

## **Devotions: 11-9 to 11-14**

**Monday:** God with Us

*Romans 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

No matter how lonely we feel, we are never alone. Anything that causes us to be separated from loved ones especially at Christmas and other holiday can be hard on people. Right now it is the Covid-19, but the separation may also be the result of death, divorce, distance or other causes which compounds the loneliness. But all of God's children have a resource that is more than adequate to help them: God's continual Presence.

Remember the prophecy about Jesus: The virgin will give birth to a Son, and they will call Him Immanuel; which means "God with us." Long before He was born, He was proclaimed to be the God who is with us. This is rock-solid truth that nobody and no circumstance can take away from us even a virus.

Whenever we are feeling lonely, take time to enjoy His Presence. Thank Him for wrapping us with a robe of righteousness to make us righteous. Ask Him, God of hope, to fill us with Joy and Peace. Then through the help of the Holy Spirit, we can overflow with hope into the lives of others.

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

**Tuesday:** Trusting

*1 John 1:7 - But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

The Christian life is all about trusting Jesus: in the good times and in hard times. He is Lord over all our circumstances, so He wants to be involved in every aspect of our lives. We can quickly connect with Him by affirming our confidence in Him here and now. When our world seems dark and we trust in Him anyways, His Light shines brightly through us. Our display of transcendent faith weakens spiritual forces of evil. And His supernatural Light showing through us blesses and strengthens people around us.

Clinging to Him in the dark requires us to persistently exert our willpower. But while we are grasping onto Him, remember: His hand has an eternal grip on ours; He will never let go of us! Moreover, The Holy spirit helps us to keep hanging on. When we feel on the verge of giving up, cry out for His assistance: “Help me, Holy Spirit!” This brief prayer enables us to tap into His limitless resources. Even when our circumstances look dark and threatening, His Light is still shining on in surpassing splendor!

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**Wednesday:** His Endless Love

*Jeremiah 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

Relax Children of God, He is in control. Let these words wash over us repeatedly, like soothing waves on a beautiful beach, assuring us of His endless Love. We waste a lot of time and energy trying to figure our things before their time has come. Meanwhile He is working to prepare the way before us. So be on the lookout for some wonderful surprises, circumstances that only He could have orchestrated.

Remember that we are His beloved. He is on our side, and He wants what is best for us. Someone who is loved by a generous, powerful person can expect to receive an abundance of blessings. We are loved by the King of the universe, and He has good plans for us. As we look ahead into the unknown future, relax in the knowledge of who we are, the ones He loves. Cling to His hand, and go forward with confidence. While we walk together with Him along the path of Life, our trust in Him will fill our hearts with Joy and our minds with Peace.

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**Thursday:** Trials

*Matthew 19:26 - Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”*

With Jesus all things are possible. When we bump into massive difficulties on our life-paths, He wants us to consider it pure Joy. As we bounce off these “impossibilities,” His everlasting arms are wide open, ready to catch us, calm us,

and help us do what does not seem possible. We can be joyful in the midst of perplexing problems because He is God our Savior. He has already accomplished the greatest miracle' saving us for our sins. If we keep looking to Him our resurrected Lord and King, our pessimism will eventually yield to courage.

Since He is infinite, "impossibilities" are His specialty. He delights in them because they display His Glory so vividly. They also help us live the way He intended: in joyful, trusting dependence on Him. The next time we face an "impossible" situation, turn to Him immediately with a hopeful heart. Acknowledge our total inadequacy, and cling to Him, relying on His infinite sufficiency. All things are possible with Him!

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**Friday:** Striving

*1 Timothy 2:8 - Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.*

To receive Christ's Peace, we must change our grasping, controlling stance to one of openness and trust. Grasping and controlling are our means of trying to feel safe. However, such an approach actually hurts us and works against us: The more we manipulate and maneuver for control, the more anxious we become.

Rather than striving for peace of mind through these means, abandon ourselves to Him. His hand is the only thing we can grasp without damaging our soul. Let Him help us open our hands, receive all that He has for us.

What we do with our bodies can help or hinder what goes on in our souls. When we realize we are grasping for control, become aware of our body language. Intentionally open our hands, releasing our concerns to Him and inviting Him to take charge. Open our hearts and minds as well, as we lift our hands to Him. We are now in a good position to receive His many blessings, not the least of which is awareness of His Presence.

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**Saturday:**

Assurance

*John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Truth is the very heart of who Jesus is, so we cannot love Him without loving the truth. In fact, for this reason He came into the world, to testify to the truth. He abhors lies, especially about salvation, which is through Him alone. In this age of "tolerance," many people deem it arrogant to believe in absolute truth. However, unless the gospel is absolutely true, people who trust Him as Savior are to be pitied more than all men.

Both His words and His works testify to the truth. He performed countless miraculous signs so that the display of His Glory would confirm the truth of His teachings. His resurrection and ascension further verify that He is who He claims to be: the only true Savior-God.

Jesus wants us to build our lives on His transcendent truth. As we listen to Him, through His Word and His Spirit, our lives gain meaning and purpose. We can face each day with confidence: secure in His eternal Love, embracing challenges as adventures to share with Him. The more we build our lives on the truth, the closer to Him we can live, enjoying Him, depending on Him, glorifying Him.

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