

Devotions: 7/27 – 8/1

Monday: Intimacy With Him

This morning's scripture is 1 Timothy 6:14-15 – "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time – God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords."

We have the amazing privilege of knowing God intimately, yet this privilege is not an invitation to act as if we are His equal. He wants us to worship Him as King of kings while walking hand in hand with Him.

He knows it is not easy for us to strike that balance, He took a huge risk when He created mankind in His own image. He made us with the awesome ability to reverence and love Him freely, without coercion. He paid enormously for our Him, the King of kings and Lord of lords. When one of His children draws near to Him in reverent awe, He opens His heart and offers intimate friendship. The Joy we share with God cannot be measured.

However, from time to time we overstep our bounds, forgetting who He is. We talk to Him carelessly, even slanderously. While our intimacy with Him is hindered by our irreverent attitude, His Love for us is constant. When we remember His majestic Presence and return to Him repentantly, He not only forgives us, but He rushes to meet us and enfold us in His embrace. He celebrates with us the Joy of being close again with Him as we walk with God down the path of Life.

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

Tuesday: Desiring Him

This morning's scripture is Hebrews 10:12-14 – "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God... For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."

Christ is pleased with us, His children. Though we are still a work in progress, we desire for Him to sanctify us; to make us holy. His sacrifice for sins made us eternally perfect the instant we trusted Christ as Savior. This sacrifice was perfect

because He is perfect and He is our Substitute in the courts of heaven. However, as long as we live in this world, we inhabit the not yet of brokenness; in us and all around us. This explains the emptiness we often feel as we long for both our perfection in holiness and our perfect home in heaven.

The best way to enhance His sanctifying work in us is to love Him with all our heart and mind; with our entire being and all our might. King David expressed such ardor when he leapt and danced before God with all his might. In spite of the serious sins he committed, he was a man after God's own heart.

Instead of focusing on all the brokenness in and around us, fan the flames of our love for Him. Though this love may be like the flickering flame of a candle, his Love for us is like a blazing forest fire. Come more and more into His Presence, and His holy Fire will ignite holy ardor in us.

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Wednesday: Prayer

This morning's scripture is Romans 8:26-27 – "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit interceded for the saints in accordance with God's will."

When we feel unable to pray, remember that the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Some of our prayers that we consider frantic and unintelligible are actually quite profound. They rise from the depths of our hearts; all the way to heaven. To form these deep prayers, we need only turn toward God with the concerns that lie heavy on our hearts.

He wants us to watch in hope as we wait for Him, our Savior, Wait expectantly; confident that He will do what is best. The longer we have to wait, the more we must rely on our trust in Him. If we start to feel anxious, seek His help with short prayers as often as needed. As we put our hope in Him, His unfailing Love rests peacefully upon us.

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Thursday: Hope

This morning's scripture is Romans 12:12 –“Rejoice and exult in hope; be steadfast and patient in suffering and tribulation; be constant in prayer.”

Be steadfast and patient in suffering. Affliction is a largely unappreciated gift among God's children. Decades of “health and wealth” teaching have obscured the benefits of suffering. As a result, a secular worldview that despise pain and sorrow has infiltrated the church.

When painful circumstances are weighing us down, He encourages us to rejoice and exult in hope; to leap joyously upward. Although physical jumping is sometimes impossible or inappropriate, our souls can leap upward at any time. As we life our souls to Him in hopeful anticipation, His showers of Joy fall upon and within us. The longer and more expectantly we wait in His Presence, the more abundantly He can bless us. One way to enhance this transaction is to lift our wide open arms up towards God; as if we were celebrating a triumphant moment in our lives. This posture expresses exultant Joy, and He responds by filling our souls with more Joy. This puts us on an upward spiral of rejoicing. If we want to verbalize our jubilation, one of the best ways is to speak, sing, or shout: “Hallelujah!”

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Friday: Striving

This morning's scripture is Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things though Him who strengthens me.”

Instead of rushing to pursue a goal, take time to talk with God about it. He realizes that striving to achieve comes almost as naturally to us as breathing. When a goal grabs our attention, our instinct is to “go for it” without really thinking it through, We may invest a lot of time and energy in the endeavor; only later realizing that it

was the wrong pursuit. But when you take the time to first discuss matters with God, we experience much more satisfaction.

There are many benefits to talking with Him; before, during, and after our quest. The Light of His Presence illuminates the pursuit so we can see it from His perspective. As our perspective lines up more with His, we gain a growing desire to please Him. This desire produces benefits far beyond the task at hand; It deepens our relationship with God.

If we discern that our pursuit accords with His will, then we can go forward confidently. As we work collaboratively with Him, continue to communicate about what we are doing. When our goal has been achieved, thank Him for His help and guidance. Rejoice in what together with God we have accomplished!

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Saturday: Pleasing Him

This morning's scripture is Matthew 22:37-38 – "Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,' This is the first and greatest commandment.'"

A successful day is one in which we have stayed in touch with God, even if many things remain undone at the end of the Day. It sounds almost too good to be true, doesn't it? We rarely reach day's end without a sense of failure to some degree. The various means and measures of worldly "success" pulls on us constantly, leaving us in a fragmented, unfocused conditions.

To avoid confusion, we need a rule of thumb: Seek to please God. When communicating with Him is our highest priority, He is pleased. The more we commune with Him as we go through a day, the more we walk in His ways. The light of His Presence illumines the path before us, making sin both obvious and abhorrent. This same Light satisfies our souls. So make this a successful day by staying in communication with God.

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