justify bothering someone with them. If there is something bothering us, we need to offer it up in prayer, and the more people praying, the better.

Having someone pray with you can be such a healing experience, not just for the person being prayed for but also for the person asked to pray. Why limit your potential for healing? Ask someone to pray for you and you pray for them, too.

Luke 18:9-14; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Malachi 3:13—4:6

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Good News Daily

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Sunday, November 15

Philippians 3:13—4:1 *Only let us live up to what we have already attained.* (v.16 NIV)

God gave us gifts to use, not to hide or hoard away. And these gifts include not only the physical or creative ability but also the power and blessing of God through the Holy Spirit.

God gives us tasks He knows we can achieve for Him. He doesn't give us tasks to trip us up so we'll fail. Too often we put off doing for fear of failure. We worry about what others will think of us if our venture doesn't work out. But just because a task ends differently than we expected doesn't mean it was a failure. It could only be the first step toward achieving glory for God.

I think our willingness to try and keep trying is pleasing to God. He wants us and expects us to keep trying. And as I gain trust and reliance on Him by doing what He asks of me, God will grace me with additional gifts with which to do more challenging work for Him. This can be both an exciting and frightening prospect. But, if we remember that God enables us to succeed by giving us power through the Holy Spirit, we will not hesitate to begin. He wants us to succeed, and He expects us to fully use what He has given us.

If we continue through the grace of God, our efforts done with God at heart will never be deemed a failure by God. And God's opinion of us is the only opinion that really counts.

Habakkuk 1:1—2:1; Psalms 66, 67; Matthew 23:13-24

Monday, November 16

Habakkuk 2:1-4, 9-20 *The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.* (v.20)

We may come to know more about God through books and magazine articles, but to know God—to develop a closer relationship with God—we must turn to Him in His holy temple and be silent. Being silent before God is so hard to do! Even those of us who think of ourselves as good listeners struggle to listen to God without distraction and with an open heart and mind.

When we talk, God will only listen. God knows that when we keep talking, we don't want a response. How can He help us with our daily struggles if we never let Him respond? How can He guide us if we don't listen? He could force it on us by shouting us down, but He won't. It is best if we come willingly to Him with an open heart and mind and be silent before Him and listen to the Lord, our God.

Psalm 89:1-18: James 2:14-26; Luke 16:19-31

Tuesday, November 17
Psalm 99 *They called on the LORD and He answered them.* (v.6b)

It takes practice to call on the Lord. But it takes even more practice to allow God to answer. It isn't just a case of stopping and listening because often we won't hear an answer. God simply responds to our need and, almost without realizing what is happening, that which threatened to overwhelm us is now manageable or no longer exists.

What we have trouble doing is relinquishing control to God. Even though we know at the very core of our being that God will handle the situation much better, we still try to keep some detail under our control.

God wants our complete trust, and doesn't need our help to tell Him how to solve our problems. God can be very subtle or He can knock us off our feet. The ways of the Lord are mysterious. We must be willing and open to all answers from God.

Habakkuk 3:1-18; Psalms 97, 100; James 3:1-12; Luke 17:1-10

Wednesday, November 18
James 3:13—4:12 *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.* (v.10)

We humans can be so fickle. One day, in desperation, we turn all our problems over to the Lord, admitting to God from the bottom of our heart that the world has overwhelmed us and we cannot do it alone. The Lord, in His infinite mercy, takes our burden from us and grants us peace and tranquility.

By the end of the day, everything has gone so well—decisions made quickly, changes in schedule taken easily in stride, meetings and errands wondrously and impeccably timed—that we feel great! So great that we then say to ourselves, "I can do this after all." Then the next day, we take back everything that we had turned over to the Lord (because we can do it, now) and our life suddenly turns upside down again. "What happened?" we shriek. Yesterday was so great and today is so terrible!

Yesterday the Lord had control, today we took control. Yesterday we moved nearer to God and humbled ourselves before Him. Today, we moved away from God and experienced the consequences. Each day we must humble ourselves before the Lord if we are to be lifted up by Him.

Malachi 1:1, 6-14; Psalms 101, 109; Luke 17:11-19

Thursday, November 19
Malachi 2:1-16 *"My covenant was with him [Levi], a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name."* (v.5)

A covenant calls for both (all) parties agreeing to do something. If one party does not uphold their end of the agreement, then the other party is not obligated to uphold their end of the agreement either. God made a covenant with Levi to give him life and peace; Levi's covenant with God was to respect and honor Him.

As I contemplated this verse, I found myself pondering who went first. So many times we agree to a "covenant" but wait for the other person to go first with their part of the agreement. This reflects both a lack of trust and a lack of seriousness about the commitment.

Who went first? God initiated the covenant, and He asks so little of us in exchange for eternal life. Initially, we may give respect and honor to God with some degree of skepticism and hesitancy; after all, this covenant sounds too good to be true. But God's covenant is strong from the beginning and He responds without hesitation. God never wavers, His covenant is forever and His giving endless in exchange for our trust and reverence.

Psalm 105:1-22; James 4:13—5:6; Luke 17:20-37

Friday, November 20
Malachi 3:1-12 *"I the Lord do not change."* (v.6)

Our lives tend to be so complicated that it becomes easy to lose our focus on God. We are distracted by the chaos around us—a world constantly changing and not often for the better.

It is during these times of high stress that we would benefit from having a small note card tucked into our pocket with the words "I the Lord do not change" printed on it. Then, when the world around us seems to be spinning out of control, we could pull that card out and remind ourselves that the Lord is our one constant, our source of stability.

We can always be comforted by the psalms, for instance, that are full of references to God as "rock," "cornerstone," "shield," "Judge and Ruler of all creation," "a refuge," and "a mighty sword," all things that are constant and unchanging and protective.

Thank You, God, for being the only thing in my life that does not change.

Psalm 102; James 5:7-12; Luke 18:1-8

Saturday, November 21
James 5:13-20 *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.* (v.16)

The reading for today concentrates on prayer. The passage from James urges us to pray at all times. Pray when you are troubled and when you are not. Pray alone and pray with others. Sick? Head for those who by their position within the church have authority—the elders—and ask them to pray for your healing. In other words, there is never a time not to pray.

Sometimes we forget how important it is to ask others to pray for us. We are hesitant or ashamed, or just don't think our problems, worries, or fears