybody. I hope you woke up to a wonderful day today. Time to be together. And welcome and welcome to all who are online this morning. We have a few announcements, birthdays this week. Jon, is it a significant birthday? Oh, come on. They're all significant at our age of 77. Excellent. And also, Al and Julie have an anniversary. Tell me, how many? I think it's one hand, right? Five. Okay. Congratulations to you. Another thing that's in the bulletin this week is that we are looking for a church building cleaner. And if you can let Adam know of your interest by next the end of next week, that would be helpful. Also, Great Lakes is looking for part time cooks and a math and business teacher. I've already said that I wouldn't do it. No sort of tongue in cheek there. I wasn't really considering it. We have some prayer requests and concerns. Marie is currently in Nova Scotia visiting her sister, who is close to the end of her life. And we need to be prayerful for in that situation. And, of course, Mike's friend is mourning at the loss of a husband. And this leaves with the care of some children. And Mike also has a friend, Roy, who was diagnosed with cancer and been given two years. So lots of things to be concerned about. And, of course, ongoing concern for those who have lost loved ones recently. It's not an easy thing to get over and to move on, but when these things happen, we are sort of forced to move on. So it's it's but there is a transition and we're concerned for those people who are in that stage of their life transitioning to being without a spouse or a parent or an aunt or uncle.

Let's pray. Our father in heaven, we come before you at this time with hearts that are filled with joy for a beautiful day today. Walking this morning we were we saw gardens that are in full bloom. The beauty of creation reminds us of how creative you are in preparing this world for us to live in. But at the same time, as we see the beauty of today and we wake up with optimism, there's still sadness around us for Jim and for Gloria's family and Jim's family, and mourning Gloria. We pray, Father, for peace. We pray for Marie, who is visiting a sister who doesn't have much time left. We pray for her. We pray for her sister Cora. We pray for for Jack as he's left in St Catharines without the support of Marie. We pray that these situations will they'll be peace and there'll be things will be taken care of. We pray for Michael's friends from school and from Iowa and his and who have been so important to him in his past. We pray that there might be peace there. We pray that these folks might find assurance from their friends and family and that they make my make-- make good use of their time and find encouragement from you and from their church families. We're thankful, Father, that we're able to be together this morning, and we pray, Father, that by being together, we might see and the ideas and experiences that we have today that your son Jesus is all well and live in our lives, that we might be examples of faith in our lives away from this building. We pray for our church.

We pray, Father, that people might find us, find a kind and loving environment among us, and that people will find people that care for them in their spiritual and physical, emotional and social needs. We pray for Don today as he delivers the sermon, and we pray for the the singing that we do together and the Bible that we consider and the communion that we take together that we might honour you and that and that we might lift each other up during these things. We pray this in your son's name. Amen.

Communion

Good morning. Good to see everyone. The last time that I was able to come and speak with you at Communion, I talked a little bit about the best places for our families, for children, for nieces, nephews, grandchildren, etc., to to learn about our faith. And we talked a little bit I talked a little bit about how kids need to see us trusting God through the paradoxes of life and through the mysteries of life, because there are indeed very many of them.

They need to learn from us what it looks like and what it feels like to trust God when we don't have the answers, when we really don't know why and when it really doesn't make sense. They need to see what it's like to hold on to our faith through these things. And that's very different from telling them, right? That's very different from telling them. I held on to my faith when my, you know, my mother died or my aunt died or, you know, when I had tough times, that's that's telling them it's very different to hold on when we share from our heart what it feels like when I'm going through it, not when I went, but when I'm going.

Now, we might use some of those examples that that help us to, you know, to sort of see what it was like when I was going through that. But it's it's a heart thing. It's we have to share from our hearts, from our emotions. And there are lots of us that are not very comfortable with doing that. We're not comfortable as a society with sharing from deep within our heart what it felt like. But really, if we want to affect the generations after us, we have to help them to see what it's like. We have to help them to know what it feels like to to like. For me, you know, those Bible characters and old time people, they seemed so far away from what it feels like. They need to know what it feels like to feel like you're walking through the desert. There are times that we feel like that they need to they need to feel our emotion. We have to we have to get in touch with who we are if we really are going to make an impact on the on the people that we love the most to help them to see how it feels to live with faith.

So what could that look like? Relationships that encouraged us. Our prayers. What are our prayers about? How do we pray? Do we cry out? Or do we say our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will. Be done right. When we're living by faith. Our prayer-- Our prayers are not. It might be that prayer, but it's not said like that. Right? What are we thinking about? How do we think what characters or stories in the Bible do encourage us that we've thought deeply about what snippets of Scripture do we use to stay faithful? I know we all have them right. What runs through our minds to help keep us faithful through those times? Remember, bring our past victories. But what they felt like, not just. I remember hearing about our gratitude to God for the life that we've been given and the gifts that we've been given. It's pretty incredible what we have and hearing about the gratitude that we feel to Jesus for the way that He made the seriousness and the depth of God's love for us so incredibly real. He made it real for us. He had the guts to make it real, to show us what it's like to be faithful, even to the point that we're going to die and that's I said it that way on purpose, because what

comes to mind is even to the point of death, because that's the way it's written. But but to put it into their words, to put it into the kinds of words that they can that they can understand, it's like imagine, imagine loving God so much that you would allow yourself unfairly. That speaks to kids, right? It's unfair what happened to Jesus. It's so unfair. Why in the world would he do that? That's how much he loves us. He was even willing to go beyond unfairness. He was willing to go beyond. That's not right. He was willing to do that because of how much he loves us. Wow. That's like that's like even more than moms love their kids. Dads love their kids. He was willing to do that. But that that's what really matters.

It's not a parable. Right? He didn't. He didn't. Yes. He spoke to us in parables. But the biggest speaking he did was through the living out of his life. He didn't just. Yes, he spoke to us in parables, but when to really show us how much he cares, to really show us that he gets it, how hard it is. He really gets how hard it is to be faithful. In the worst of times, he was willing to literally die for us, go through all that pain and die. I don't know how that makes you feel. And I'm talking feelings here. I know how that makes you feel. But that makes me go, Whoa, I'm so grateful. That's. That's a love I can trust. So as we take communion, let's think about the depth of that love that we can trust. Try and put your inside words into articulating it. What is it? What? How does that make you feel? That gratitude, that deep gratitude that I get, this amazing life that I have, this amazing assurance that I am loved because of the sacrifice that Jesus made, because he was willing literally to put his life on the line for me.

Let's pray, dearest Lord God, thank you so much, God, for all that you've given us. Truly, it it it defies words how amazing you are. God, we just. We come to you. We're grateful. And I would I pray that you would just hear the the deep gratitude in our hearts right now as we as we think about who Jesus is, who he who he was, even who he will be to us in our lives, God, that we can have this amazing gift that you've given us of love that is so deep that it's unfathomable through your death, God, through your burial, and through your resurrection. God, we love you. We thank you. Ask you to bless our thoughts as we take the bread and drink. Drink the juice. God, we love you and we thank you in Jesus name. Amen.

Reading

Our reading today is from the Psalms, Psalm 78 verses one through seven. My people, hear my teaching, listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable. I will utter hidden things, things from of old things we have heard and know. Things our ancestors have told us we will not hide them from their descendants. We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children so the next generation would know them. Even the children yet to be born. And they in turn will tell their children.

Message

Good morning, everyone. Looks like a lot of people on vacation today, but we're delighted to have you with us. All of us need times of spiritual renewal when our spiritual batteries can be recharged, when the Spirit of God can do his masterful work of spiritual motivation in each one of our lives. And I think there are times in our life when we get that where we've just been living our life like normal. And then all of a sudden, hmm, I feel more somehow feel different. I feel closer to God. That's God's Holy Spirit working in our lives. And just to thank Him and to thank Jesus and to thank God for the opportunity of

knowing Him. God, the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit, and in really being grateful for that wonderful motivation that they gave us throughout the Scriptures, there is a Bible within the Bible for many, many, many, many, many years. There was the Psalms, and that was the Bible of their day before Jesus came into the world, before his birth. The Psalms was available for all in the Psalms preached to us even today. And so you'll guess that I want to spend some time focusing on some of the Psalms, Jesus commented about the Psalms himself when He said to his disciples these words, Luke 24:44 Jesus said, This is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me. Listen now, in the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms, Jesus knew the Psalms. Jesus quoted the Psalms. Jesus prayed the Psalms.

The majority of the Biblical Psalms are devoted to expressing praise and Thanksgiving to God 150 Psalms. But the majority of those Psalms is an expression of praise and Thanksgiving to God.

And thousands of years later, we're doing the same. One of the oldest books is called The Psalms. It serves as a prayer book, a preaching book and encouragement book and instruction book, a spiritually enlightening book, a praise book, a devotional book, a meditation book, and a teaching book. And if you want to throw something else in, go ahead. Out of the 150 books within its context, each one is truly unique, diverse, and sometimes quite challenging. Sometimes there's a psalm. And you think, I've got to read that again? Yeah, yeah, I got to read it again. It's challenging for a variety of reasons, and that helps us to meditate on some of these Psalms, sing the Psalms, pray the Psalms. And if you're a person that struggles to pray, I think it's a good thing to be honest and tell God as if he didn't know that, Lord, I'm I'm struggling. I don't I don't know what to say. But here's something, you know, and I offer this to you as my prayer, one of the songs. There are so many.

What I love was it the Psalms give us an an understanding of how people worshiped many, many years ago. So we've come to worship this morning at a certain time and we're worshiping. That's great. But there was this unique time when the people of God would congregate outside of the temple. And at the given time, when worship was to begin, there was a procession coming to the time of worship. Let me read it to you. Just picture this in your mind as I read it from Psalm 68, 24 through 27. Just picture this. Your procession has come into view. Oh, God, the procession of my God and king into the sanctuary. In front of the procession are the singers after them, the musicians, and with them, the women playing tambourines. Praise God in the great congregation, praise the Lord in the Assembly of Israel, there is the little tribe of Benjamin leading them there, the great throng of Judah's princes and their princes of Zebulun and Naftali. Amazing picture of this worshiping on their way to worship. Have you ever done that? If you wake up Sunday morning and you feel like, Oh, I don't even I don't know if I really feel like coming, then start praising, start worshiping. And as you're trying to debate whether or not I really want to come, then start, start worshiping, start praising, start reading a scripture. Start giving yourself to God, God. This God has given us this amazing opportunity to worship whenever we want to worship day or night. But he also gives us a time to come together with a group of people who love God, who love Christ, who are filled with the Spirit and want to grow in their faith.

And that's an ongoing process. The Psalms tell us all about this. Some of the authors of the Psalms are unique, David wrote Most of them, some 73 of the 150. But listen to who else wrote some of the Psalms. Moses. Moses wrote some of the Psalms. And then Melchizedek wrote a song or two. Abraham Hemon, Judson. Some of these people we don't know. Asaph, he was the musician, his name is all throughout the Psalms. He's the one that helped create the music and the procession. Everybody

knew who he was. The three sons of Korah all wrote Psalms. Solomon wrote songs. David, of course, wrote the majority of those Psalms.

So in Psalm 72, it's a description of the rule of Jesus on the earth. Amazing. Hundreds of years before, the Psalmist writes a description of the rule of Jesus on the earth. 72 In verse eight, he will rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. The desert tribes will bow down before him and his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarsus in the distant shores will bring tribute to him. The Kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts. All Kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him. Imagine on that day when Jesus said, It's time and God says it's time and the Holy Spirit does His work and the world is no more. But neither is Heaven because heaven and earth are married. They come together as one in a new heaven. In a new earth that Paul talked about, that Jesus talked about, that John talked about that Peter talked about that Amos talked about that. Isaiah talked about that David talked about. All of these are displayed in splendor through the Psalms by noticing that praise of what will happen for us in these days, or if not, that we will be with our loved ones. When the time is right, we will see it and be part of it. And then there's Psalm 32. This is a very personal psalm, sometimes feeling very close to God, in other times feeling a distance from God, and for some reason pushed God away without really meaning to. But if you ever gone through periods where you think, you know, I really I don't think I even thought about God this week or it was such a busy week in the night. I don't think I ever. Really. Thought what Jesus is doing in my life. One of the best ways to wake up every morning is to say, God, this is this is your day. I'm part of you. You're with me every step of the way. It's easier said than done. I realize that because we get caught up in life sometimes we can go a week or whatever and we come to church and we think, Oh yeah, we've got to think about God.

But God is always thinking about us every moment. That's that's the part of this wonderful, amazing, loving God. So in in Psalm 32, this is that this is the personal psalm, sometimes very feeling very, very close to God in sometimes not so versus three. And five. So when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long for day and night Your hand was heavy upon me. My strength was sapped. Have you ever felt that way? As in the heat of the summer? Then I acknowledge, urged you God and and did not confess my iniquity. I said. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord. And you forgave me the guilt of my sin happens every day. Happens every day. Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found.

I read a book today from a person that I know very, very well, and the author of this book was very honest. He was he was popular in high school, Great Lakes College. She was he was a student that did well. He preached many chapels, services. And then years came and he pulled the way, pulled away from God by by just not really thinking about it. It wasn't intentional. Just life got busy and got pulled away from God. And then his life started to turn on a on a downward spiral. What has to happen in some cases is you have to hit rock bottom and start again. And once he started again, God became real. God wasn't religious to him anymore. God was a personal God. Every day was a challenge for him. Will I drink or not today? Every day was a challenge. And so he said, I give it all up. Helped me in his life. Changed for the better. And as one of the great speakers today, helping people who have challenges with addictions and so forth. A wonderful, wonderful man. But then there's something else.

The beauty and the glory of nature. For those of you that get the opportunity to go pretty far north and then at night when there's no ambient light around, you see incredible things in the sky. Not just stars, but things go across the sky. I don't know if they're satellites or stars that are burning out. It's it's

beyond my science to understand all these things that there there are sometimes a star that seems like it's burned out. And from what I understand that burned out long ago, now it's the reflection of it. I don't understand the science of it all. It's just amazing. But it's always been that way in God's world, the beauty and the glory of nature. So it says the heavens declare the glory of God. The skies proclaim the works of the hands. Day after day they pour forth speech. Listen to this. Night after night they display the knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth. Their words to the ends of the world. Sometimes when you get the chance, get up where there's no light and just look at those stars. It's God. It's part of who God is. And I, I'm not a science person at all. But I kind of think one of the reasons why we have those stars is because every once in a while we need to be wowed by God because we forget. And so the psalmist thousands of years ago write these things, you know, can you think about this for just a minute? Here's Abraham. How many years ago was Abraham looking up into the sky at night and seeing the stars? And now, a gazillion years later, you and I are looking at the same stars. The stars that God put for us to look up when times get rough. Look.

Psalm 121 is a personal God to each one of us. Psalm 121 God watches us coming and going. I will lift up my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip. He watches over. You will not slumber. Indeed, he watches over. Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you. The Lord is your shade and at your right hand. The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore. And if you ever get to the point where things are so difficult in life that you don't even feel God's presence, you just got to know He said, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am always with you. We may not feel that way, but that's what God is saying to us. God's loving care. We have heard with their ears, Oh, Lord, our fathers have told us what you did in their days and days long ago. With your hand, you drove out the nations and planted and planted our fathers. You crushed the peoples and made our fathers flourish. It was not by their sword that they won the land nor their arm that brought them victory. It was your right hand or God, it was your arm, the light of your face. For you loved them, for you loved us. And then we're almost finished.

Psalm 149 And I love this, whoever the writer was, and we're not always sure who wrote all of them, but the Psalmist says keep writing new songs. Have you ever got to the point where you pray almost the same prayer every day? If you pray, it's kind of the same prayer every day. You know, I kind of think like if any of my loved one just said a sentence to me and it's the same sentence every day, I'd say, Really? Like, let's communicate a little bit here. And here you have the Psalmist saying, keep writing new songs to the Lord. He hears-- hears, keep writing it, keep saying new things. And if your prayer life is dull, change it. And if you don't know how to pray, pray the Psalms. They're here for us to give to God. Keep writing new songs to the Lord. Psalm 149. Sing to the Lord a new song. His Praise in the Assembly of the Saints. Let Israel rejoice in their maker. Let the people of Zion be in their king. Let them praise God's name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. For the Lord takes delight in his people. He crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in his honor. And sing for joy in their beds. As a happy church. That's just a happy church.

Yes, but we've got problems. Yeah, but it's okay. Everyone's got problems. Well, there's some real challenges in my life. Yeah, there's challenges in your life. And God is with us every step of the way. Then why did my loved one have to go? I don't. Oh, I don't know. But I can guarantee you one thing.

That person was never left alone for one moment and still is. God the father, God, the Son of God, the Holy Spirit. Their arms are around those loved ones, and we have been guaranteed that we will see and be with each other again. We will see God face to face, Jesus face to face. The Holy Spirit. Face to face. Paul. Jeremiah. Wonderful men and women. And we will see our loved ones again. And there will be a new heaven and earth. So how do you conclude this? The perfect conclusion is Psalm 150. Here's what he says. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord in this sanctuary. Praise Him in His mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power. Praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet. Praising with the harp and the lyre. Praise him with the tambourine and dancing. Praise him with the strings and flute. Praise him with the clash of cymbals. With everything that has breath. Praise the Lord. And the last word goes to NT Wright himself.

Commenting on the Psalms, he says, The Psalms are not only poetry in themselves, they are to be the cause of poetry in those who read them and sing them together and individually they are God's gifts to us so that we can be shaped as a gift to the world. So may I challenge all of us today? Read the Psalms. Sing the Psalms. Praise the Psalms. Thank God for God.

Closing

When I was about 16 years old, there was one night we moved out to the country and there wasn't much. Late at night. And one night I went out and laid in the grass and looked up. And there was a splendor of stars and all that stuff. Just beautiful. I can still remember being just struck by the beauty, and I wondered if I went to the furthest star and looked, what would I see?

And so this started a life of for me or continued a life of imagination. A few weeks ago, I mentioned something about the universe and in a communion talk. And one of the things I didn't say in that communion talk is it's been estimated that the universe is 64 billion light years in diameter. That's light traveling as the illustration that I used light here at the equator and fire a bullet to be seven holes in your body in one second. And light's traveling that fast. For 64 billion years. So if there is a God that is powerful to do that, or some people say, well, all happened by chance, I don't believe that. I think there's some purpose in it, though. I think if we wake up in the morning and we pray for opportunities to be helpful in people's lives, people show up. If we get up in the morning and we pray that we might see the beauty of the creation are more observant. So I think prayer is an important aspect of our of our being, is we can pray while we're driving, we can pray while we're sleeping, we can pray while we're holding a loved one. We can pray in a lots of different situations. And we need to have the discipline of prayer, because a prayer opens ourselves up to the imagination of God, imagination of our purpose and living.

It's not about us. It's about others. It's about sacrificing ourselves. And I think of, you know, we worry about a lot of things, but the scripture says, do not worry, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And these things will be taken care of. So it is indeed, there is a Bible within the Bible. There are some things that are more important in there that need to be said and understood. That's our challenge. Each day for all of us is to try to sort this out and then live lives, prayerfully connect with others. And maybe not. I'm not I'm not talking about preaching at people. I'm talking about being like Jesus, who just went about doing things, most of which probably was not about talking. It was about doing. So that's our challenge. It's all of our challenge and whatever life people ask, asking, we know

they like retirement. It's not quite the same, but each day is an important day. Each day we need to fill it, at least partially, with things that are really important.

Let's pray. Our Father in Heaven, we're grateful for the things that we've been reminded of today. Reminded about your word; the importance of it. But not just that there're ideas, but somehow that these ideas can become part of who we are and that these ideas can be reflected in how we behave, how we speak. We pray, Father, that you'll help us to have the right words to speak and the right voice inflection, the right mannerisms to back up what we're saying. We pray, Father, for opportunities to be helpful. We pray for eyes to see those doors that are opening in our lives, and that you will give us courage to walk through them with you. We're grateful, Father, for your son, Jesus. We're grateful for an unimaginable gift that you would send a person of yourself to this world that we might see in him and understanding him the vastness and the greatness of your creation, and the vastness and greatness of your love and compassion and caring that these things are important, that we might dedicate our lives in some way to living these things, being these things. But at the same time, Father, we are concerned with a struggle of our own sin and for the heaviness and the weight of it. And we pray, Father, that Your Grace might abound and that we might have peace with that sin and try not to repeat it. But we know we will. And we live our lives, not to do things that are in our salvation.

We realize that Your Grace is greater than all our sin. We live our lives in thankfulness for that grace that's already been given, for that gift that's already been given. And we pray, Father, that you might be with us always in what we do, that we might honor you, that we might honor your son and his sacrifice, and we might honor the spirit that's trying to dwell within us and guide us. To this end, we pray with thankful hearts in Jesus name. Amen.

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