

**When It's All Too Hard**

**Monday, 10/26/09 – Read Psalm 130:1-8**

My Observations \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Sometimes life is just too hard. Right now, is there something that's making your life hard? A difficult or broken relationship? Some shortcoming on your part? Keeping up with the pace of life? Write down (as specifically as you can) a couple of those things that make your life tough these days. ... The Psalmist cried out to God "out of the depths." Will you today cry out to God out of your own depths? And will you invite God to be there with you?

**Tuesday, 10/27/09 – Read Isaiah 61:1-4**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: The Hebrew prophet Isaiah, long before Jesus, proclaimed God's central purpose: to bind up the brokenhearted and to set the captives free. (Compare Luke 4:16-21; Jesus claimed this passage for his ministry too.) ... It is God's purpose to heal and to make whole, to bind up our broken hearts. Has your heart been broken? In your prayer today, tell God about your broken heart; tell God about those things that still hold you captive. Pray today for God's healing in your life.

**Wednesday, 10/28/09 – Read Luke 8:42b-48**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: The Bible always describes the ministry of Jesus as including HEALING the sick. Sickness is part of our human experience. Our bodies get sick, and so do our minds, our emotions, our souls -- and so do our relationships and our communities. God's purpose for us is full wholeness and wellness. And God is always, in every moment, working within us and around us to bring about divine wholeness. The woman in today's reading trusted that and claimed it. It is this attitude of confidence that unlocks the power of healing. Will you trust that and claim that for yourself today?

**Thursday, 10/29/09 – Read Mark 10:35-45**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Not all our human sickness and "brokenness" is inevitable. We humans create a lot of our own misery. We undermine the quality of our relationships when we strive for dominance and power over others -- when we insist on getting our own way at the expense of others. Even Jesus' disciples James and John made this mistake, and the reaction of the other disciples was predictable! ... Where do you see striving for dominance operating in your life? Where do you strive for power over another person? Where do you see others trying to dominate you? ... In your prayer today, acknowledge this to God and pray for healing in your relationships.

**Friday, 10/30/09 – Read Matthew 23:1-15**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: We tend to think of Jesus as gentle and kind. But he could also be fierce and confrontational! Perhaps his harshest words were aimed at those who exalted themselves over others and sought superior status. ...

Sometimes we mistakenly conclude that following Jesus means always being meek and soft. Jesus' way is the way of service, and sometimes that means we must be assertive and firm. ... Is there a relationship in your life where firmer assertiveness is needed? Make some notes about that relationship and pray about it today.

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**Saturday, 10/31/09 – Read Matthew 11:28-30**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: How are you feeling about your life these days? Are you weary? Are you carrying heavy burdens? Jesus invites you to come. Jesus "yoke" is not burdensome, it is liberating. And it brings rest for your soul. It isn't magic, and usually it isn't instant. But when we come, when we trust, when we follow, we find in our lives a new energy, freedom, and joy. Today, Jesus invites you to come.

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**Sunday, 11/1/09 – Read John 14:1-3, 27-28**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: What does the word "peace" mean to you? Take a moment to write down your thoughts about "peace." ... Jesus promises a peace that is different from the peace of "the world." Look closely at verse 14:3. Jesus' expressed desire is for relationship, and it is in relationship that we discover peace. Maybe peace is not something that we can just make happen. Maybe we cannot just "be peaceful." Maybe we enter into relationship with God, and in that relationship we discover peace. What do you think? ... In your prayer today, talk about how you might deepen your relationship with God.

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*My Faith Journal*, October 25, 2009

You Asked for It, #7

***Faith for Hard Times (1)***

***Broken People, Broken Families***

**What do I hear God saying to me today?**

Matthew 11:28-30

Isaiah 61:1-4

Psalms 23

**What action do I intend to take this week?**

*Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.*