

The Meyer Minute for July 2, 2001

Keyword: Time Off

Here's a simple spiritual thought as you take time off this week. Genesis 1:26 says the Lord gave mankind dominion over the earth. When you and I work we're exercising "lordship" over our little corners of the world. Someday, however, work will be taken away. Layoffs, retirement, disability, certainly death...the message will come: Time to get off your throne and let another take your place.

So the discipline of taking days off is a reminder that your work, your little lordship, is temporary. Laying it aside, getting off your throne, impresses upon you who really is Lord. Time off now prepares you for the day you can no longer work and, best of all, for the day you'll see the Lamb on His throne.

Jesus, be our Lord and teach us to rest in You. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 6, 2001

Keyword: Perseverance

From Martin Luther King, Sr. in 1977: "I confirmed my faith in God long ago. I hold on Him. I know He is going to see me through.

"I have to sometimes look at that cup that another minister talked about in Harlem. When the depression was deepest, a mother had just one glass of milk with four or five children to drink from that one glass. He said all the children but one begged to drink and finally one of the children said, 'mama, how deep can I drink?' Then she measured it off.

"Sometimes, when these trials and tribulations hit you, you have to ask God, 'Oh, God, how much? How deep must I drink?' So I say occasionally to God, 'God how much more must I bear?' I never ask Him why. Because I know He is going to see me through. I have that faith in God."

Father, help us persevere...with faith. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 9, 2001

Keyword: Pornography

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that "Playboy" will acquire three hard-core sex television channels. "As sex on TV has become commonplace,

Playboy has been losing ground to more-explicit producers. Rich profit margins are driving the change at Playboy: hard-core sex programming brings TV distributors nearly double the profit of Hollywood films. And consumers who pay to watch sex on TV seem to prefer the more explicit stuff: so-called buy-rates for hard core porn are more than double that of soft-core porn." (July 2, 2001; B6)

Philip Bickel writes, "The difference between soft-core porn and hard-core porn is like the difference between the pulsating blade of an electric saber saw and the raging teeth of a chain saw. Would you be willing to put either one in your pocket?" ("Pornography and the Search for Intimacy," Lutheran Hour Ministries, p. 15)

Jesus, You came to seek and save the lost. Rescue lives being ruined by pornography. If need be, use us in that rescue. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 11, 2001

Keyword: "Are we there yet?"

It's Wednesday, "hump day," halfway to the weekend. Today your energies may be flagging, your zest for work may well be gone.

Observant Jews take great delight in the fact that the day of rest, the Sabbath, is always coming. Always. There is no time in their week when Sabbath rest and renewal aren't just around the corner. That's an expectant attitude that must revive their flagging spirits!

We Christians can learn from that. Our Savior says, "I will give you rest." That means that even in the depths of work, even on "hump day," His rest and renewal is just around the corner.

"Are we there yet?" Kids love to pester their parents with that question. Looking for some rest and spiritual renewal? Put that question to your Heavenly Father.

His answer? "You're almost there!"

Dear Father, may the promise of coming times of refreshment help me through this day. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 13, 2001

The "Keyword?" It'll be God's

Yesterday the "Alliance for Marriage" began a campaign to amend the Constitution to decree that legal marriage in the United States can only be between a man and a woman. It's now a year since Vermont gave legal status to gay and lesbian unions and the court battles promise to

intensify.

After five decades I've learned that we don't know much about God. What little we know comes in large part from the Bible. Gays may talk about God's love but passages like 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 say that God doesn't condone the gay lifestyle.

Everything else aside, you and I live before God. He's our judge. He loves us all, gay and straight. He forgives us all...and we've all got sins aplenty. And, as the Bible tells it, that also includes forgiveness for the sin of homosexuality.

This is so tough, O Lord. Guide my attitudes so that they will reflect Yours. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 16, 2001

Keyword: Love

I hadn't planned this, but I'm writing from Washington D.C. because my daughter Elizabeth has been hospitalized.

Now is the time for faith to go to work. The sick hounded Jesus. Unlike religious snots, they knew they needed His help. Strangely He didn't cure them all (Mark 1:38). He pointed them, He's pointing us in our troubles to something greater. What's greater than health? It's the gift of knowing that you are loved, loved by God and loved by others. As 1 Corinthians 13 tells us, love has many virtues that are helpful in troubled times but one of the best is that love will never end. When illness strengthens in you the comforting conviction that you are loved, that temporary trouble becomes a blessing in disguise!

Thank you for asking, Elizabeth is progressing well. How would we cope in life without God's love.

Heavenly Father, deepen our awareness that Your love always surrounds us. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 18, 2001

Keyword: Thumbs up for God!

Does God exist? Listen to the world famous doctor Paul Brand. "For several years our team worked specifically with the pain system of the human hand, trying to find ways to protect the hands of leprosy patients who can no longer feel pain. What engineering perfection we find there! All (our) techniques correct the deviants, the one hand in a hundred that is not functioning as God designed. But we have found no way to improve on the hand God gave us. We wonder at the genius of Beethoven, but we have forgotten to wonder at the mystery behind the human hand that plays the

sonatas he composed. After operating on thousands of hands, I must agree with Isaac Newton, 'In the absence of any other proof, the thumb alone would convince me of God's existence.' (In Philip Yancey, "Soul Survivor," p. 14f).

Dear God, my thumbs, my humble, taken-for-granted thumbs, praise You! Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 23, 2001

Keyword: "On Eagle's Wings"

Two weeks ago I met Oral Hershiser. I knew of him as a great pitcher. 59 straight scoreless innings, winner of the Cy Young Award and the World Series MVP in 1988. However, I was amazed to hear that he was cut twice from his high school baseball team and, when he finally did make that team, he went to college on a baseball scholarship and was cut again!

You are often called "out" when you don't succeed, when you don't meet other's expectations. Yes, rejection hurts but finally will be of no importance. What counts, as Orel said, is God's forgiveness and help that keeps you going today and promises you a future in heaven. And if rejection helps build your eternal hope, then even rejection is good.

I asked about his name "Orel." He said it's Slavic for "eagle." Spirit of Jesus, in faith and hope lift us up on eagle's wings! Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 25, 2001

Keyword: Intercessory Prayer

The Chinese communists yesterday sentenced Gao Zhan to 10 years in prison for espionage. Friends, family, and the American government say there's no this U.S. resident and scholar was spying. As I shared with you in May, Gao Zhan and her family are members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Suburban Washington D.C.

Tyrannical rulers have persecuted the innocent for ages. Today is the day of St. James the Elder, a member of Jesus' inner circle along with his brother John and Peter. Like Gao Zhan, James harmed no one but an unjust ruler imprisoned him and put him to death. "King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death." (Acts 12:1-2)

O God, help us in our weakness. Set Gao Zhan free. Lead those who subjugate the innocent to repent, lest they fall into Your eternal anger. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 27, 2001

Keyword: Cui Bono?

That's Latin, meaning, "Who benefits?" I wonder, who will benefit from the administration's proposed faith-based initiative?

Will it be the religious agencies who will receive money from the federal government for social programs? Hmm...Should money encourage us people of faith to help the disadvantaged? Peter didn't wait for a government grant when he helped a handicapped man. "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." (Acts 3:6) The fact is that Good Samaritans don't wait for federal money to help the hurting. "Not by might or power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty." (Zechariah 4:6)

Cui Bono? Who will benefit? Money's important, no doubt about it, but more people will benefit from God's power at work in faith than from money.

Lord, don't let me hesitate today when I have an opportunity to do good. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for July 30, 2001

Keyword: More Cui Bono

Who will benefit if the administration's faith-based initiative is passed, the proposal to make federal money available to religious social agencies?

Legitimacy is a consideration. For many years some people have used the separation of church and state as an excuse to attack Christianity. The proposed faith-based initiative would help make the public debate fairer to people of faith. It says we're legitimate; we're ok.

That's good, but I wonder, where do you seek approval for how you live? From government? Shouldn't God be the One who validates your life?

Cui bono? Who will benefit? In an ancient controversy the prophet Elijah asked this basic question, "How long will you try to have it both ways?" (1Kings 18:21) The ultimate benefit will be yours if you seek your approval from God, not from anyone else.

Lord, guide me to seek approval for my life from following You, not from following anyone else. Amen.

