

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

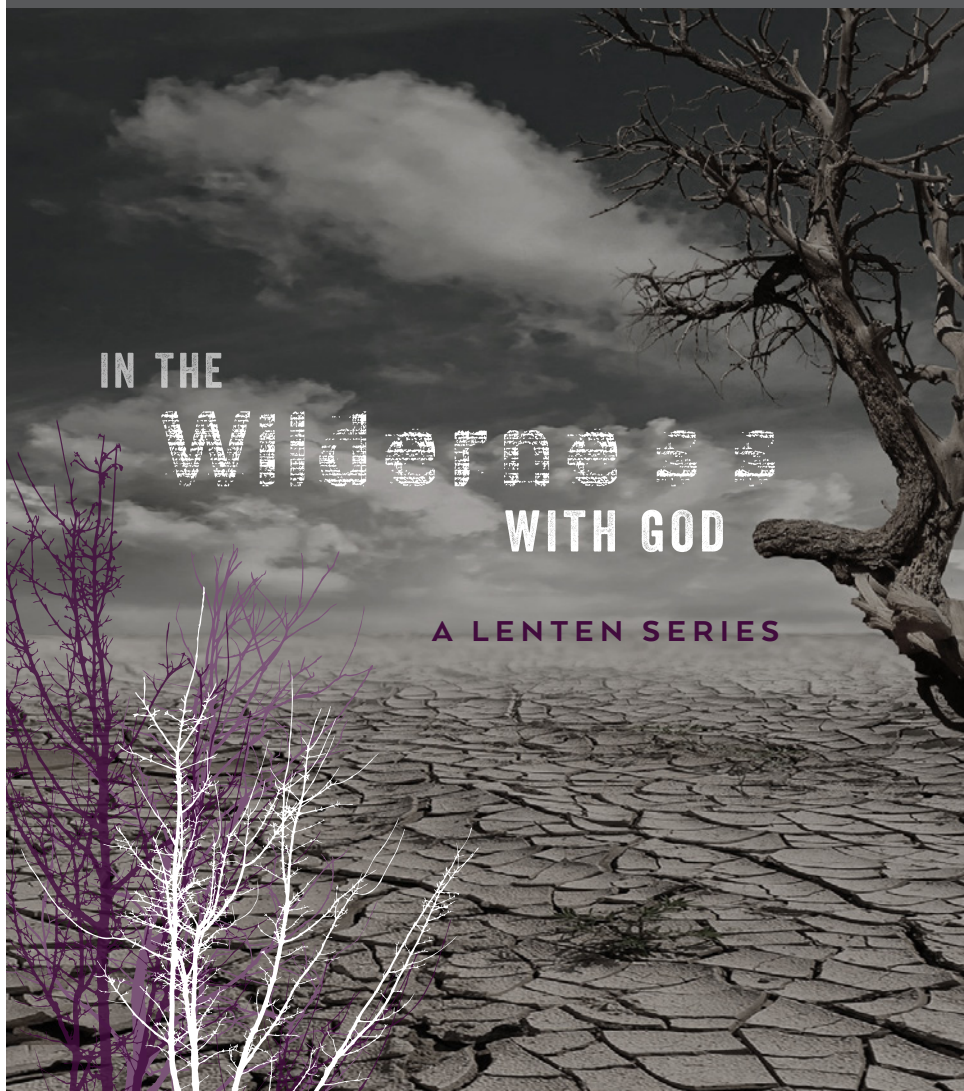
MARCH 11 - 15, 2019

IN THE

WILDERNESS

WITH GOD

A LENTEN SERIES



Each week during Lent we will be taking time to wait on God. Use some of the material below to direct your prayers and time of confession. You might use some of the space below to jot down your reflections and answers to the questions below

- **As I continue my Lenten practices, I have noticed ...**
- **Jesus revealed Himself today ...**
- **I am aware of my need for forgiveness ...**
- **If I were to be truly obedient today I would ...**
- **I sense Jesus is trying to tell me ...**

Easter week begins with Palm Sunday, the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem, down from the Mount of Olives to the cheers of the people, waving palm branches and shouting “Hosanna!” Their King had arrived in Jerusalem. Jesus made his way directly to the temple where He began to overturn the tables of the money changers saying: “*My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers*” (Matthew 21:1-17).

“The temple and the palms, then, speak with one voice. Jesus is engaged in two symbolic actions with clear Old Testament foundations from Zechariah 9:9-10 and Isaiah 56:6-8. These texts speak to God’s desire for the peoples of the world divided by strife to be reconciled under the kingship of the Messiah and to join together in the worship of the one true God.”  
(Esau McCaulley)\*

A few soul-searching questions come to mind.

- If Jesus intent was to finally bring the promise given to Abraham to fulfillment that through his descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed, how am I doing in partnering with Jesus in blessing all peoples?
- It is easy to declare Jesus is King; it is another thing to live under His Kingship, His Lordship. How am I doing? What needs to be cleaned out of my life in order that Jesus might be Lord in my life, that through me, *all* the people of the earth would be blessed?
- Are our values, our relationships, our choices, our churches shaped by the reality that His kingdom is global and multi-ethnic?

What might it look like to cleanse my life? Spending time presenting my life to Father God, asking for His help in doing a spiritual inventory, is a place to start. Reflecting on what is traditionally called the Seven Deadly Sins, some of the historical virtues might help, or the 12 Confessional Statements below might help.

Again, take time to sit with God. What is He saying? Do I find these in my life? What might, through the power of His Holy Spirit, need to change?

- **Pride** is excessive belief in one's own abilities that interferes with the individual's recognition of the grace of God. It has been called the sin from which all others arise. Pride is also known as "vanity".
- **Envy** is the desire for others' traits, status, abilities, or situation.
- **Gluttony** is an inordinate desire to consume more than that which one requires.

- **Lust** is an inordinate craving for the pleasures of the body.
- **Anger** is manifested in the individual who spurns love and opts instead for fury. It is also known as “wrath”.
- **Greed** is the desire for the material wealth or gain, ignoring the realm of the spiritual. It is also called “avarice” or “covetousness”.
- **Sloth** is the avoidance of physical or spiritual work.

Traditionally, the virtues that replace these seven sins are humility, kindness, abstinence, chastity, patience, liberality, diligence. Paul mentioned his own three virtues: love, hope, faith. Others down through the years have talked of faith, hope, charity, fortitude, justice, temperance, prudence, courage and justice. Are these increasingly present in my life? What one virtue might I want to work on? What might I do to practice incorporating that virtue into my life?

## 12 Confessions

1. I admit that I am powerless to fix the brokenness of my life on my own. My life has become unmanageable.
2. I believe that God—through His actions and those of His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit—can restore me to sanity.
3. I will turn my will and my entire life over to the care of God. Father, I’m asking for a total transfusion of Your will, power, presence, and love.
4. I will make a searching and fearless inventory of my life to discover all the ways I have engaged in self-worship (by being in control instead of living surrendered to the will of God).
5. I will admit to God, to myself, and to another human being the exact nature of my wrongs.

6. I am entirely ready to have God remove all the defects in my character and replace them—through His presence—with the thoughts, emotions, will, behavior, and relationship patterns of Christ.
7. I humbly ask God to help me become willing to deny myself, and the desire to live life on my terms, and to remove my shortcomings.
8. I will make a list of all the people I have harmed and become willing to make amends.
9. I will make direct amends to all I have injured.
10. I will continue to take personal inventory, and when I wrong someone, I will promptly admit it.
11. I will, through prayer, meditation, and the practice of other Christian disciplines, attempt to improve my conscious contact with God.
12. Having experienced some measure of authentic transformation as a result of surrendering all aspects of myself to the power and presence of Christ, I will carry this message to others and continue to practice these principles in all my affairs. (Gary W. Moon)\*\*

\*Esau McCaulley. "Journey to the Cross," Christianity Today, Lent/Easter 2019

\*\*Moon, Gary W.. Apprenticeship with Jesus (pp. 41-42). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

# MONDAY

## Exodus 3:1

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It is easy to skip over the first verse in Exodus 3 as we hurry to the super extraordinary event where God speaks to Moses through the burning bush. However, as all Scripture is inspired, it is best not to hurry through the two words “Now Moses” that begin this chapter. “Now” was about to begin a 40-year journey for a man who had probably thought that God was done with him. We know that Moses was about 80 years old (Acts 7:23-24; Acts 7:30, Exodus 7:3) and that half his years were lived in Egypt and half in Midian. For the first 40 years he had a life of privilege. In Exodus Chapter 2, we learn that Moses, at the age of 40, murdered an Egyptian. There is certainly no kinship demonstrated among the brethren for this juxtaposed Hebrew rescued as a baby from the Nile by Pharaoh’s daughter as he is ridiculed for his privileged position and “ratted out” to Pharaoh who immediately wants Moses, “his grandson,” dead.

Moses flees from Egypt to Midian, marries Zipporah, has a family, and begins tending flocks. For most of us this would have been “retirement.” What could God possibly do with us at the age of 80? However, our God has a purpose for us until we draw our last breath. For 80 years God has shown His hand of mercy, love, and grace by saving a young Hebrew baby when all the other Hebrew babies in Egypt were being killed. God ordained a princess to find Moses and

raise him as her own son. And then, God prepared Moses for another 40 years as a shepherd in preparation to lead the largest exodus in history of God's people to the Promised Land.

God doesn't waste our yesterdays, even when we might think that they were a failure or insignificant. We are reminded through the calling of Moses that an omniscient, omnipresent, loving God is always preparing us for His plan of today and tomorrow. His call to us to fulfill that purpose is built on a mosaic of choices, circumstances, experiences, and a growing relationship with Him that prepares us every day for that divine moment to serve Him. Every moment, situation, conversation, act, or relationship is part of His plan of love and redemption for this world. Each of us has purpose as His instrument.

## QUESTION

As you reflect on your own life, how do you see God's hand in preparing you for where you are in life and what you believe He still has purposed for you to finish?

## PRAYERS FOR THREE ANGELS CHILDREN'S RELIEF

Pray for Three Angels Children's Relief in Haiti, which serves orphans and at-risk families. Our mission is to help children in Haiti escape poverty so that they may experience God's love, become part of a healthy home, and grow into who they are called to be.

# TUESDAY

## Exodus 3:2-3

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A man sat at a metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin; it was a cold January morning. He played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, it was calculated that thousands of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. In the 45 minutes the musician played, only six people stopped and stayed to listen for a while. About twenty gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. He collected \$32. When he'd finished playing and the music was replaced by silence, no one even noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition. No one knew that this violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the finest musicians in the world. He'd played one of the most intricate pieces ever written on a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars.

It is so easy for us to get into a place of complacency or apathy in our walk with God. Perhaps, like Moses after tending sheep for 40 years, we are not expecting God to speak to us or give us another opportunity to serve. Perhaps, like these passers-by, there just wasn't time to stop. What does it take for God to get our attention? To Moses, a burning bush was probably interesting but was still not enough. It had to be extraordinary, a burning bush that did not burn up!



This is an encouraging word for us today as it reminds us that God is still interested in us personally. He still has a specific purpose and has designed us as unique individuals to accomplish His purpose in our time here on earth. It is also an encouragement that when God calls, it is a personal call. God called Moses by name. He did not say, “Hey, you,” but rather, “Moses! Moses!” What a great reminder that God’s call to us is personal and for us alone. What a mighty Creator He is to design us uniquely for His purposes and then to call us one by one, by name, to serve Him.

However, getting our attention is only the first step. A call does require action; it requires us to stop and recognize God; it requires us, like Moses, to “go over.” He calls many times in a personal and unique way, knowing who we are and how we will respond. Listen today for that personal, special, unique call on your life—He’s calling for you.

## QUESTION

As you think about hearing God’s voice in your walk with Him, what has He placed on your heart that you hear Him calling you personally to do? What is holding you back from “going over” to hear more?

## PRAYERS FOR THREE ANGELS CHILDREN’S RELIEF

Pray for the safety of the ministry workers of Three Angels Children’s Relief as Haiti is in an uncertain season amidst anti-government protests.

# WEDNESDAY

## Exodus 3:4-6

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I wonder if you, like me, have thought through how you might have responded in Moses' situation of observing a burning bush that is not consumed by the fire, and then what you would have done if that burning bush had called you out by my name—twice! I probably would have first considered whether or not I was medicated, or perhaps would have looked around for that hidden camera! But God does speak to us personally and uniquely anyway He wants, and anytime He wants. The real question is not how we react, but rather how we *respond* when we hear His voice calling us by name. Moses responds with probably the most courageous and appropriate response when he says “Here I am” to the living God.

Moses is not the only person in Scripture to respond “Here I am”; in fact, there are eight recorded instances of this response in the Old Testament. Abraham, when called by God (Genesis 22:1), immediately responds, “Here I am,” only to be told to go out and sacrifice his son. Then, just as he was about to slay his son, God calls again, “Abraham! Abraham!” (Genesis 22:11). To this call Abraham again responds, “Here I am.” Abraham reminds us that this response may be one that is personally painful and beyond our comprehension; yet he is obedient not only once, but twice.

We often forget the powerful message of when the angel of God called to Israel in a night vision and Jacob responded, “Here I am” (Genesis 46:2), leading to the migration of Jacob’s people, the people of Israel, to the land of Egypt. And then there is that wonderful response in Isaiah 6:8 where we read, “*Then I heard a voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’*”

God’s call to us is serious business and requires a passionate, real, stirring response from the called. When we hear God calling, like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, and Isaiah did, we must say, “*Here I am.*” We know we must do this in faith, though also often in fear. “I am willing, Lord, but am I ready? I am available, but am I able?” The assurance comes from God Himself, “*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me*” (Revelation 3:20).

## QUESTION

Are you not only listening for His voice, but also preparing your heart and life for this immediate response to His call, “Here I am”?

## PRAYERS FOR THREE ANGELS CHILDREN’S RELIEF

Pray for the children and families being served through Three Angels Children’s Relief, that they would feel the love of Christ extended through the staff and programs.

# THURSDAY

## Exodus 3:7-13

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The conversation is going so well. You are about to get that new job, receive that home loan, hear that clean bill of health, receive that invitation ... and then you hear that three-letter word, “but”! Your heart sinks. You know that you don’t want to hear what comes next.

Our God is a gracious God. In verse 7 God articulates His compassion and vision for His people. God said, *“I have seen ... I have heard ... I am concerned ...”* and then in loving action, *“I have come down to rescue them.”* What a clear purpose and vision God presented to Moses regarding his birth nation he had left 40 years prior.

And then in verse 11 we read, *“But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I?’”* What was Moses thinking? Only a few minutes ago he had responded with *“Here I am,”* and now he is responding to God with a *“but”!* Perhaps we are too quick to judge Moses when we think about how we might have responded to the call of God in our own Christian walk. I wonder if it may be somewhat similar to when we were first called to follow Him. We were transformed, excited, passionate, open, and ready to take on the world for our Savior, Jesus. We would go anywhere, do anything. We were on fire for our Lord!

But now, a little further in our spiritual journey, the response may have a few “buts.” That call from the Lord, the quiet word from the Lord, the vision must be for someone else. It can’t be for me. We feel inadequate, or the timing is not right. “But Lord,” we say, “when the children grow up, when I am retired, when we have a home.” How often do we, like Moses, respond to that call by saying to God, “But who am I?” God’s response is exactly what we need to hear; it has never changed over time. It was for Moses exactly as it is for you and me today. “*And God said, ‘I will be with you’*” (v. 12). Not, “You are wrong,” or “That is not a valid reason,” or “I must have called the wrong person—just a reminder that I am God, Creator of the world, sovereign, the One you call Lord ... and I will be with you!”

## QUESTION

When you hear His voice calling you, do you feel inadequate, or that the Lord perhaps doesn’t understand that this is not the right time? Do you believe God’s promise that He will be with you?

## PRAYERS FOR THREE ANGELS CHILDREN’S RELIEF

Pray for the people of Haiti that they might find hope in the darkness. Haiti has food and fuel shortages due to the government not having enough U.S. dollars to make purchases, and no other countries are willing to give credit due to the corruption.

# FRIDAY

## Exodus 3:14-15

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It appears that Moses was a persistent kind of guy. I wonder, if God used a burning bush to capture my attention, then made it very clear that He would be with me, if I might have considered this the end of the discussion. Moses moves immediately onto a second reason, saying, *“What shall I tell them?”* In human context, this is not a bad question. After all, Moses was being directed to ask Pharaoh to release a group of 2.5 million people. However, this was not the question to ask a sovereign God. Thankfully, our God is a patient and gracious God who loves us and knows exactly where we are, where we are coming from, and what we are really seeking when we question Him.

So God says, *“I AM WHO I AM”* (v. 14). God begins with an answer that no one but our Creator would have been able to claim. Who could exceed the authority of an eternal God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a God whom every Hebrew would recognize by these five words? God again revealed His identity as the God who is always there for His people—an attribute that should be celebrated by each one of us today.

*“This is my name forever”* (v. 15). God, using these words, reminds Moses and those who were to hear these words that His name is to be revered and to be the name above all other names. He is

a God who does not break his covenants with His people. The Hebrews would have been reminded by this name of the promise that God made to their ancestor Abram—that his descendants would be “enslaved and mistreated 400 years” (Genesis 15:13-17), but they would “come out with great possessions” for He is our God who does not forget His promises.

Finally, these words remind Moses that our infinite, absolute, self-determining God is preparing His people for His coming as Jesus Christ. Jesus, responding to Jewish leaders questioning his authority, says, “*Truly, truly! I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM*” (John 8:56-58). Could Jesus have said this anymore succinctly? When Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I AM,” he immediately took up all the majestic truth of *YAWWEH*, spoken here to Moses at Mt. Horeb. He is an eternal God, a triune God, a God to be respected and loved, and a God who calls us to obediently follow Him.

## QUESTION

Do you trust God when He calls out to you, or do you look for one more reason to negotiate whether this is the right time for you?

## PRAYERS FOR THREE ANGELS CHILDREN’S RELIEF

Pray that the hearts of the people of Haiti would be open to the Gospel. We serve the God of the impossible made possible. Nothing can move the hand of God until our hearts are in the right place.



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