

Devotions: 10/5 to 10/10

Monday: Pray

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Be joyful always: pray continually. The way to rejoice at all times is to find moment-by-moment pleasure in our relationship with Christ, the Lover of our souls. This relationship is so full of comfort and encouragement that it is possible to be joyful in hope even when we are in the midst of adversity.

Give thanks in all circumstances. There is immense Power in praying, "Thank You, Jesus." These three words are appropriate for all times and in every situation because His great sacrifice for us. He encourages us to praise Him for every good thing as soon as we become aware of it. This practice adds sparkle to our blessings, heightening our joy.

When we are feeling sad or discouraged, it is still a good time to thank Him. This demonstrates our trust in Him and brightens our perspective. To enhance our gratefulness, ponder specific things about Christ that delight us, His continual Presence, His lavish grace, His unfailing Love. Thanking Him in all circumstances strengthens our relationship with Him and helps us to live more joyfully!

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

Tuesday: Trust

Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

Blessed are all those who wait for the Lord! Waiting patiently does not come easily to us, but it is nonetheless very good for us. We long to plan ahead, make definitive decisions, and make things happen. There is a time for that, but this is not the time. Now is a time for sitting in His Presence, trusting Him with our whole beings. This discipline will bring a wealth of blessings our way.

Some of the good things He offers us reside in the future. While we obediently wait on Him, we are building us equity for those not-yet blessings. Because they are veiled in the mystery of the future, we cannot see them clearly. Other blessings

are for the present. The very process of waiting for Him is beneficial. It keeps our souls on tiptoes, as we look up to Him in hope. We acknowledge that He is in control. And we rest in His goodness. Though we may not understand why we have to wait so long, He blesses us as we choose to trust Him with all our hearts.

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Wednesday: Trust Christ

John 3:36 - Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

We can trust the One who died for us. In this world of spin and scams, we often find it hard to believe anyone. We talk about requiring others to earn their trust by proving themselves. Christ is the quintessential Person who has earned the right to be trusted. For our sakes, He left the glorious perfection of heaven and began life in our world as a helpless, stable-born infant. He resisted all temptations for thirty-three years so that His sacrifice for sinners would be sufficient. He lives a perfect life and freely gave His body to be tortured and executed, to pay the full penalty for sin. As a result of His death and resurrection, whoever believes in Him has eternal life!

He wants us to rely on Him, not only as our Savior but also as the God-Friend who is taking care of us. He has already proved how trustworthy He is. Now He invites us to relax in His loving Presence and confide in Him. Tell Him our hopes and fears. Cast all our anxiety on Him because He cares for each of us.

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Thursday: Gift of Forgiveness

Romans 8:1-2 - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Thank Christ for the glorious gift of forgiveness. He is our Savior-God, and He alone can give us this blessing. He went to exorbitant expense to procure this gift for us. We receive forgiveness and become His children by receiving Him and believing in His Name. This Name, Jesus, means the Lord saves. To receive this

gift of salvation, we need to trust Him as our only Hope, the One who delivers us from all our sins.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. He wants us to enjoy the wonder of walking through our lives as His followers, totally forgiven! The best response to this wondrous gift is to live in gratitude, seeking to please Him above all else. We do not need to do good things to secure His Love, because it is already ours. Just let our desire to please Him flow readily out of our grateful hearts. Thanking Him frequently will help us stay close to Him, ready to follow wherever He leads. Rejoice, beloved, for through Christ the law of the spirit of Life has set us free!

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Friday: There is Peace

John 16:33 - "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Christ's kingdom is not of this world; it is indestructible and eternal. When we see shocking evil and mismanagement all around us, do not despair. As He was being arrested, He told His disciples that He could call on His Father and He would send more than twelve legions of angels to rescue Him. However, this was not the plan He and the Father had chosen. It was necessary for Him to be crucified; to save everyone who calls on His Name.

Remember that we are part of His kingdom of everlasting Life and Light. The darker our planet becomes, the more we need to cling to the hope we have in Christ. Despite the way things look, He is in control, and He is accomplishing His purposes in ways we cannot understand. Though this world is deeply fallen, it is possible to live in it with Joy and Peace in our hearts. As He told His disciples, so He is saying to us now: Be of good cheer; He has overcome the world. Because we belong to His kingdom, in Him we may have Peace.

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Saturday:

Reason for Our Hope

1 Peter 3:15 - But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

As we seek Christ, He encourages us to rejoice and be glad in Him. Take time to praise Him in psalms and song. Think about who He is: He dwells in splendor, majesty, and beauty. Then remember how He left the Glory of heaven and came into the world; so He could bring us into His kingdom of everlasting Life and Light. All of this helps us further to be joyful in Him, our Savior. This Joy ushers us further into His holy Presence, helping us draw nearer to Him. And this nearness gives us even more reason to rejoice!

Being joyful blesses not only us, but other people. Our families and friends will benefit from our gladness, which can rub off on them. We can also influence many beyond our inner circles. When His followers are joyful, unbelievers are more likely to be drawn to Him. Joy shines in stark contrast to our ever-darkening world, and some people will ask us about it. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you the reason for our hope.

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