

Devotions **8/24 to 8/29**

Monday: His Sufficiency

This morning's scripture is Psalm 46:10 – “Cease *striving* and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the ^[b]nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

God understands us perfectly and loves us eternally. It is our souls He loves, rather than our appearance or performance. Sometimes we are so dissatisfied with both of these that they become our focus. To break free from this self-preoccupation, relax into His loving Presence and let the Light of His Love soak into you entire being. Rest deeply while He massages our thoughts and feelings, helping us change our focus from ourselves to Him. Remember that God created us to know Him: to enjoy Him and center our lives in Him. Cease striving and Know He is God.

The world abounds with idols, things we turn to when we want to feel better about ourselves: eating, entertainment, exercise, mastery of something or someone. However, none of these things can slake the thirst of our souls, which yearn for Him alone. Idolatrous substitutes may suppress your appetite for Him, mainly by distracting us, but they provide no satisfaction. When we get that gnawing sensation around the edges of our souls, return to God. Your soul will be satisfied as with the riches of foods.

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

Tuesday: Renewing Your Mind

This morning's scripture is Romans 8:6 – “The attitude that comes from selfishness leads to death, but the attitude that comes from the Spirit leads to life and peace.”

A happy heart is good medicine, and a cheerful mind works healing. We may think we need to experience healing first in order to gain a cheerful heart and mind. However, we have a powerful source of happiness within each of us: the Holy Spirit! He can empower you to live above your circumstances. When our hearts are heavy, ask Him to fill them with buoyant cheerfulness. He takes pleasure in doing this as we entrust ourselves into His capable care.

Friday:

Emptiness

This morning's scripture is Hebrews 4:16 – “Finally, let's draw near to the throne of favor with confidence so that we can receive mercy and find grace when we need help.”

Come to Christ with your aching emptiness. Take time with Him so He can fill you with Joy in His Presence. He crafted you as a dependent being, needing many resources outside of yourself; air, food, water, shelter, clothing and so on. Mankind has long recognized these basic needs. However, even when such needs are fully met, there is something vital missing: a living relationship with Christ. He is the only One who can satisfy your soul-hunger. Open your heart and soul to Him, and let the joyous abundance of His Presence flow into you.

Since He is the same yesterday and today and forever, there could never be a time when you might find Him lacking. It is crucial not only to know this truth but also to believe it wholeheartedly. Whenever you are feeling empty, come boldly to His throne of grace. Pour out your heart to Him and allow Him to help you. Confess not only your neediness but also the idolatrous ways you have tried to satisfy your needs. Cooperate with Him as He cleanses your heart of idols. Then, lift up empty hands of faith to receive all that He has for you. Thus you can enjoy many blessings even while living in a deeply fallen world. This is a mere foretaste of the endless pleasures He has reserved for you in paradise.

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Saturday:

Desiring Him

This morning's scripture is 2 Peter 1:5-6 – “This is why you must make every effort to add moral excellence to your faith; and to moral excellence, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, godliness;”

We will seek God and find God when we seek Him with all our heart. He knows the full extent of our weaknesses, and He realizes that seeking Him wholeheartedly requires massive, sustained effort. He understands the brokenness within us and all around us. We are easily distracted by this disjointed world and by our restless

thoughts. He does not expect perfection in our pursuits of Him; it is not about that at all. It is the effort itself that pleases Him, seeking Him even though it is so hard.

Actually, the strenuousness of this pursuit blesses us! As we strive to find Him in our moments, our focus is on Him. While we plow our way towards Him through countless distractions, our awareness of Him increases. Even if we do not feel close to Him, we find ourselves communicating with Him. So there is a sense in which our efforts to find Him are self-fulfilling: He is richly present in our striving. As a result, we feel more alive, more solid and real, when we are actively pursuing Him.

Our willingness to pour ourselves into this quest delights His heart. This challenging journey is all about perseverance. As long as we continue seeking Him, we are on the right path. His Presence continually moves along before us, keeping us from stagnating and showing us the way forward. In spite of the difficulties of the arduous trail we are following, our success is certain: God will be found by us!

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