

Devotions

Monday: Receive Peace

This morning's scripture is 2 Thessalonians 3:16 – “Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.”

Jesus is the Lord of Peace. He gives us Peace at all times and in every way. There is a deep, gaping hole within us that can be filled only by His peaceful presence. People who don't know Him try to fill that emptiness in many different ways, or they simply pretend it isn't there. Even we His children often fail to recognize the full extent of our need: at all times and in every situation. But recognizing our neediness is only half the battle. The other half is to believe Jesus can and will supply all we need.

Shortly before Jesus' death, He promised peace to His disciples and to all who would become His followers. He made it clear that this is a gift: something He provided freely and lovingly. So our responsibility is to receive this glorious gift, acknowledging to Jesus not only our need but also our desire. Then to wait expectantly in His presence, ready to receive His peace in full measure. If you like, you can express your openness by saying, “Jesus, I receive Your Peace.”

Tuesday: God's Love

This morning's scripture is 1 John 4:11-12 – “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.”

God wants us to know the depth and breadth of His love that surpasses knowledge. There is an enormous difference between knowing God and knowing about God. Similarly, experiencing His loving presence is vastly different from knowing facts about His character. To experience His presence, we need the empowering work of His Spirit. Ask Him to strengthen you with power in your inner being so that you can know God's love in full measure.

Since the moment of our salvation, God has been alive in our hearts. The more room we make for Him there, the more God can fill us with His love. There are several ways to expand this space in our hearts. It is crucial to take time with God; enjoying His presence and studying His Word. It is also vital to stay in communication with God. As the apostle Paul wrote, pray continually. This joyful practice will keep you close to Him. Finally, let God's love flow through you to

others, in both your words and your actions. This makes God's love in you complete.

Wednesday: God is Worthy

This morning's scripture is Psalm 36:5 – "Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the skies.

The Lord is worthy of all our confidence, all our trust. So let us refuse to let world events to spook us. Instead, let us pour our energy into trusting God and looking for evidence of His presence in the world. Let us whisper His Name to reconnect our hearts and minds to God quickly. He is near to all who call upon Him. Let Him wrap us up in His abiding presence and comfort us with His peace.

Let us remember that God is both loving and faithful. His love reaches to the heavens, His faithfulness to the skies! This means we can never come to the end of God's love. It is limitless and everlasting. Moreover, we can stand on the Rock of His faithfulness, no matter what circumstances we may be facing.

People routinely put their confidence in their abilities, education, wealth, or appearance. But God urges us to place our confidence in Jesus, the Savior whose sacrificial death and miraculous resurrection opened the way for us into eternal Glory.

Thursday: God Called Us by Name

This morning's scripture is Isaiah 43:1 – "The Lord who created you, O Israel, says: Don't be afraid, for I have ransomed you; I have called you by name; you are mine."

The Lord has called each of us by name; each of us is His. No matter how isolated we may sometimes feel, we belong to God! He has redeemed us by paying the full penalty for our sins. Nothing can separate us from His loving presence. He called us to Himself in the most personal way: reaching down into the circumstances of our lives, speaking into the intricacies of our hearts and minds. Although he has vast numbers of followers, we are not a number to Him. He always speaks to us by name. In fact we are so precious to Him that He has inscribed us on the palms of His hands.

When world events are swirling around us and our personal world feels unsteady, don't let our minds linger on those stressors. Let each of us tell ourselves the truth: "Yes, this world is full of trouble, but Jesus is with me and He is in control." It is this but Jesus factor that makes all the difference in our lives. Change

the subject from problems to His presence many times a day by whispering, “But Jesus...” and look to Him.

Friday: He is with us Always

This morning’s scripture is Matthew 18:20 – “And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Trust Jesus in the depths of your being. It is there that He lives in constant communion with you. When you feel flustered and frazzled on the outside, do not get upset with yourself. You are only human, and the swirl of events going on all around you will sometimes feel overwhelming. Rather than scolding yourself for your humanness, remind yourself the Jesus is both with you and within you. Jesus is with you at all times, encouraging and supportive rather than condemning. He knows that deep within you, where He lives, his peace is your continual experience. Slow down your pace of living for a time. Quiet your mind in His presence. Then you will be able to hear Him bestowing the resurrection blessing: *Peace be with you.*

Saturday: The Lord is Good

This morning’s scripture is Psalm 34:8 – “Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.”

Taste and see that Lord is good. The more intimately we experience the Lord, the more convinced we become of His goodness. He is the Living One who sees us and longs to participate in our lives. He is training us to find Him in each moment; to be increasingly aware of His loving presence. Sometimes His blessings come to us in mysterious ways: through pain and trouble. At such times we can know His goodness only through our trust in the Lord. Understanding will fail us, but trust will keep us close to Him.

Thank the Lord for the gift of His peace, a gift of such immense proportions that we cannot fathom its depth or breadth. When he appeared to His disciples after the resurrection, it was peace He communicated first of all. The Lord knew this was their deepest need: to calm their fears and clear their minds. He also speaks peace to us, for He knows our anxious thoughts. Listen to the Lord! Tune out other voices so that we can hear Him more clearly. The Lord designed us to dwell in peace all day, every day. Draw near to the Lord; and receive His peace.