

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10, 2024

Scripture Reading: John 3:14-21

Trying to live a successful life without God is like being a light bulb and trying to light up without being plugged in. Impossible.

—Anon.

Greg McKeown is the author of *Effortless: Make It Easier to Do What Matters Most* — a *New York Times* bestseller.

In a blog post called “The Most Important Hour Of Your Life,” he tells the story of the German psychologist Jan Souman, who took some research-study participants to the Sahara Desert and told them to walk in a straight line.

Easier said than done. Have you ever tried it over a long distance? McKeown reports that “[Some] of them walked on a cloudy day, with the sun hidden behind the clouds [and with no reference points in view]. ... [They] all walked in circles, with [several] of them repeatedly crossing their own path without noticing it.”

But some had little or no difficulty. The reason? They walked while the sun was shining, and kept a faraway reference in view. “These ... followed an almost perfectly straight course.”

He concludes, “In other words, if we can identify what is most essential and keep our eyes fixed on that it can help us from getting too far adrift.”

It rings true, doesn’t it? Walking toward the light helps us to walk the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life. The apostle Paul told the believers at Philippi, “This one thing I do ... I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14).

When we try to live right, act right, do right only according to our own wisdom, we might end up walking in circles, as though we were walking at night without the benefit of the moon or the North Star.

We need the guiding light of Scripture and the Living Word, Jesus Christ himself, to make our paths straight. The writer of Hebrews got it right, “Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus”! (Hebrews 12:1-2a).

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I know from past experience that when my eyes stray from you to the cares of this world, I soon lose my way. Help me to have single-minded vision. In your name. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Leviticus 20-23
Monday: Leviticus 24-27
Tuesday: Mark 1-3
Wednesday: Mark 4-6
Thursday: Mark 7-10
Friday: Mark 11-13
Saturday: Psalms 25-28

VOW TO FIND A VOWEL!

Directions: We'll not only give you a vowel, but we'll give you a lot of them. The words in this brain-cruncher have vowels in unusual arrangements. See if you can guess the words from the clues provided. Find the secret message by transferring the circled letters to the appropriate spaces. Remember that the circled letter may be a vowel.

1. Brave: ○ _ _ _ _ _ E O U _ _
2. A dark profile: _ _ _ _ ○ O U E _ _ _ _
3. Circular: ○ O U _ _ _
4. Running away: _ _ _ E E ○ _ _ _
5. Savage, fierce: _ _ _ _ I O U ○
6. Strange, odd: _ _ U A I _ _ ○
7. A person from the 50th state: _ _ _ _ A ○ I A _ _
8. Compress, push together: ○ _ _ U E E _ _ _
9. A large tree in California: ○ _ _ _ U _ _ I A
10. Paddling in a small, narrow boat: _ _ ○ _ _ O E I _ _ _
11. Upright, moral and righteous: ○ _ _ _ _ U O U _ _
12. Lining up in a row: _ _ U E U ○ _ _ _
13. Gorgeous: _ _ E A U _ _ E ○ U _ _
14. Precipitation: ○ A I _ _

Secret Message:
Write here in the space provided.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

March 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

ANSWERS: 1. courageous; 2. silhouette; 3. round; 4. fleeing; 5. vicious; 6. quaint; 7. Hawaiian; 8. squeeze; 9. sequoia; 10. canoeing; 11. virtuous; 12. queuing; 13. beautiful; 14. rain. **Secret Message:** CHRIST IS SAVIOR. **Riddle:** Because the little kid cannot reach buttons higher than 5.

RIDDLE

A family lives in a large tower apartment building, 10 floors high. Every day, their son takes the elevator from the family's apartment on the 10th floor to the ground floor and goes to school. When he returns in the afternoon, he uses the elevator to get to the fifth floor, and then uses the stairs for the remaining five floors. Why?