

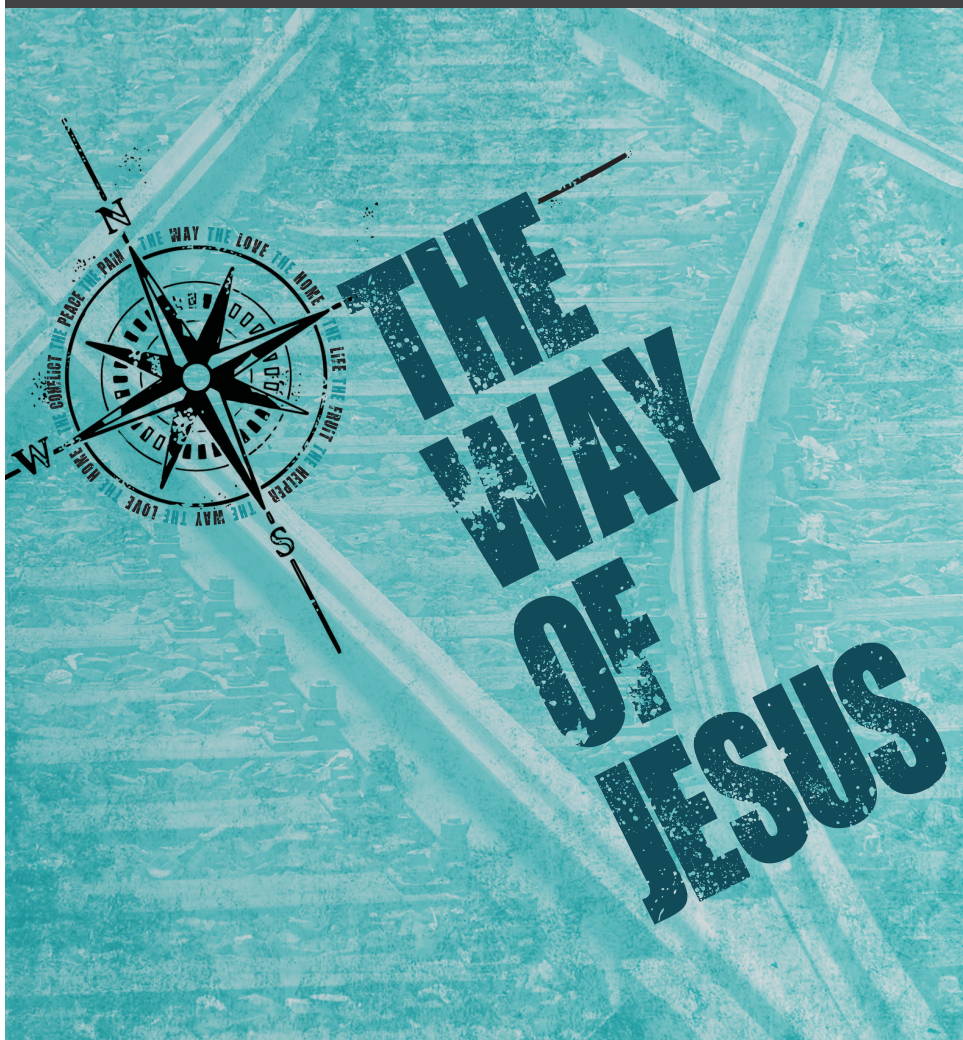
GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JUNE 29 - JULY 3, 2020



MONDAY

Read John 16:5-15

“Witnessing to Jesus Christ, glorifying Him by showing His disciples who He is, and making them aware of what they are in Him is at the core of the Spirit’s ministry. All God’s work in us is done by the Spirit.”
(J.I. Packer)

An earnest Christian friend of mine admitted that he found the subject of the Holy Spirit so “mixed up” that he’d rather “just think about Jesus.” Jesus promises, *“But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come”* (John 16:13). The Bible teaches the Holy Spirit is vital to the life of a Christian. Yet, many Christians hold one of these common misconceptions about the Holy Spirit: He is a “force” (cue Obi Wan), or a consolation prize, or a phenomenon of signs and wonders seen in Acts and not today. We all need to answer the question, “Who is the Holy Spirit?”

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.” (John 15:26)

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity. The Holy Spirit is eternal God, as fully God as God the Father and Jesus the Son (Genesis 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14). God the Father sent Him to carry on Jesus’ ministry through His disciples, then and now. The actions of the Holy Spirit are actions of a person. He intercedes and comforts. He calls, sends, and empowers His people. Jesus promised the Spirit would

teach and bring to memory His teachings. The Holy Spirit rejoices, is tested, and can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30) and cursed. He prays for us (Romans 8:26-27).

The Holy Spirit makes “sin repulsive and Christ adorable in the eyes of people who previously loved sin and cared nothing for the divine Saviour ... God implants desires that were not there before,” writes J. I. Packer. The Spirit continually strengthens our inner person, making us holy. Therefore, we love and obey Him as we do the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit guarantees God’s promises of the good things He has in store for us in the future and forever (Ephesians 1:13-14); therefore, He will never leave us.

QUESTIONS

Who is the Holy Spirit? How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a new believer? How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a five-year-old?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pray for Missio Community Church, which is an ECO church in Pasadena that launched in January 2018. Missio is embodying the Gospel through outreach to Caltech students, equipping Fuller students, and working towards racial reconciliation in Pasadena.

TUESDAY

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

I hope wherever you are in your Christian life you desire to say, “I want to learn more about God!” But like most Christians in our culture, I wax and wane in pursuing a maturing faith. But key to our seeking after a holy, righteous, faith-filled life is the Holy Spirit. Why? Because faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from God through the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote to encourage the brothers and elders of the church these words:

“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.” (Titus 3:4-6)

It is God who makes us able to believe (Ephesians 2:8-9). Because we are all sinful to the core, on our own we do not want God or believe in Him; we do not love and trust God (John 3:5-6). God speaks the gospel of Jesus Christ to us through the Bible and other people. As we hear the gospel, the Holy Spirit works in our hearts to produce faith in Christ (Romans 10:17). God gives faith so we can turn to Him and receive all Jesus has for us.

True faith always includes repentance. When we turn to Christ by this gifted faith, we let go of sinful actions, thoughts and attitudes (Acts 20:21). Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin—inseparable. Repentance honors Jesus and brings us joy because Jesus relieves us of the heavy burden of sin.

Do you have questions or doubts about your faith? A growing believer in Jesus will often have questions. Sometimes even when we want to believe God, we struggle (Mark 9:24). When we bring our questions and doubts to God, He will answer us. The Bible is strong enough to stand up to our sincere questions and doubts.

Thank God for the gift of faith and the joy of repentance! Ask Him for opportunities to share your faith this week.

QUESTIONS

Where does faith in Jesus Christ come from? What happens if I have questions and doubt my faith?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pray that God continues to provide financially for Missio Community Church.

WEDNESDAY

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16; John 16:13

“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?” ~ Paul (1 Corinthians 3:16)

One of the amazing truths of the Christian life is that the moment we trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, His Spirit (Advocate, Counselor, Spirit of Truth) takes up residence in our bodies. My finite mind cannot fully grasp the magnitude of the God whom the cherubim declare as, *“Holy, holy, holy!”* (Isaiah 6:5) and who lives *inside* us. Paul relates this insight immediately following telling the Corinthians a day is coming when all our actions and attitudes will pass through the fire to be graded by Christ (1Corinthians 3:12-15). What’s the connection to being a temple of the Holy Spirit and this report card in heaven?

God does not ask us to love the unlovely, live with courageous faith, and forgive our enemies *on our own*. The entire Bible points out that God knows we cannot do it by ourselves, and He gives us the Holy Spirit to guide and empower us to do His will (John 16:13). As Jesus told His disciples, and us, the Spirit uses the truth of Scripture, His gentle nudge, circumstances, and the wisdom of mature believers to guide us, while He transforms our hearts to care more about Him and others than about our selfish interests. This process is what Paul describes as *“being the temple of God.”*

The Spirit provides supernatural resources to equip us, but we also live under the watchful eye of the Spirit of Truth who lives inside us. Nothing Ever. Escapes. His. Notice. We obey Jesus, then, for many reasons: the promise of rewards, the Spirit's resources and gifts, and the reminder that we live eternally with His all-seeing presence. Together they form a powerful motivational punch to keep us pursuing God and His purposes.

“It is astounding to know that we can stay connected to the source of all power and authority just by opening our hearts and our minds to Him.”
(Zig Ziglar and Ike Reighard)

QUESTIONS

On a scale of zero (not at all) to ten (all day, every day), how much are you aware of the Spirit's presence and work in you? How does the fact that the Holy Spirit lives inside you motivate you?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pray that God would enable this church to reach many unbelievers for Christ through its outreach ministries.

THURSDAY

Read John 16:7-15; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

“Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” —Paul (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

A Barna Group survey in 2003 revealed that half of church-going Christians do not know if they will go to heaven when they die. They live in the “I hope so” world, wondering if they have done enough, if God is good enough, and if all they’ve heard about God is true. People, though, do not need to love with fear or doubts. Whether we think about it or not, hope is a part of everyone’s life. Everyone hopes for something. To have hope is to want an outcome that makes our life better in some way.

Paul uses words to describe the certainty of our relationship with Jesus. He said that God “makes” us in His grace and forgiveness like an unshakable structure built on a foundation of bedrock. He explained God “sealed” us. In the first century Rome, this was a significant analogy. Roman authority was unquestionable. A seal would signify ownership and security. Nothing could break the Roman seal, and Paul infers that nothing can break God’s seal of ownership and security in our lives.

Paul goes on to tell us the Holy Spirit’s presence in our hearts is a guarantee that we have an eternal relationship with God. What Jesus

promises in John 16 is that the Holy Spirit will be an eternal presence, witness, and guide in our lives. As Christians, our hope in the Holy Spirit's work motivates us to bring God glory through joys and sorrows, pain and plenty. Paul reminds us that believers will sense the Spirit's presence—if not continually, then enough to be convinced that we belong to God forever.

Can you and I be sure of our eternal destiny? According to the Bible, yes!

QUESTIONS

Before you read this passage, how sure were you that you are heaven bound? And after you read this passage, how sure are you? Explain your answer.

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pray that God would allow Missio Community Church to reach more non-student residents of Pasadena who want to invest deeply in serving the city in areas such as racial reconciliation and affordable housing.

FRIDAY

Read John 16:7; Psalm 139:8-10

“If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in hell, you are there. If I take wings in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.” (Psalm 139:8-10)

“Psalm 139 is one of the grandest of all the Psalms, for it brings us face to face with the majesty and power of God. Immediately it exalts God as all-knowing and omnipresent, and it clearly shows that all of man’s life is in God’s hands.” (E.J. Young, PhD.)

The eternal nature of God—past, present, and future—is powerfully revealed in this Psalm. Using beautiful poetry, David explains God is omnipresent. I am in awe that God is not bound by limitations of time and space, and He transcends these to be present in my life through the Holy Spirit. Jesus patiently tells His disciples, *“Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you”* (John 16:7).

We will never experience a moment in time or a place in our lives where God is not present in Spirit. When we are on the mountaintops of exhilaration, God is present in our joy. When we suffer in the valley of depression and isolate ourselves in darkness, God is there as a light. When we enjoy success, God rejoices with us. When we are overwhelmed by loss or failure, God is there to bring equilibrium to our upside-down world. When we are alone and indulge in the sin that besets us, God is there also. God’s presence brings either comfort or

discomfort, depending on our actions and reactions to the pull of the ever-present Holy Spirit. Jesus promises His presence in us through the Holy Spirit, and that makes all the difference.

“When you feel lonely, when you feel unwanted, when you feel sick and forgotten, remember you are precious to Him.” (Mother Teresa)
Thank God that He is always with you. Remember that His presence is with you in every circumstance every day.

QUESTIONS

When are you most aware of the presence of God? When you feel hopelessly distant from God, how will it affect you to remember that He is always with you?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pray for encouragement and continued strength for Missio’s pastor, Len Tang, and his family.

Sources

- J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishing, 1993).
- Zig Ziglar and Dr. Ike Reighard, *The One Year Daily Insights with Zig Ziglar* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishing, 2011).
- E. J. Young, “The Background of Psalm 139” (Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, Summer 1965).
- Joseph Langford, *Mother Teresa’s Secret Fire* (Huntington, IN: One Sunday Visitor Publishing, 2016).

