

## Subject: Unreality

September 25 – October 1, 2023

### The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language

Compiled each week by Mark Mohlenbrock for CSDirectory.com

#### Golden Text: 1 Peter 2:11

11 Friends, this world is not your home, so don't make yourselves cozy in it. Don't indulge your ego at the expense of your soul.

#### Responsive Reading: 1 Peter 2:1-3, 5, 9-11, 21, 22, 25

1 So clean house! Make a clean sweep of malice and pretense, envy and hurtful talk. 2 Now, like infants at the breast, drink deep of God's pure kindness. Then you'll grow up mature and whole in God. 3 You've had a taste of God. 5 Present yourselves as building stones for the construction of a sanctuary vibrant with life, in which you'll serve as holy priests offering Christ-approved lives up to God. 9 But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God's instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you - 10 from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted. 11 Friends, this world is not your home, so don't make yourselves cozy in it. Don't indulge your ego at the expense of your soul. 21 This is the kind of life you've been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He suffered everything that came his way so you would know that it could be done, and also know how to do it, step-by-step. 22 He never did one thing wrong, Not once said anything amiss. 25 You were lost sheep with no idea who you were or where you were going. Now you're named and kept for good by the Shepherd of your souls.

#### Section 1: (1) 1 John 4:1

1 My dear friends, don't believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God. There are a lot of lying preachers loose in the world.

#### (2) Psalms 143:10

10 Teach me how to live to please you, because you're my God. Lead me by your blessed Spirit into cleared and level pastureland.

#### (3) Isaiah 45:6, 8, 12, 13

6 So that everyone, from east to west, will know that I have no god-rivals. I am God, the only God there is. 8 "Open up, heavens, and rain. Clouds, pour out buckets of my goodness! Loosen up, earth, and bloom salvation; sprout right living. I, God, generate all this. 12 I made earth, and I created man and woman to live on it. I handcrafted the skies and direct all the constellations in their turnings. 13 And now I've got Cyrus on the move. I've rolled out the red carpet before him. He will build my city. He will bring home my exiles. I didn't hire him to do this. I told him. I, God-of-the-Angel-Armies."

#### Section 2: (4) Psalms 103:6, 7

6 God makes everything come out right; he puts victims back on their feet. 7 He showed Moses how he went about his work, opened up his plans to all Israel.

#### (5) Psalms 95:3, 6-10

3 And why? Because God is the best, High King over all the gods. 6 So come, let us worship: bow before him, on your knees before God, who made us! 7 Oh yes, he's our God, and we're the people he pastures, the flock he feeds. Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks: 8 "Don't turn a deaf ear as in the Bitter Uprising, As on the day of the Wilderness Test, 9 when your ancestors turned and put me to the test. 10 For forty years they watched me at work among them, as over and over they tried my patience. And I was provoked - oh, was I provoked! 'Can't they keep their

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minds on God for five minutes? Do they simply refuse to walk down my road?'

#### **(6) Romans 6:16-18**

16 Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. 17 But thank God you've started listening to a new master, 18 one whose commands set you free to live openly in his freedom!

#### **(7) Hebrews 3:12, 14**

12 So watch your step, friends. Make sure there's no evil unbelief lying around that will trip you up and throw you off course, diverting you from the living God. 14 If we can only keep our grip on the sure thing we started out with, we're in this with Christ for the long haul.

#### **Section 3: (8) Psalms 10:4**

4 The wicked snub God, their noses stuck high in the air. Their graffiti are scrawled on the walls: "Catch us if you can!" "God is dead."

#### **(9) 2 Samuel 16:5, 6, 9, 10, 12-14**

5 When the king got to Bahurim, a man appeared who had connections with Saul's family. His name was Shimei son of Gera. As he followed along he shouted insults 6 and threw rocks right and left at David and his company, servants and soldiers alike. 9 Abishai son of Zeruiah said, "This mangy dog can't insult my master the king this way - let me go over and cut off his head!" 10 But the king said, "Why are you sons of Zeruiah always interfering and getting in the way? If he's cursing, it's because God told him, 'Curse David.' So

who dares raise questions?" 12 And who knows, maybe God will see the trouble I'm in today and exchange the curses for something good." 13 David and his men went on down the road, while Shimei followed along on the ridge of the hill alongside, cursing, throwing stones down on them, and kicking up dirt. 14 By the time they reached the Jordan River, David and all the men of the company were exhausted. There they rested and were revived.

#### **(10) James 3:5, 6, 8-11, 14-18**

5 A word out of your mouth may seem of no account, but it can accomplish nearly anything - or destroy it! 6 A careless or wrongly placed word out of your mouth can do that. By our speech we can ruin the world, turn harmony to chaos, throw mud on a reputation, send the whole world up in smoke and go up in smoke with it, smoke right from the pit of hell. 8 but you can't tame a tongue - it's never been done. The tongue runs wild, a wanton killer. 9 With our tongues we bless God our Father; with the same tongues we curse the very men and women he made in his image. 10 Curses and blessings out of the same mouth! 11 A spring doesn't gush fresh water one day and brackish the next, does it? 14 Mean-spirited ambition isn't wisdom. Boasting that you are wise isn't wisdom. Twisting the truth to make yourselves sound wise isn't wisdom. 15 It's the furthest thing from wisdom - it's animal cunning, devilish conniving. 16 Whenever you're trying to look better than others or get the better of others, things fall apart and everyone ends up at the others' throats. 17 Real wisdom, God's wisdom, begins with a holy life and is characterized by getting along with others. It is gentle and reasonable, overflowing with mercy and blessings, not hot one day and cold the next, not two-faced. 18 You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results only if you

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do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.

#### Section 4: (11) Luke 2:52

52 And Jesus matured, growing up in both body and spirit, blessed by both God and people.

#### (12) Luke 12:16-21

16 Then he told them this story: "The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. 17 He talked to himself: 'What can I do? My barn isn't big enough for this harvest.' 18 Then he said, 'Here's what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods, 19 and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!' 20 "Just then God showed up and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods - who gets it?' 21 "That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

#### (13) Matthew 6:31-33

31 What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. 32 People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. 33 Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

#### Section 5: (14) Psalms 139:1, 17, 18

1 God, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand. 17 Your thoughts - how rare, how beautiful! God, I'll never comprehend them! 18 I couldn't even begin to count them - any more than I could count the sand of the sea. Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you!

#### (15) Matthew 8:5-8, 10, 13

5 As Jesus entered the village of Capernaum, a Roman captain came up in a panic and said, 6 "Master, my servant is sick. He can't walk. He's in terrible pain." 7 Jesus said, "I'll come and heal him." 8 "Oh, no," said the captain. "I don't want to put you to all that trouble. Just give the order and my servant will be fine. 10 Taken aback, Jesus said, "I've yet to come across this kind of simple trust in Israel, the very people who are supposed to know all about God and how he works. 13 Then Jesus turned to the captain and said, "Go. What you believed could happen has happened." At that moment his servant became well.

#### Section 6: (16) Psalms 24:3-5

3 Who can climb Mount God? Who can scale the holy north-face? 4 Only the clean-handed, only the pure-hearted; Men who won't cheat, women who won't seduce. 5 God is at their side; with God's help they make it.

#### (17) Ephesians 4:17-24

17 And so I insist - and God backs me up on this - that there be no going along with the crowd, the empty-headed, mindless crowd. 18 They've refused for so long to deal with God that they've lost touch not only with God but with reality itself. 19 They can't think straight anymore. Feeling no pain, they let themselves go in sexual obsession, addicted to every sort of perversion. 20 But that's no life for you. You learned Christ! 21 My assumption is that you have paid careful attention to him, been well instructed in the truth precisely as we have it in Jesus. 22 Since, then, we do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything - and I do mean everything - connected with that old way of life has to go. It's rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life - a God-

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fashioned life, 23 a life renewed from the inside 24  
and working itself into your conduct as God accurately  
reproduces his character in you.

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