

A Daily Dose of Good News

Thursday, February 25, 2021

*Pastor Steve's devotional is available online at <https://youtu.be/OWrSrSer2p4>
You may dialog with Pastor Steve on this devotion at steve.wachtman@me.com*

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." 2 But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:1-6)

My Stars!

Abram trusted the promises of the Lord
And the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

This interaction between Abram and God
In the opening act for the story of God's people
Is echoed centuries later by the prophet Habakkuk,
That, "The righteous shall live by faith,"
And then expounded centuries later again by the Apostle Paul in Romans:
"They are now justified by his grace as a gift"
And in Ephesians:
"For by grace you have been saved through faith."

Then 500 years ago now, Luther joins the chorus
By asserting the long-held truth now among us:
Justification (in other words, righteousness) by grace alone
Through faith alone
In Christ's righteousness alone.

God promises to love us through all generations
And keeps that promise in Christ Jesus our Lord
And that love is our by trust ... no matter what.

And before the ultimate validation in the death and resurrection of Jesus
God pointed to the abundant stars in the heavens as
A sign for the trustworthiness of that promise
Stars too numerous to count.
In fact some astronomers calculate
That there are 10,000 stars to every grain of sand on earth
That's quite a show of trustworthiness for our creator God!

Maybe you too, can find the stars to be reminder
Of God's promise of love for you as well,
Especially since even during a pandemic,
A small portion of them are in your view
When you step outside on a clear night.

I think about the guiding star of Bethlehem
That we talked about together
During worship in the Parking Lot on Christmas Eve.

I think about the pact Adrienne and I made
Several nights before she left for college last fall.
With a quick text notice from either of us,
Each of us could go outside at night ...
Her at Case Western in Cleveland and me here in Columbus
And spot together the big dipper
And gaze at the same stars.

And this week humanity has made another astounding contact
With the red star of Mars so far away.
If you haven't seen the video footage yet,
you can watch a computer model of how the Mars rover Was designed to land
https://youtu.be/Ki_Af_o9Q9s

And then watch a video footage at the real rover doing exactly that
<https://youtu.be/4czjS9h4Fpg>

All thanks to the collaboration and cooperation among the countless skills and talents
Of all the people who worked together on the project.
A triumphant of humanity that seems to dwarf the abundance of stars themselves.

Friends, the God who creates such endless potential
Can certainly be trusted to love us through all generations
Pandemics and all!
Amen