

## **Devotions:**

### **Monday:**

#### Abiding In Him

This morning's scripture is Numbers 6:25-26 – “the LORD makes his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turns his face toward you and gives you peace.”

Invite Christ into your thoughts by whispering His name; suddenly your day brightens and feels more user friendly. When you speak His Name in loving trust, you sense His Presence and feel yourself drawing closer to Him.

There is great Power in His Name: Simply whispering “Jesus” can turn a hard day into a good day. By calling on His Name frequently, you acknowledge your continual need for Him. And when you pray His Name, you are actually calling upon His very Being. He joyfully responds to your invitation by coming nearer to you.

He is pleased by your desire to rely on Him in ordinary moments as well as in the big events of your life. When you whisper His Name, He responds not only to your neediness but also to your love. As you look to Him, His Face shines upon you in radiant approval; brightening your day and helping you to feel secure.

Christ is waiting to hear and to respond to you, but it is up to you to reach out to Him so you may receive the benefits of His Love and His Presence. Remember that no matter what is happening in your life, you are not alone for Christ is there for you.

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

### **Tuesday:**

#### Grace

This morning's scripture is 2 Corinthians 12:9 – “But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.”

Christ's Grace is sufficient for us, but its sufficiency is for one day at a time. That is why it is essential for us to learn how to live in the present, not the past or the future, but now.

Our minds so easily slip into the future, where worries abound. We also spend way too much time analyzing the past. Meanwhile, splendors of the present moment parade before us, and we do not even notice. Part of the problem is our tendency to strive for self-sufficiency. He will help us learn to rest in His sufficiency, depending on Him more and more.

We need His grace in order to live in the present. Grace is all about His provision for us, but accepting that goes against the grain of our natural tendencies. Each day we face a number of situations requiring His help. Moment by moment Christ proffers to us the needed assistance. Our part is to recognize our neediness and receive what He offers.

His Presence is with us always, providing everything we need. So don't worry about tomorrow's needs. Don't worry about yesterday's mistakes. His sufficiency is for a day at a time and that time is today!

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**Wednesday:** Fear

This morning's scripture is Romans 8:15 – “The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.<sup>[a]</sup> And by him we cry, “*Abba*,<sup>[b]</sup> Father.”

Fearfulness is a form of bondage. Christ died on the cross for us so that we would not be a slave to fear. When He sees His children continuing to live in bondage to fear, He is grieved. His sacrifice was not only to provide forgiveness of sins but also to open the way to our Heavenly Father's heart. Now that we trust Him as Savior, we are the recipient of perfect Love; His Love, Abba's Love. This perfect Love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment (and there is no punishment for His followers).

People are born into the world in spiritual bondage, including bondage to fear. Because we inhabit both a fallen world and a fallen body, it is not easy to break free from fearfulness. However, the Spirit of adoption can help you in this struggle, enabling us to see ourselves as we truly are: Much-loved children of God! The Spirit frees you to cry out, “Abba, Father,” believing we are His precious, adopted children. In the presence of a loving, strong father even the most frightened child eventually calms down. We have a perfectly loving, infinitely strong Father, so bring your fears freely to Him. Let Him hold us close to His Abba-heart, where we know we are safe. Open our hearts to receive vast quantities of His love. The more of this Love we hold in our hearts, the less room there is for fear. Receive His Love in full measure!

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**Thursday:** Assurance

This morning’s scripture is Hebrews 4:12 – “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” God knows fully well the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts, so it is wise to be honest with Him. When our hearts overflow with Love and Joy, He rejoices with us and delights in us. When we are rebellious and ungrateful, he continues to love us perfectly; even though our behavior is unacceptable. The more we believe in God; who He is and what He has done; the better our attitude will be.

When we are feeling ungrateful, we need to focus on the goal of our faith; the salvation of our souls. No matter what we have suffered in this life, our souls are absolutely secure. We have an eternity of inexpressibly wondrous Life reserved for us in heaven. This glorious inheritance has been credited to our account ever since we trusted in Him as our Savior God. As we ponder the wonders of our souls’ salvation, we become free; free to receive Joy beyond description and full of Glory!

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**Friday:****His Love**

This morning's scripture is 1John 4:16 – “And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.”

The very name God uses to address us, Beloved, proclaims how dearly He loves us. He shows us the full extent of His Love by enduring humiliation, torture, and death for us. No greater love than this is possible, or even conceivable.

We have tucked into our memories many experiences of His unparalleled Love. He wants us to dwell on these memories: Enjoy them over and over again! This practice will help convince our doubting hearts that His extraordinary Love is really ours, every nanosecond of this life and throughout eternity.

When we abide in Him, we also abide in His Love, for God is Love. As we live close to Him, communing with Him more and more; His living Presence permeates our entire beings. This empowers us to trust in His unfailing Love, secure in the salvation He won for us.

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**Saturday:****Joy**

This morning's scripture is Philippians 4:4-5 – “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”

Rejoice in the Lord Always. This is a moment by moment choice. It is possible to find Joy in Him even during the most difficult times. Because He is always near, He is constantly available to help us. He can even carry us through the times of extreme adversity.

Imagine a woman who has become engaged to a man she deeply loves and admires. Her heart overflows with pleasure whenever she thinks about her beloved. Problems fade into the background, unable to dampen her enthusiasm and excitement. Similarly, when we remember that God is our perfect Betrothed and

that we are promised to Him forever, we can rejoice in Him even though we face many problems.

It is in the present moment that we find Him ever near to us. His Presence in the present is an endless source of Joy: a continual feast! The soul-satisfaction we find in Him helps us to relate well to other people. As we enjoy His abiding Presence, we can bless others with our gentleness.

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