

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2021 – FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE EPIPHANY

Isaiah 40: 21-31 - The Creator Cares for the Powerless

²⁸ He does not faint or grow weary.

When in your life were you especially glad that God does not faint or grow weary?

²⁹ He gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.

When have you especially needed God to give you power and strengthen you?

When have you felt especially powerless? How did God help you then?

³⁰ Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted.

When were you especially faint, weary, and exhausted even when you were young?

"You are too young to be tired."

³¹ But those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

When have you been able to mount up with wings like eagles? Re the eagle and the crow

When have you been able to run and not be weary?

When have you been happy just to be able to walk and not faint?

Psalm 147: 1-11 - The Lord Heals the Brokenhearted

Psalms 146-150 all begin and end with the words, "Hallelujah!" – "Praise the Lord!"

What a great way to begin and end each day – with the words, "Hallelujah!" – "Praise the Lord!"

¹ Praise the LORD!

How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

³ He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

When have you been brokenhearted and God healed you?

When have you been wounded and He bound up your wounds?

⁴ He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.

And there are a lot of stars for God to name.

¹⁰ His delight is not in the strength of the horse nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner.

¹¹ But the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

1 Corinthians 9: 16-23 - A Servant for the Sake of the Gospel

²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law.

²²I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some.

The same apostle who wrote to the Galatians, "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?" (3: 1) was also willing to have Timothy circumcised "because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek." (Acts 16: 3)

What have you been willing to do or not do in order to not be a barrier to someone's coming to Christ? What should your church do or not do in order to help people come to Christ?

Mark 1:29-39 - Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law

²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

Peter's house – location – size – ancient church - present-day church – Matthew 19: 27

³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.

When are some times in Jesus' ministry when He got alone to pray?

At the beginning of His ministry – for guidance – Mark 1: 35

Before choosing His disciples – for wisdom – Luke 6: 12

After the death of His cousin, John the Baptist – for comfort – Mark 6: 46

When He was about to face the crucifixion – for strength – Matthew 26: 36

³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you."

Cf. the temptation that every church faces – to focus on the members – on those already on the inside – rather than on the community – on those on the outside

³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do."