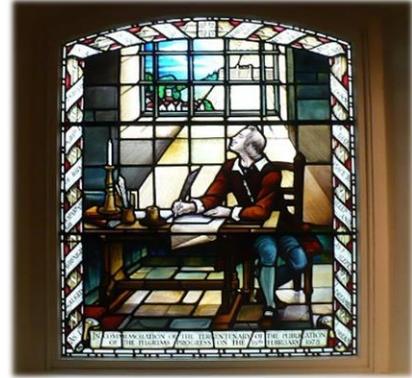


May 22, 2020

## Good morning, Everybody.

Almost everyone thinks about trying to do better when a new year comes around. Several years ago I was looking at the upcoming new year and trying to think of what would make it better. I found myself just sort of doodling with a pen on a little piece of post-it-note paper. What would make a difference?



What I found myself scribbling wasn't profound. It wasn't even something out of the Bible. But it was pretty much all that came to mind that morning.

***Enjoy the day. Be cheerful.***

I've kept that little piece of paper on my desk here in the study ever since. I see it nearly every day, and almost always find myself consciously thinking, *I need to do better*. But what I've discovered is that you can't just turn *enjoy* and *be cheerful* on like a light switch. Sometimes you can hardly even want to. It's just a lot easier that day to stay glum. Too much work to change today. Melancholy just **feels** good this evening.

### Grace to Live

Somebody once asked D. L. Moody whether he felt that he had enough of God's grace to be burned at the stake. Moody, ever eminently straightforward and practical, responded at once that he did not, in fact, have enough grace to be burned at the stake. *Don't you wish that you did?* pressed the speaker. *No*, Moody replied, *because I don't need it now. What I need just now is grace to live in Milwaukee for three days and hold an evangelistic mission.*

*Grace to live in Milwaukee for three days.* Or in Greenville for another day. Or **wherever** for yet another day. And to do what our hands find to do; make the beds this morning, do the laundry, clean out the gutters, take the car in for a repair, answer the mail. . . . Grace to live today, not grace to die.

And, of course, grace to live today *graciously*. What a delight it is to encounter a gracious, not a grouchy Christian. I forget who it was, but there was a fairly well-known pastor a century or so ago who was renowned for both his preaching and his grumps. After one particularly prickly encounter with him, a wise, gentle friend, wishing to help him, said, *You know, John* (or whatever his name was; I forget), *there's not a lot of the old Adam in you, but what there is, is good, strong stuff*. Ugh. May the Lord deliver us from old Adam and all his stuff.

What a difference it would make every day in every encounter if we had more of the meekness and gentleness which are in Christ. Why must we be so assertive? Why so opinionated? Why so insistent on having the last word and making the clinching point? Why so quick to take offense? How little it matters, but how much harm it does.

What an unspeakable blessedness deliverance from the flesh will be! Meantime, *Oh, for grace to love Him more. . . . And to be **like Him** more.*

And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips (Luke 4:22a).

To be gracious, to speak graciously—that would take grace today. *He giveth more grace. . .*

### A Visit

The dog began barking while I was writing this. When I stepped outside, there at the back door was Mary Kraus! With a little book in one hand and our newspaper (which I'd not yet picked up from the end of the drive this morning) in the other. She had on a pretty, pink mask which a friend had made for her, and she was in good spirits. Seeing her reminded me of just how much we're all missing each other, and how good it will be to at least begin seeing each other again in a little over a week when we start to phase back into our normal services.

I know that you'll be praying for the church's leadership as we attempt to do so wisely. Pastor Rush, especially, needs our prayers. The other day we were talking, and he mentioned that he had a punch list of about 75 details to discuss

and work out with various ones. He was using a number code of some kind; everything marked a certain number (3, for instance), he needed to talk with Pastor Vincent about, everything numbered 4 he needed to talk with Pastor Jones about, etc. He didn't say what my number was (smile). But we were talking! So I guess I'm on the list. We'll all owe him a real big "thank you so much!" as we get back into meeting on site.

I trust that you'll have a blessed day. His grace is infinite. *Grace and peace be unto you.*

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick