

Devotions:

Monday:

Listen

This morning's scripture is Isaiah 50:4 – “The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He awakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.”

Come to Christ and Listen! Attune yourself to His voice, and receive His richest blessings. Marvel at the wonder of communing with the Creator of the universe while sitting in the comfort of your home. Kings who reign on earth tend to make themselves inaccessible; ordinary people almost never gain an audience with them. Even dignitaries must plow through red tape and protocol in order to speak with royalty.

Though Christ is King of the universe, He is totally accessible to you. He is with you wherever you are. Nothing can separate you from His Presence! When He cried out from the cross, “It is finished!” the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. This opened the way for you to meet Him face to Face, with no need of protocol or priests. Christ, the King of kings, is your constant Companion.

Stay safe, stay healthy, take care and God Bless! Pastor Mary Lou

Tuesday:

Heavenly Caregiver

This morning's scripture is 1 Timothy 4:4 – “For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.”

Have you ever thought to yourself, “Why am I doing this? They don't care. It was a lot of work, but if I knew they at least appreciated what I did, it would make it easier. Just a word of thanks would go a long way.”

How often we try hard to please others. We put in our best effort, and no one seems to notice. What encouragement it would be to be thanked once in a while for giving out time and energy.

Two special words: Thank you. Good manners demand the use of this small but powerful phrase. As children we were taught to say it even when we didn't want the sweater our aunt gave us or the green beans Mom put on our plate.

But think of the issue from another angle: God is our heavenly caregiver. Think of all He has done in our lives. Have we thanked Him lately?

Being thankful to the Lord focuses our eyes on what we have rather than what we've lost. We find a new appreciation of the small things that show His presence; like a warm summer breeze or a good night's sleep. Saying thank you expands our peripheral vision to see blessings in unexpected places. Thank you, heavenly Caregiver!

Maybe it is time to say: Thank you, Lord, for all You do for me. Even when I can't see You or understand the reasons why things happen, I know Your love surrounds me. Amen.

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Wednesday: Rejoice

This morning's scripture is Luke 10:20 – "However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Rejoice that our names are written in heaven, in the book of life. Because we are Christ's, we have Joy that is independent of circumstances. We have received eternal Life that will never be taken away from us. Those who are justified (through faith in Christ as their risen Savior) are also glorified. There is a very real sense in which we are already seated with Him in the heavenly realms.

Joy is the birthright of all who belong to Christ. It can coexist with the most difficult, heartrending circumstances. So come to Him each morning with open hands and an open heart, saying, "Jesus, I receive your Joy." Then wait with Him while the Light of His Presence shines upon us; soaking into the depths of our inner being. Thus He strengthens us, preparing us for the day that stretches out before us.

As you journey through this day, return to Him for fresh Joy as often as we need. Christ is a God of unlimited abundance, so He always has more than enough for us.

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Thursday:

Hope

This morning's scripture is Romans 8:25 – "If we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance."

Among the five senses, sight is often the one that people value the most. Christ created the world glorious beautiful, and He wants you to appreciate beauty when you see it. However, even more beneficial than sight is hope, which is itself a kind of vision. It enables you to see, through the eyes of your heart, things that are not yet. The most stunning example of this is the hope of heaven. Your ultimate destiny is to share Christ's Glory! This is His promise to you, secured through His finished work on the cross and His resurrection. Practice hoping for things you do not see, both for this life and the next. Ask Christ to guide you into hopes and dreams that are in line with His will. Train the eyes of your heart to "see" these blessings, while praying for His will to be done fully and only. Discipline yourself to wait eagerly, with your focus on Christ and the lingered for outcome. Remain hopeful and expectant as you wait with perseverance.

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Friday:

Such as We Have

This morning's scripture is Acts: 3:6 – "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

Our modern materialism often skews our spiritual thinking. When called upon to do a task, we often think we need to have all the money, equipment, and personnel we'll need in the end before we begin. This is not God's methodology. God operates through us with "such as we have."

Peter and John didn't have money, but they did have the healing power of Jesus, which they offered in faith to the crippled man.

The little boy didn't have enough lunch to feed a multitude. But when he gave such as he had to Jesus, it multiplied.

The widow of Zarephath had only enough grain and oil for one meal, but she gave such as she had to Elijah, and she survived the famine.

When God gives us a job to do, He doesn't require our resources. He has everything He needs to accomplish His will. As Hudson Taylor said, "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." All God needs is such as we have, a willing heart and a willing body. He can and will take care of the rest.

Sometimes God calls us to do something that we feel that it seems too big for us. We feel we don't have all the things we need to do the job. At these times we must remember that God does and He is asking us to be willing to serve. We need to allow God to work through us as He sees fit.

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Saturday: Even Though You Do Not See

This morning's scripture is 1 Peter 1:8-9 – "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

Even though we do not see Christ, we are to believe in Him. He is far more real, complete, unchanging, unlimited than the things we can see. When we believe in Christ, we are trusting in the rock-solid Reality. Christ is the indestructible Rock on which we can keep standing, no matter what our circumstances may be. And because we belong to Him, He is devoted to us. Beloved He encourages us to take refuge in Him.

Believing in Christ has innumerable benefits. The most precious one is the salvation of our souls, forever and ever. Our belief in Him also enhances our present life immensely, making it possible for us to know who we are and Whose we are. As we stay in communication with Christ, He helps us find our way through this fallen world with hope in our hearts. All of this enlarges our capacity for Joy. The more we seek Christ and the more fully we know Him, the more He can fill us with inexpressible and glorious Joy!

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