

The Meyer Minute for October 1, 2001

Keyword: Suffer-fest

Ready to grit it out this week? Read what the great bicyclist Lance Armstrong says about suffering. "What makes a great endurance athlete is the ability to absorb potential embarrassment, and to suffer without complaint. If it was a suffer-fest, I was good at it." (It's Not about the Bike, P. 24)

Lance Armstrong drew on his own resources to win. For your challenges, for your suffer-fests, trust in God to help you through. "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

"We brag because of our confidence that we will receive glory from God. But that's not all. We also brag when we are suffering. We know that suffering creates endurance, endurance creates character, and character creates confidence. We're not ashamed to have this confidence, because God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit." (Romans 5:2-5)

Spirit of God, in this week's suffer-fests, make me a winner with Your help. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 3, 2001

Keyword: Messianic Speculations

Judged by sight, Jesus was a failure. Since He was buried with the world apparently no better off, most Jews rejected Jesus.

Now comes a stunning development. A Rabbi Schneerson who died in 1996 is being hailed as the Messiah by Hasidic Jews throughout the world.

Judaism has never tolerated the possibility that an apparent "failure" like Jesus could be Messiah. Yet this new Hasidic movement claims a dead man as Messiah, even though the world continues to be imperfect. If Rabbi Schneerson can be Messiah, why not Jesus of Nazareth?

Why not hail as Messiah the apparent failure who died but now lives? Rabbi Schneerson is still in his grave. Jesus rose from His. Although they have a ways to go, this Hasidic movement is a development in the right direction.

Spirit of God, lead us all to know the true Messiah, not just the One who died but the One who lives. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 5, 2001

Keyword: Faith

Could your faith have helped you more these past weeks?

Faith should hold to God's promises (Romans 4:16). It should be forward looking, "being sure of what we hope for" (Hebrews 11:1). It's not shocked by trials, "the testing of your faith," (James 1:3). And faith is _or should be-an active expression of God's love in our daily lives (Galatians 5:6).

Father Gary Braun of St. Louis recently said this. "The question faith asks is Do I trust that the Divine Artist, God, can make something beautiful out of our broken lives? do we trust that we can make something beautiful-a new and sweet song of love-out of the brokenness all around us? It might seem impossible for you and for me, but the God who is Love refuses to know that." (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 1, 2001; D1)

Spirit of God, sustain me with a stronger faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 8, 2001

America's military retaliation began Sunday.

"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Savior." (1Timothy 1:-4)

In this effort for freedom and against the anarchy of terror, let us pray for our leaders.

"Almighty and everlasting God, we humbly implore thee graciously to regard the President of the United States, his counselors, and all others in authority over us; that, guided by Thy Holy Spirit, they may be high in purpose, wise in counsel, and unwavering in duty; and in the administration of their solemn charge may wholly serve Thy will, uphold the cause of freedom, secure the protection of our people, and set forward every righteous cause; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord." Amen. (Service Book and Hymnal, p.225)

The Meyer Minute for October 10, 2001

"When my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident." (Psalm 27:2-3)

Please pray that our military personnel find such confidence and protection in God.

"Almighty God, our heavenly Father, let Thy protection be upon all those who are in the service of our country; guard them from all harm and danger of body and soul; sustain and comfort those at home, especially in their hours of loneliness, anxiety, and sorrow; bless the ministry of chaplains who counsel those facing death; give success to our arms on land and sea and in the air; and grant unto us and all nations a speedy, just and lasting peace, to the glory of Thy Name and the coming of Thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen. (Adapted from "Service Book and Hymnal," p. 225)

The Meyer Minute for October 12, 2001

Keyword: Full

I had a religious experience last weekend. A vision? Tongues? No, a ride on a combine. I rode with my friend Art as he picked corn. Every few rounds he pulled up to the large truck at the edge of that Illinois field and unloaded hundreds of bushels that had quickly filled the grain tank of the combine. Watching that grain flow into the truck, I was overwhelmed. God has richly blessed us in America.

You know that's true, despite our problems. The ag bill before Congress isn't going to cure the dilemma of the American farmer. And whatever they may be, you face big challenges too. Still, our lives are filled with more blessings than problems.

So, be thankful. Even in these times of challenge, it's simply another way of affirming our independence upon God from whom all blessings flow.

Thank You, Father, for filling our lives again and again with Your bountiful goodness. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 15, 2001

Keyword: Worry

In "Standing on the Promises", Susan Wales quotes a Vicki Baum: "You don't get ulcers from what you eat. You get them from what's eating you." (p. 138)

What's eating you this Monday morning? Take this minute to apply some promises from God to your worries.

"Turn your burdens over to the Lord, and He will take care of you. He will never let the righteous person stumble." (Psalm 55:22)

"Thanks be to the Lord, who daily carries our burdens for us. God is our salvation." (Psalm 68:19)

"When I worried about many things, Your assuring words soothed my sour." (Psalm 94:19)

"My God will richly fill your every need in a glorious way through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Lord Jesus, sometimes my worries consume me. As You told Martha, tell me now: One thing is needful, the Word of promise. Remind me that in You all the comforting promises of God are "Yea" and "Amen."

The Meyer Minute for October 17, 2001

Keyword: Fear

Anthrax. we are told, is not contagious. Fear, we know, is.

Not everyone lived happily ever after in many Bible stories. Little people often got trapped in the chess games of worldly powers. "The wicked hem in the righteous." (Habakkuk1:4) Anthrax isn't contagious, but fear is...for good reason.

God promised Habakkuk an end to injustice, but not immediately. "The revelation awaits an appointed time. It speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it. The righteous will live by faith." (2:1ff)

Today's little people, you and I, can share that big picture. God promises to conquer random acts of evil in His time, not ours. For today each of us can only do what's right and trust that God's vindication of right will eventually come. When it does, we'll live happily ever after.

Lord, help me share with friends and family the promise that You'll vindicate the right. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 19, 2001

Keyword: God Bless America

I don't care what the A.C.L.U. thinks, but what does God think about those signs, or more precisely, the people putting them up? It's really a prayer. "God, bless America. "Why should God do that? Centuries before Christ, ancient Israel assumed God was on their side, but in 586 B.C. Jerusalem was destroyed and their "God bless Israel" signs were left in the rubble. Why? Their religion had become superficial, their hearts callous, their God marginalized.

God doesn't do our whims. If He is to bless us (which we all want), it will be so that each of us and all of us will get our lives more in line with the way He wants us to live. Lackadaisical attitudes to the divine by many Americans have done more damage than the A.C.L.U.

God, lead us to a more genuine relationship with You. In that spirit, we humbly implore You, God, bless America. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 22, 2001

Keyword: Grace

Users. You know the kind, people who use you to get what they want and then they move on.

Many sincere Christians have the opposite problem. They're reluctant to ask for help when they should.

Reflecting on her victory over cancer, Dee Simmons wrote, "Never try to go it alone. You need the love of others fully as much as you need the medicines your doctor prescribes, and maybe even more. Other people's love and encouragement can rebuild our inner person at times when we believe that's impossible. Reach out to that love and accept it." (Ultimate Living, p. 171)

Asking for help is one way to appreciate God's grace. Salvation is grace, a gift, and not a work. Asking now and then for some needed help can be a little reminder that ultimately we are dependent upon our God of grace.

Lord, teach me to accept help as a little reminder of Your grace. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 24, 2001

Keyword: Spiritual Renewal?

Today I'm an hour south of Berlin, in a town called Wittenberg. In this university town, Martin Luther taught. Here in 1531 Luther wrote something that applies to America today.

"I'm distressed at heart for Germany. For now she has the day of her gracious visitation. If she makes light of it and does not receive it, but scoffs and sneers at it, then Germany will lose the splendor of this glorious day, and God have mercy on her, she is ruined. ...At the time of the grace of her Lord, she remains unmindful of the eternal good. As the Lord says: If you comprehended it, you would weep, and you would receive forgiveness of your iniquities...Now I have not come as a hangman, judge, and persecutor, to destroy you; I have come as a Father, preacher, and Savior."

Heavenly Father, may we Americans not squander this present opportunity for spiritual renewal. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 26, 2001

Keyword: Angels

With Halloween coming, here are some lies about those supernatural beings called "angels".

We should seek angels.

No, says the Bible. "Seek the Lord" (Isaiah 55:6)

All angels tell the truth.

No, in fact, the Bible calls one angel "the father of lies" (John 8:44)

Human beings are able to become angels.

No. 1 Corinthians 6:3 says that someday we'll judge the angels.

Angels serve only to uncover our innate goodness and divinity.

Major lie. Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

Angels can help us gain access to heaven.

No, Jesus says, "I am the way...No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

(Bill Myers and David Wimbish, "The Dark Side of the Supernatural, Bethany, 1999; p. 33ff)

Lord, with the supernatural in the air these days, keep us in Your truth about angels. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 29, 2001

Keyword: Halloween Hullabaloo

Time once again for the annual Christian debate about Halloween. Harmless holiday or demonically dangerous?

Some Christians talk like good and evil are two equal forces. No, God alone is God and demonic forces are inferior. While evil wins some battles, God, being God, will win the war.

Don't however, be unconcerned. Years ago my children went out trick or treating and somehow didn't fall into the occult. Our concern was to give our kids a full, Christ-centered spiritual life for the real world. Under God's blessing, that's the parenting I commend to you.

"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them." (C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, p. 3)

Spirit of God, help parents live their lives in Christ and share that with their children. Amen.

The Meyer Minute for October 31, 2001

Keyword: Jesus

On this date in 1517, a young professor posted some propositions for academic debate. Those theses sparked the Reformation and a lifetime of writing for Martin Luther. His best-known words are this confession of faith:

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord,

"Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,

"That I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, "Even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

"This is most certainly true."

Jesus, I also confess that You are my Savior, my Lord. Amen.