

BETHANY INTERNATIONAL CHURCH MELBOURNE

FEBRUARY EDITION

*For the kingdom of God is not
a matter of eating and drinking,
but of righteousness, peace and
joy in the Holy Spirit*

ROMAN 14:17

WHAT IS THE
KINGDOM OF GOD?



for my house
will be called
a house of
prayer for all
nations

The Sle

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Pelayanan Gereja-Nya Di Era Pentakosta Ketiga

Dari zaman ke zaman, Alkitab menyatakan bahwa enam hari lamanya Allah menjadikan langit dan bumi, laut dan segala isinya, dan DIA berhenti pada hari ketujuh. Rasul Petrus menyatakan bahwa satu hari bagi Tuhan sama seperti seribu tahun bagi manusia dan seribu tahun bagi manusia adalah satu hari bagi Tuhan.

“Akan tetapi, saudara-saudaraku yang kekasih, yang satu ini tidak boleh kamu lupakan, yaitu, bahwa di hadapan Tuhan satu hari sama seperti seribu tahun dan seribu tahun sama seperti satu hari.” (2 Pet 3:8)

Melalui studi Alkitab kita menemukan bahwa kehidupan manusia melewati tiga zaman yaitu:

1. Zaman Allah Bapa (zaman pra-sejarah) yang berlangsung selama 2000 tahun lamanya, dimulai dari Taman Eden dan berakhir dengan panggilan kepada Abraham.
2. Zaman Anak Allah dimulai dengan perjanjian Allah kepada Abraham bahwa tanah Kanaan akan diberikan kepada Abraham dan keturunannya (**Kej 3:15-17**) lalu diteguhkan lagi melalui Firman Allah bahwa melalui benih Ishak yaitu Yesus Kristus semua bangsa dimuka bumi ini termasuk Indonesia akan diberkati Tuhan. Zaman ini berlangsung selama 2000 tahun dari Abraham sampai kepada Yesus Kristus.
3. Zaman yang kita hidupi sekarang ini yaitu zaman Roh Kudus yang dimulai sejak hari Pentakosta Pertama di kamar loteng Yerusalem. Saat ini kita berada di era Pentakosta Ketiga, kita berada di pintu akhir zaman Roh Kudus, dimana Tuhan Yesus akan segera datang kembali dalam kemuliaan-Nya. Apa yang Roh Kudus lakukan di zaman ini? Roh Kudus bekerja dengan luar biasa untuk menyucikan dan menyempurnakan gereja-Nya sehingga siap menjadi mempelai Kristus yang tak bercacat cela.

GEREJA DAN KUASA ROH KUDUS

Ketika Roh Kudus bekerja dengan cara yang ajaib untuk menyempurnakan

menyempurnakan rencana Allah maka gereja-Nya semakin nampak, eksistensi semakin sama seperti ketika Yesus Kristus hidup dan berada di dunia; yaitu semakin bergairah untuk melayani jiwa-jiwa yang membutuhkan keselamatan dari Tuhan. Gembala Pembina Pdt. DR. Ir. Niko Njotorahardjo mengatakan bahwa tanda dari murid-murid Tuhan Yesus yang telah dipenuhi oleh Roh Kudus adalah kehidupan mereka ditandai dengan “Signs and wonders”.

Allah kita adalah Allah Mujizat, Dialah Allah yang mengadakan banyak mujizat yang dahsyat di Perjanjian Lama tetapi lebih besar lagi mujizat yang Ia nyatakan dalam sejarah Gereja Tuhan adalah di dalam Perjanjian Baru. Kita melihat bagaimana Gereja Tuhan bisa berkembang begitu pesat di seluruh dunia termasuk di Indonesia? Jawabannya hanya satu; yaitu Kuasa Roh Kudus.

Pada Pentakosta Pertama dalam khotbahnya rasul Petrus berkata; “Bertobatlah dan hendaklah kamu masing-masing memberi dirimu dibaptis dalam nama Yesus Kristus untuk pengampunan dosamu, maka kamu akan menerima karunia Roh Kudus.” (**Kis 2:38**)

Karunia Roh Kudus diberikan Tuhan kepada Gereja-Nya tidak dengan sembarangan, melainkan untuk maksud dan tujuan tertentu, karena Tuhan bekerja dengan rencana yang sempurna dan bersifat kekal. Tiap sesi dari rencana Allah itu akan digenapi tepat pada waktu-Nya, manusia bisa saja menolak dan tidak percaya namun apapun respon manusia, itu tidak akan menghalangi rencana-Nya. Puji Tuhan kita berada di dalam Gereja yang percaya dan mau menerima karunia Roh Kudus.

Ada sembilan Karunia Roh Kudus (**1 Kor 12:4-10**) yang dibagi dalam tiga kelompok:

a. Karunia Pengetahuan Rohani (Revelation)

Yaitu: Perkataan Hikmat, Perkataan Marifat dan Membedakan segala roh.

b. Karunia Kuasa (Power)

Yaitu: Iman, Menyembuhkan dan Mujizat

c. Karunia Ilham (Inspiration)

Yaitu: Nubuat, Karunia berbahasa lidah dan Karunia menterjemahkan bahasa lidah

MAKSUD DAN TUJUAN TUHAN MEMBERIKAN KARUNIA ROH KUDUS

1. Untuk Menyatakan Rahasia Allah

Gereja adalah tubuh Kristus di dalam dunia ini, namun banyak orang termasuk orang Kristen sendiri mengira bahwa gereja itu hanyalah gedung atau organisasi agama Kristen, mereka tidak mempunyai pengertian yang benar tentang hakekat gereja. Itu sebabnya kita melihat umat Kristen terbagi ke dalam kotak-kotak yang disebut dengan Katolik, Protestan, Injili, Pentakosta, Bethel dan lain sebagainya. Keadaan dan kenyataan ini disebabkan oleh faktor manusia yang memang berbeda-beda paham, pandangan, kebudayaan, suku dan bangsa. Namun Alkitab tidak mengenal seribu satu macam gereja, melainkan satu Gereja yang esa, satu tubuh Kristus yang esa karena di dalam Kristus semua orang percaya dari segala bangsa dibaharui oleh Roh Kudus dan menjadi satu bangsa yang kudus, keluarga Allah yang terpilih dan milik Allah sendiri. (**Gal 3:28, 1 Ptr 2:9-10**)

2. Untuk Memperluas dan Memperkuat Pekabaran Injil

Gereja lahir karena Injil, oleh karena itu gereja harus menginjil. “Core business gereja adalah pekabaran Injil” (Pdt. Japarin Marbun - Ketua BPH GBI). Injil Kristus harus dikabarkan meliputi seluruh Indonesia bahkan sampai kepada segala bangsa di seluruh muka bumi, inilah Amanat Agung Tuhan Yesus yang harus dilaksanakan. (**Mat 28:18-20**)

Kita tahu ada begitu banyak rintangan dan tantangan terhadap upaya-upaya pekabaran Injil di dalam dan di luar gereja. Tanpa karunia Roh Kudus melalui Gereja-Nya, pekabaran Injil menjadi tidak menarik, tidak ada kesembuhan, tidak ada mujizat dan akhirnya tidak ada jiwa baru yang bertobat. Padahal mujizat merupakan “petunjuk arah” dan pembuktian bagi orang yang belum percaya, bahwa Allah itu ada dan mengasihi mereka.

Sistem penginjilan berdasarkan ilmu jiwa, ilmu pendidikan dan ilmu pengetahuan lainnya hanya menghasilkan sedikit jiwa yang bertobat, tetapi pekabaran Injil dengan karunia Roh Kudus itu dinamis dan revolusioner, seperti karunia yang bekerja dalam hamba-hamba Tuhan D.L. Moody, Gordon Lindsey, T.L.Osborn, Oral Robert, William Seymour, Billy Graham dan lain-lain yang dalam waktu singkat membawa ratusan ribu orang percaya kepada Tuhan.

Di Indonesia pun Tuhan akan dan sedang membawa hamba-hamba-Nya yang penuh Roh Kudus untuk membawa kebangunan rohani dimana-mana.

Seperti yang terjadi pada setiap Healing Movement Crusade (HMC) yang dilayani oleh Gembala Pembina kita, tanpa kuasa Roh Kudus tidak mungkin HMC bisa berlangsung dengan dahsyat dimana mujizat demi mujizat terjadi dan membawa orang menjadi percaya kepada Kristus.

3. Untuk Meneguhkan Iman Gereja Tuhan

Alkitab dengan tegas menyatakan bahwa Iblis adalah raja atau penghulu dunia, bahwa segenap dunia ini ada dalam genggamannya si jahat (**1 Yoh 5:19**), ia adalah musuh Allah dan gereja-Nya, ia adalah pendusta dan bapa dari segala dusta, ia pembunuh manusia. Dengan bermacam-macam ideologi, filsafat, isme-isme (ajaran) dan agama ia menipu manusia dan membawa manusia kepada kebinasaan. Alkitab menjelaskan bagaimana umat Allah di Perjanjian Lama dan Perjanjian Baru begitu berat berjuang memelihara dan mempertahankan imannya kepada Allah. Bangsa Israel menerima Firman Allah melalui nabi-nabi-Nya, orang Kristen menerima Firman Allah melalui rasul-rasul-Nya, semua itu diketahui Iblis.

Oleh sebab itu Iblis menyusup dalam gereja dengan pengajaran-pengajaran sesat, bersumber dari liberalisme, sekularisme, materialisme dan komunisme untuk membuat merosot dan akhirnya melumpuhkan iman gereja-Nya.

Kristus diturunkan derajat-Nya menjadi seperti manusia biasa dan disejajarkan dengan tokoh agama-agama dan mereka pada akhirnya berkata. “Semua agama sama saja kan? Semua agama mengajarkan kebaikan kan?”

Puji Tuhan, Roh Kudus ada di dalam perahu kehidupan kita, kita tidak lagi melawan angin ribut dengan kekuatan sendiri melainkan dengan mengandalkan kuasa Roh Kudus.

Sejarah membuktikan iman Gereja-Nya tidak dapat dipatahkan, walaupun mengalami aniaya, harus mati syahid namun imannya tidak goyah. Apa rahasianya? Kuasa Roh Kudus, karunia Roh Kudus yang bekerja didalam gereja-Nya mematahkan setiap tipu muslihat Iblis.

PENERIMA KARUNIA ROH KUDUS

Hal yang penting untuk kita pahami bersama adalah rasul Paulus sudah menjelaskan bahwa karunia Roh Kudus itu diberikan untuk mendatangkan faedah atau berkat untuk umat Tuhan dan bukan untuk kepentingan diri sendiri (**1 Kor 12:7**) dan

karunia apa yang diberikan Tuhan kepada kita, itu juga tergantung dari kehendak-Nya karena Ia mengenal pribadi kita dan mengetahui untuk apa kita dapat dipakai oleh-Nya.

Dari penjelasan rasul Paulus kita tahu bahwa yang dapat menerima karunia Roh Kudus itu bukan pengunjung gereja atau seseorang yang belum lahir baru melainkan setiap orang percaya yang telah yakin akan kebenaran Firman Tuhan yang menyatakan,

“Sebab dalam satu Roh kita semua, baik orang Yahudi, maupun orang Yunani, baik budak, maupun orang merdeka, telah dibaptis menjadi satu tubuh dan kita semua diberi minum dari satu Roh.” **(1 Kor 12:13)**

Keyakinan bahwa kita terikat dengan jemaat Tuhan adalah dasar Roh Kudus memberikan karunia-Nya. Apabila kita tidak mengasihi persekutuan jemaat Tuhan dan hanya mau bekerja sendiri-sendiri saja, maka tidak mungkin karunia Roh Kudus itu diberikan kepada kita. Karunia Roh Kudus itu tidak diberikan untuk kepentingan nama atau golongan tertentu melainkan untuk kemajuan gereja Tuhan, untuk kemuliaan dan hormat nama Tuhan Yesus Kristus. Kristus sebagai Kepala Gereja selalu memelihara dan membela tubuh-Nya, jemaat atau gereja adalah persekutuan orang-orang percaya yang berfungsi sebagai tubuh-Nya. Untuk kepentingan dan kemajuan tubuh Kristus inilah karunia-karunia Roh Kudus diberikan.

Bayangkan jika setiap jemaat di gereja dimana kita tertanam dan melayani, mereka penuh Roh Kudus dan bergerak melayani dengan disertai karunia-karunia Roh Kudus yang bekerja dengan dahsyat, ada yang menyembuhkan, orang yang sakit parah, ada yang melakukan banyak mujizat, ada yang bernubuat dan lain sebagainya. Semua itu akan menarik banyak jiwa datang kepada Tuhan.

Waspada Terhadap yang Palsu

Ada karunia Roh Kudus yang asli yaitu yang sudah kita pelajari di atas, namun kita harus waspada terhadap karunia-karunia tiruan alias palsu. Karunia palsu ini telah mengacaukan gereja Tuhan dan menanamkan kebimbangan dalam hati umat Kristen terhadap karunia Roh Kudus. Sebagai contoh: Sejak zaman Musa Iblis, telah meniru mujizat-mujizat Allah yang dilakukan Musa dengan kuasa Allah. Tongkat Musa menjadi ular, begitu juga tongkat ahli-ahli sihir bisa menjadi ular. Iblis bisa

memakai hamba-hambanya yaitu dukun dan ahli sihir untuk menyembuhkan orang sakit dengan kuasa kegelapan yang berujung ada tumbalnya.

Ada dua sumber dari karunia palsu ini yaitu: dari manusia dan Iblis. Biasanya Iblis menggunakan Firman Tuhan yang disalahtafsirkan untuk memperkuat teori atau rencananya. (**Matius 4:6**) Rasul Paulus menyebutnya sebagai ‘rasul-rasul palsu’, atau kita bisa juga katakan untuk sekarang ini pendeta palsu, penginjil palsu (**2 Kor 11:13**) yang bergerak dalam pelayanan dengan tipu daya menunjukkan seolah-olah mereka adalah hamba-hamba Kristus.

Kita dapat mengenalnya melalui ajaran dan buah kehidupannya, karena orang yang meniru karunia Roh Kudus memiliki sifat sombong dan berusaha menarik orang kepada dirinya sendiri; bukan kepada Kristus. Dalam pandangannya, semua orang dan semua golongan salah, hanya dia saja yang benar sehingga ia mengisolasi diri, hanya mau berkumpul dengan kelompoknya sendiri dan tidak suka bersekutu dengan eksponen tubuh Kristus yang lain.

Mereka juga berkata-kata dengan lidah asing, tetapi hanya dengan memperkatakan bahasa roh yang ‘asal bunyi’, bukan berasal dari Roh Kudus. Dan dari buahnya kita bisa lihat karakter yang sombong, cemburu, tidak jujur, malas, kebencian.

Segala sesuatu ada waktunya, dan hari ini api Pentakosta Ketiga sudah menyala, kalau kita ingin mengalami kehidupan melayani yang berdampak dan gereja dimana kita tertanam tidak sepi dengan jiwa-jiwa baru yang percaya kepada Tuhan, terimalah setiap kebenaran Firman Tuhan dengan hati terbuka lalu percayalah dan lakukanlah Firman Tuhan maka kita akan masuk ke ‘musim’ yang tidak lazim; dimana karunia-karunia Roh Kudus bekerja dengan dahsyat. Amin. (FM)

A place of refuge in Christ

Eden

Jennifer Chandra

Genesis 2:8 – Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

‘Eden’ – a place that holds one of the most significance in the Bible; a place akin to paradise, in which God had provided everything for His greatest creation: mankind. It’s also the place where He first came face-to-face with man, an encounter that would start the entire journey of mankind for thousands of years to come.

Fast forward to the present day, it is a name that has resonated with so many things on Earth –including our small, yet lively ‘Community of Love’ (COOL in short) in Melbourne’s Bethany International Church (BIC). Currently led by the boisterous and friendly Jennifer ‘ci Jen’ Chandra, ‘COOL Eden’ (just Eden for short) has become a place of refuge in Christ and a family away from home for some of the international students and young adults attending BIC Melbourne, even allowing some of them to meet and get closer to God for the first time.

All the members are blessed to be able to get to know Jesus more through this loving community and family in Melbourne. Fiona was an undergraduate student in February 2015, alone in an unfamiliar place at nineteen years old. She joined Eden not long after she arrived after she was referred by BIC Caring Team. Despite already being a believer beforehand, Fiona was learning a lot more about Christ through these group of people. In COOL we learn to accept shortcomings, teach more about His kindness as we bonded together in a Christ-filled community.

Emily, also has a similar story. She first joined Eden back in 2016 after going through an extremely rough year in her life, feeling that almost all hope was lost for her. But thankfully, the friends she made has become a ‘family in Christ who becomes a source

of strength and joy’, aiding her as a support system to always be reminded of God’s goodness and truth.

‘The community has allowed me to be more deep-rooted in my knowledge and love of God.’ Emily also added that in many occasions when she was praying with Eden, it became the place where God has revealed Himself and intervened with certain decisions in her life. It has certainly brought her to a better place, seeing that she is a happier and livelier person at this current stage. Praise the Lord!

Community of Love bring a little taste of family when we are far away from our real family. Enjoying a cup of frozen yoghurt or having Sichuan noodle soup at night are little things that Eden enjoy. Every Friday night we gather to fill up of both physical and spiritual food from the word of Christ. And we would like to invite you to join our Community of Love, Eden, every Friday nights to eat your fill up of both physical food and spiritual food from the word of Christ. We can’t wait to have you around!



17 FEB

Atmosphere of Encouragement

Read

Romans 15:1-7

Bible in a Year

Leviticus 21–22;

Matthew 28

*Each of us
should please
our neighbors
for their good,
to build them
up.*

Romans 15:2

By Cindy Hess Kasper

I'm encouraged every time I visit the fitness center near our house. In that busy place, I'm surrounded by others who are striving to improve their physical health and strength. Posted signs remind us not to judge each other, but words and actions that reveal support for others' conditioning efforts are always welcomed.

What a great picture of how things should look in the spiritual realm of life! Those of us who are striving to “get in shape” spiritually, to grow in our faith, can sometimes feel as if we don't belong because we're not as spiritually fit—as mature in our walk with Jesus—as someone else.

Paul gave us this short, direct suggestion: “Encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). And to the believers in Rome he wrote: “Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up” (Romans 15:2). Recognizing that our Father is so lovingly gracious with us, let's show God's grace to others with encouraging words and actions.

As we “accept one another” (v. 7), let's entrust our spiritual growth to God—to the work of His Spirit. And while we daily seek to follow Him, may we create an atmosphere of encouragement for our brothers and sisters in Jesus as they also seek to grow in their faith.

*Lord, help me today to encourage others along the way.
Guide me to say what will not discourage but will spur
them toward a deeper walk with You in Your love.*

Praying and Growing

18
FEB

When my friend David's wife developed Alzheimer's disease, the changes it brought to his life made him bitter. He needed to retire early to care for her; and as the disease progressed, she required increasingly more care.

"I was so angry at God," he told me. "But the more I prayed about it, the more He showed me my heart and how I had been selfish for most of our marriage." Tears welled in his eyes as he confessed, "She's been sick ten years, but God has helped me see things differently. Now, everything I do out of love for her, I also do for Jesus. Caring for her has become the greatest privilege of my life."

Sometimes God answers our prayers not by giving us what we want but by challenging us to change. When the prophet Jonah was angry because God spared the wicked city of Nineveh from destruction, God caused a plant to shade him from the hot sun (Jonah 4:6). Then He made it wither. When Jonah complained, God answered, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" (vv. 7–9). Jonah, focused only on himself, insisted it was. But God challenged him to think about others and have compassion.

God sometimes uses our prayers in unexpected ways to help us learn and grow. It's a change we can welcome with open hearts because He wants to transform us with His love.

*Lord Jesus, thank You for helping me grow when I pray.
Help me to be sensitive to what You want for my life
today.*

Read

Jonah 4:1-11

Bible in a Year

Leviticus 23–24;

Mark 1:1–22

*Whatever you
do, whether in
word or deed,
do it all in the
name of the
Lord Jesus,
giving thanks
to God.*

Colossians

3:17

By James Banks

19 FEB

Shelve Them and Move On

Read

Proverbs 15:30-33

Bible in a Year

Leviticus 25;
Mark 1:23-45

*Whoever heeds
life-giving
correction will
be at home
among the wise.*

Proverbs 15:31

By Ruth O'Reilly-Smith

I'm reminded of some wise advice a radio broadcaster friend once gave me. Early on in his career, as my friend struggled to know how to deal with both criticism and praise, he felt that God was encouraging him to shelve both. What's the essence of what he took to heart? Learn what you can from criticism and accept praise. Then shelve both and humbly move on in God's grace and power.

Criticism and praise stir in us powerful emotions that, if left unchecked, can lead to either self-loathing or an overinflated ego. In Proverbs we read of the benefits of encouragement and wise counsel: "Good news gives health to the bones. . . .Those who disregard discipline despise themselves, but the one who heeds correction gains understanding" (15:30, 32).

If we're on the receiving end of a rebuke, may we choose to be sharpened by it. Proverbs states, "Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise" (v. 31). And if we're blessed with words of praise, may we be refreshed and filled with gratitude. As we walk humbly with God, He can help us learn from both criticism and praise, shelve them, and then move on in Him (v. 33).

Father God, thank You for the gift of praise and criticism. As I humbly surrender to You, may I grow and be sharpened by both.

Send It in a Letter

20 FEB

Like most four-year-olds, Ruby loved to run, sing, dance, and play. But she started complaining about pain in her knees. Ruby's parents took her in for tests. The results were shocking—a diagnosis of cancer, stage 4 neuroblastoma. Ruby was in trouble. She was quickly admitted to the hospital.

Ruby's hospital stay lingered on, spilling over into the Christmas season, a hard time to be away from home. One of Ruby's nurses came up with the idea to place a mailbox outside her room so family could send letters full of prayers and encouragement to her. Then the plea went out on Facebook, and that's when the volume of mail coming in from friends and complete strangers surprised everyone, most of all Ruby. With each letter received (more than 100,000 total), Ruby grew a little more encouraged, and she finally got to go home.

Paul's letter to the people at Colossae was exactly that—a letter (Colossians 1:2). Words penned on a page that carried hopes for continued fruitfulness and knowledge and strength and endurance and patience (vv. 10–11). Can you imagine what a dose of good medicine such words were to the faithful at Colossae? Just knowing that someone was praying nonstop for them strengthened them to stay steady in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Our words of encouragement can dramatically help others in need.

How have others' words encouraged me? What opportunities do I have to give someone else the "letter" of encouragement they need?

Read

Colossians 1:9–12

Bible in a Year

Leviticus 26–27;

Mark 2

Since the day

we heard

about you,

we have

not stopped

praying for

you.

Colossians 1:9

By John Blase

21 FEB

Living Sacrifice

Read

Romans 12:1-8

Bible in a Year

Leviticus 17–18;
Matthew 27:27–50

*I urge you . . .
in view of God's
mercy, to offer
your bodies as a
living sacrifice.*

Romans 12:1

By Amy Boucher Pye

My great aunt had an exciting job in advertising and traveled between Chicago and New York City. But she chose to give up that career out of love for her parents. They lived in Minnesota and needed to be cared for. Both of her brothers had died young in tragic circumstances and she was her mom and dad's only remaining child. For her, serving her parents was an expression of her faith.

The apostle Paul's letter to the church at Rome urged Christian believers to be "a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" (Romans 12:1). He hoped they would extend Christ's sacrificial love to each other. And he asked them not to think of themselves more highly than they should (v. 3). When they fell into disagreements and division, he called them to lay down their pride, because "in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (v. 5). He yearned that they would show each other sacrificial love.

Each day we have the opportunity to serve others. For instance, we might let someone go ahead of us in a line or we might, like my great aunt, care for someone who is ill. Or maybe we share from our experience as we give another advice and direction. When we offer ourselves as living sacrifices, we honor God.

Lord Jesus Christ, You humbled Yourself and lay down Your life that I might live. May I never forget this most precious gift of grace and love.

He Holds Our Hand

22
FEB

The little girl who navigated the stairway one Sunday at church was cute, spunky, and independent. One by one the child—who appeared to be not much older than two years—took the steps down to the lower level. Descending the stairs was her mission and she accomplished it. I smiled to myself as I pondered the daring independence of this courageous toddler. The child wasn't afraid because she knew her caring mother's watchful eye was always on her and her loving hand was extended to help her. This aptly pictures the Lord's readiness to help His children as they make their way through life with its varied uncertainties.

Today's Scripture includes two "hand" references. After cautioning His ancient people not to fear or be dismayed, the Lord told them, "I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10). Many anxious and fearful children have been steadied by the strength of a parent.

Here God's power comes into view. In the second "hand" reference, once again it's the Lord who acted to secure the safety of His own. "For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand" (v. 13). While life situations and times have changed, the Lord hasn't. We need not despair (v. 10) because the Lord still assures us with the promise of His support and with the words we desperately need to hear: "Do not fear" (vv. 10, 13).

Father, thank You for always watching over me.

Read

Isaiah 41:8-13

Bible in a Year

Numbers 4–6;

Mark 4:1–20

I will

strengthen you

and help you;

I will uphold

you with my

righteous

right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

By Arthur Jackson

23 FEB

Living in God's Story

Ernest Hemingway was asked if he could write a compelling story in six words. His response: “For sale: Baby shoes. Never worn.” Hemingway’s story is powerful because it inspires us to fill in the details. Were the shoes simply not needed by a healthy child? Or was there a tragic loss—something requiring God’s deep love and comfort?

The best stories pique our imagination, so it’s no surprise that the greatest story ever told stokes the fires of our creativity. God’s story has a central plot: He created all things; we (the human race) fell into sin; Jesus came to Earth and died and rose again to save us from our sins; and we now await His return and the restoration of all things.

Knowing what has come before and what lies ahead, how should we now live? If Jesus is restoring His entire creation from the clutches of evil, we must “put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Romans 13:12). This includes turning from sin by God’s power and choosing to love Him and others well (vv. 8–10). The specific ways we fight with Jesus against evil will depend on what gifts we have and what needs we see. Let’s use our imagination and look around us. Let’s seek out the wounded and weeping, and extend God’s justice, love, and comfort as He guides us.

Father, may Your kingdom come and may it come in me.

Read

Romans 13:8-14

Bible in a Year

Numbers 7–8;
Mark 4:21–41

*The night is
nearly over; the
day is almost
here.*

Romans 13:12

By Mike Wittmer

Pray for Nation

SPAIN



Capital: *Madrid*

Population: *46.5 million people*

Religion: *Roman Catholic*



1. Let the light and truth of the word of God open every eye of this nation to see all the deceptions of the evil one through religious rituals and traditions that are misleading.

2. Let there be a significant change in which many of these nations who claim to be Christians find the true truth in the Lord Jesus.

3. Pray for migrants especially those from Arab countries so that they can be reached through the ministry of the Evangelical Churches there, so that many of them may know the love of Christ.

4. Listen to the commandment given to you today, Spain, love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 11:13).



MAIN SERVICE

8.30 am & 11 am

(Indonesian with English
translation)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9 am (English)

180

(TEENS)

8.45 am (English)

NEXT GENERATION

(YOUTH)

11 am (English)

PRAYER TOWER

Point Cook | Monday | 7:15 PM

BIC Melbourne | Tuesday | 6:30 PM

Mount Waverly | Wednesday | 7:15 PM

BIC Melbourne | Friday | 12:00 PM

BIC Melbourne (Fasting Prayer) | Saturday | 10:00 AM

COOL

Friday, 7:00 PM

LADIES FELLOWSHIP

Women of Impact Community

Tuesday 10:30 AM, at BIC

FUTURE EVENTS

BMF Amazing Race

Saturday, 16 March, 10:00 AM, at BIC



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