



e - Votion

e-Votion for Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Dear Friends,

Don't forget TOMORROW night is the Emory & Henry Choir concert. 7 pm in the sanctuary.

We have a number of people to remember in our prayers:

- UNSPOKEN
- The family of Nellie Gover who died yesterday at the age of 103! (our oldest member I believe). Visitation Friday 1-2, funeral at 2 followed by Internment. Appalachian Funeral Home.
- The family of Joe Horton, Sr. Service of committal at Monte Vista at 2:30 Saturday.
- Mollie Gross Warren, her husband Cooper, and baby girl due in June
- Carrie Denny
- Jane Eddy
- Betty Squires, Susan Fields' mother
- Kevin Boggs, high school classmate of Debbie Shell

Today I am reading Numbers 21:4-9:

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a

Keep your focus.

LOOK AND LIVE.

Remember how contagious

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- Rev Jane Taylor

pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Do you like snakes? Not me. I cannot imagine touching a snake--they truly bring forth fear and for whatever reason I think they are icky, slimy, nasty, dangerous, and anything else BAD you can imagine. The children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness after leaving Egypt and they stumbled into a place near the Dead Sea that apparently, is infamous for SNAKES--Poisonous, lethal snakes. By then, they were OVER this wilderness wandering. Their attitudes were less than pleasant. They probably thought, "Here we go.... Why should we expect anything different? This trip has been a disaster from beginning until now."

The trip became an extended hike that lasted 40 years. Was it a disaster? Maybe. Was it an adventure? Absolutely. They complained almost as soon as it started and did not stop. "If only we had died in Egypt!" And on and on they griped. In this passage they are close to the end of their journey. God was just about at God's infinite limit!~ Their venomous tongues would be repaid with... VENOM! People began to die.

They came to Moses. They admitted they were wrong. "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you." They agreed that their mouths had gotten them in trouble. "Please, please, please pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." Moses prayed and he got this very strange instruction to make a bronze image of a serpent and hang it on a pole in the middle of the camp. His instructions were to inform anyone who is bitten will survive if he or she will look at the serpent. I've always wondered why God didn't just get rid of the snakes. As I have reflected on this passage, my AHA moment came when I realized that none of us can be healed until we recognize the disease within us. And their grumbling stopped.

I don't like snakes, but I wonder if these ancient Israelites didn't need these snakes. They focused on the brass serpent when they were supposed to and found healing. Later, it came back to "bite them" when the brass serpent became an idol to which the people brought sacrifices. Many, many years later good King Hezekiah smashed it into pieces. It is SO easy to lose focus.

Keep your focus. Look and live. Remember how contagious it is--when we are looking in the right direction, others want to look with us.

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in his wonderful face
And the things of earth will go strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace."

"Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words."

St Francis of Assisi

Blessings,

Jane Taylor
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