

Devotions:

Monday: Faith

This morning's scripture is 2 Corinthians 5:7 – "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

Christ's Light shines on us continually, whether you are aware of it or not. During the wee hours of the night, our thoughts are often distorted; even catastrophic. Although we may feel as if we are enveloped in darkness, remember that darkness and light are alike to Him. He is with us, and His Love for us never fails. We need the Light of His Presence supremely more than we need the light of the day.

When the way before us seems dark and threatening, we can still trust Christ to guide us. Walking by faith is akin to using radar to discern the way we should go. Instead of trying to see through the clouds of uncertainty up ahead, fix our eyes on Him. He can show us a way forward where there appears to be none. Moreover, as you strive to stay in communication with Him, our souls open up to Him. Even in the midst of our struggles, His loving presence can fill our souls with warm delight.

Stay safe, stay healthy, take care and God Bless!

Tuesday: Attitude

This morning's scripture is Psalm 90:14 – "Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days."

In God's Presence we have infinite approval. We often judge ourselves on the basis of what we see in the mirror, even though we know how fickle and shallow that ever changing image is. We tend to be equally enslaved to viewing ourselves through the eyes of other people, rigorously evaluating our personal performance and almost always feeling displeased with something we have said or done.

"Enslaved" is an appropriate word. We are indeed slaves when we try to measure ourselves through any perspective, but God's. Evaluating our worth based on how we look, to ourselves or to others, is always a trap. It is as if we are sifting sand in

a search for gold; looking only at the grains of sand filtering through the sieve, while ignoring the priceless nuggets that remain. The gold represents the eternal part of us: our souls. It is invisible to everyone but God, the one who plans to spend eternity with us. Though invisible, a well nurtured soul can actually improve our appearance: As we rest in the certainty of His unfailing Love, our faces glow with the Joy of His Presence.

His approval of us is infinite because it will continue forever. It is based entirely on His righteousness, which is ours for all eternity. When we look in a mirror, try to see yourself as you truly are; arrayed in perfect righteousness, adorned in glowing approval.

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Wednesday: Trails

This morning's scripture is 2 Corinthians 4:17 – "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

Come to God with the difficulties that are weighing you down. Even though there is no relief in sight, your troubles are actually light and momentary; from an eternal perspective. Your problems feel so heavy because you have given them too much power. Each time you focus on them and forget about God, you empower them a bit more. Even small objects placed very close to your eyes can obscure most of the vista before you. He wants you to put your troubles down long enough to view the vast expanse of Life that is spread out before you; all the way into eternity!

The best way to lay your problems down is: Bring them to God. Unburden yourself by pouring out your heart to Him, for He is your Refuge. As you release your woes to Him (even temporarily), your vision improves and you can see Him more clearly. Linger with God while His Light shines powerfully into your heart. This Light illuminates the knowledge of the Majesty and Glory revealed in His Face. This is the eternal Glory that outweighs all your troubles.

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Thursday: Worship

This morning's scripture is Deuteronomy 33:27 – “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemies before you, saying, ‘Destroy them!’”

God is the firm foundation on which we can dance and sing praises and continually celebrate His Presence; just as we long to. Most of the time, however, we feel earthbound and weighed down. Worshipping God requires the engagement of our entire being; sometimes we delight in and yet somehow resist.

If we want to learn how to celebrate God more consistently, more abundantly, begin by lingering in His peaceful Presence. As we relax in His everlasting arms, sense how safe and secure we are. He is indeed the rock-solid Foundation on which we can live exuberantly. Dancing, singing, and praying are ways you can express your delight in Him.

His very Presence radiates Joy in vast, unmeasured fullness! When we praise Him, our Joy increases, as does our awareness of His holy Presence. Our bodies may or may not be mightily engaged in this endeavor, but He sees into our hearts. There is where the ultimate celebration of His Presence takes place.

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Friday: Trust

This morning's scripture is Ephesians 3:17-18 – “so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,”

Christ wants to make our lives a glorious adventure, but we must stop striving for a lifestyle that feels safe. He knows how ambivalent our hearts are in all of this: We long for the adventure that a life abandoned to Him can be, and at the same time, we cling to old ways because change frightens us. Though we feel safest when our lives are predictable and things seem to be under control, He wants us to break free and discover the adventures He has planned for us.

The greatest adventure of all is knowing Christ abundantly: discovering how wide and high and deep is His Love for us. The power of His vast Love can feel overwhelming. That is why many people choose to limit their knowledge of Him, keeping Him at a distance. How this grieves Him! People settle for mediocrity because it feels more comfortable. Meanwhile, they continue to battle fear. Only Christ's Love is strong enough to break the hold that fear has on us. A predictable lifestyle may feel safe, but it can shield us from what we need most of all; Christ!

When unexpected events shake up our routines, rejoice. This is exactly what we need, to wake us up and point us toward Him. Recognize that we are on the threshold of a new adventure, and that He will be with us each step of the way. As we venture out together, cling tightly to His hand. The more we abandon ourselves to Him, the more exuberantly we can experience His Love.

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Saturday: Sorrow

This morning's scripture is Isaiah 53:3 – “He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”

Trust in God at all times. He knows the pain and sorrow you are feeling, and He wants you to pour out your heart in His presence. You need to release all those emotions in a safe place. Demonstrate your trust in Him by opening your heart to Him; as you do so, He promises to keep you safe.

Remember God is a man of sorrows, fully acquainted with grief. Because of all He suffered, He can empathize with you and share your pain. As you pour out your emotions in His Presence, your heavy burden grows lighter. You no longer carry your sorrows alone. You released them to Him, and He then relieve and refresh your soul. Moreover, as your heavy heart grows lighter, you are freed to learn more of Him: who He really is.

Come to God and get to know Him in ever increasing depth and breath. You will find that He is indeed a Refuge; a safe place flooded with eternal Love. Linger a while in His Presence, letting His Love soak into your soul.

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