

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JUNE 20 - 24, 2022



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Pentecost Series
Jun 12 - Aug 7

MONDAY

Read **Psalm 150; Acts 2:46-47**

“Glenkirk Church is a *worshipping community*, inviting everyone to join in the journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ, loving God and His world.”

Hopefully the above declaration is very familiar, as it is Glenkirk’s mission statement. What better emphasis this week, as we anticipate the Associate Pastor candidate’s sermon next Sunday, than to consider Glenkirk’s mission?

Today we explore the mission statement’s “worshipping community” element. “Worship” is derived from the Old English word, *weorthscipe*, which means “worthiness, acknowledgment of worth.” (Lexico) When worshipping God, we affirm His greatness and majesty, gratefully adoring and serving Him for all that He is. Many see “worship” and “praise” as synonyms, but they are not. Praising God—via singing and/or playing music, public declarations, bowing or kneeling before Him, rejoicing—is a subcategory of worship. However, worship includes other things as well, essentially anything done for God’s glory and kingdom purposes. Other worship examples include prayer, Scripture reading, cheerfully-given offerings, serving, teaching, godly fellowship, meditation on God’s goodness, being an effective employee or worker, etc.

Regarding community, there are to be no “Lone Ranger Christians.” As predators often hunt the weakest animal in a group, so is the

enemy effective at disabling believers out of fellowship with the church. Christian community, enabled by the Holy Spirit, helps bolster us against the devil's attacks.

While following Christ is deeply personal, it is also communal; thus, Glenkirk's and ECO's community emphasis both in baptism and the Lord's Supper. However, even a community emphasis requires balance—a church “all about community” can become like a commonplace, flaccid social club versus a worshipping community following and effectively serving the Lord. Jesus should never have to say to any true Christian church, “*I stand at the door and knock (because you have forsaken Me)*” (Revelation 3:20). The church's highest priority should always be worshipping the true and living God.

Does your worship periodically become so personal that it isolates you from other Christ followers? Or can your need for community sometimes compromise quality time with the Lord? Seek God prayerfully, asking Him to help you bless Glenkirk's worshipping community.

QUESTIONS

What's the difference between praise and worship? Which forms of worship are most comfortable and natural for you? How connected are you with Glenkirk's worshipping community?

PRAYERS

For Stephen & Kate

Background. Stephen is Glenkirk-raised, previously a YWAM missionary, recently joined Reliant, which mobilizes church planters and missionaries via partnerships. He and Kate, who are newly-wed, relocated to Indonesia in December to bring Christ to young Muslims on college campuses. Pray that this new ministry bears tremendous fruit in fields yearning for harvest.

TUESDAY

Read **Luke 15:11-32; Romans 5:8**

“Glenkirk Church is a worshipping community, *inviting everyone* to join in the journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ, loving God and His world.”

Is there any type of person whom you could not comfortably invite to Glenkirk? In the 1960s, amidst the original Calvary Chapel’s early days, Senior Pastor Chuck Smith became concerned about the “hippies” and “surfers” increasingly coming to the church shoeless, sitting on the floor. Kay Smith reminded her husband that Jesus was a “friend to sinners” who “*came to seek and to save the lost*” (Luke 19:10). Pastor Smith subsequently admonished congregants complaining about resultant damage to the sanctuary’s carpets, responding, “Then I guess we’ll just have to rip out the carpeting.” God multiplied such faithfulness: today there are about 750 Calvary Chapel congregations nationwide, not counting global locations.

The message here is not, “Invite anyone because we need to grow!” Rather, it is that every person is made in God’s image (Genesis 1:27), loved by Him (John 3:16), all desperately needing the Savior. There has never been anyone naturally born who is not a sinner. But God has solved this problem for those who believe: “*while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8). Thus, we are called to invite others. And you don’t need to be a Bible scholar, Christian apologist or seminarian to welcome people to church.

There is truth to the expression, “You have to catch the fish before you clean it.” If we are a faithful, devoted, loving church, God can, and will, use that to begin restoring His image in even the most misguided. Our calling is to faithfulness, including inviting others—the results, the harvest, are God’s.

Why don’t more of us invite others regularly to join us at Glenkirk? Lovelessness toward neighbors? Unbelief regarding hell’s reality and horror? General unbelief? Laziness? Worry about awkwardness, rejection and/or judgment? Fear of being asked tough questions, “being hypocritical” or sounding self-righteous?

Whom will you invite this week to join you next Sunday? Perhaps God will use the Associate Pastor candidate’s message to stir and draw them toward our Lord and Savior.

QUESTIONS

What types of people would you feel uncomfortable inviting to worship with you at Glenkirk? Do you believe that “made in God’s image” does not apply to such types? What things keep us, including you, from inviting others regularly to join us in worshipping God?

PRAYERS

For Stephen & Kate

Summer Team Prep. Stephen is part of a team planning the programming for the summer teams working on several campuses, and Kate is in charge of logistics. They are overseeing seven teams that arrived in late May. The work is exhausting. Pray for endurance for this dynamic young duo.

WEDNESDAY

Read [Luke 22:54-62](#); [John 21:4-17](#)

“Glenkirk Church is a worshipping community, inviting everyone to *join in the journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ*, loving God and His world.”

You might find today’s featured portion (bolded and italicized above) of Glenkirk’s mission statement curious. After all, many Glenkirkers have believed since youth, following Christ for years while serving throughout. Don’t these “get credit” for being “fully devoted followers of Christ”? A godly believer would not even consider such a notion, knowing that they remain a “beggar simply fortunate to know where the Bread is.”

Following Christ is a journey, the sanctification process directed by God shaping us into increasing Christlikeness. Even the Apostle Paul—though declaring in a later epistle, “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith*” (2 Timothy 4:7)—admitted, “*I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing*” (Romans 7:19). Like all believers, Paul would be an “unfinished work” until Jesus’ second coming and his resurrection into a glorified body.

One of Jesus’ most forceful, influential, passionate followers apparently considered himself “fully devoted.” After Jesus told the disciples that they would scatter amidst His crucifixion, abandoning Him, Simon Peter

boldly claimed, “*Though they all fall away because of You, I will never fall away*” (Matthew 2:33). Luke 22:54-62 shares what transpired within hours: Peter betrayed the Lord three times amidst His false trial, as foretold.

Some might throw up hands and complain, “What’s the use?! We’ll never get there, so why even try?” Although our best efforts add nothing to our salvation—Jesus declared accordingly, “*It is finished!*” (John 19:30) upon Calvary’s cross—God delights in our humble, sincere, committed efforts to follow Christ. Even though we will not master full devotion in this lifetime, God uses even broken instruments to make beautiful music!

Our walk with the Redeemer is a journey, but He’s with us, helping and encouraging throughout—Peter’s post-betrayal reinstatement (John 21:15-17) illustrates this. Though wayward ourselves, Jesus offers us the honor and joy to help “*feed [His] sheep*” (John 21:17).

QUESTIONS

How close are you to being a “fully devoted follower of Christ”? What are your takeaways from the Apostle Peter’s claim to superior faithfulness, subsequent three-time betrayal of Jesus, and ultimate reinstatement by the Lord?

PRAYERS

For Stephen & Kate

Campus Work. The American students being hosted will be on campuses all summer connecting with locals and sharing the Good News. Pray that they will befriend and share with many students—for open hearts and minds—to receive this life-changing news in a Muslim culture.

THURSDAY

Read 1 John 4:7-19; Deuteronomy 7:9

“Glenkirk Church is a worshipping community, inviting everyone to join in the journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ, *loving God* and His world.”

Today’s featured two-word phrase, “loving God,” is perhaps the mission statement’s trickiest element. After all, God is invisible and so holy and majestic, immeasurably above us! The gap between us and God is infinitely greater even than that between any person and bacteria.

Fortunately, God leads, enabling us to love Him “because *He first loved us*” (1 John 4:19). He demonstrated His love by Jesus’ substitutional payment for the sins of humankind, earning our pardon for the wages of sin if we follow Christ. Our appreciation for God’s sacrifice not only provides the only Way to salvation, but enables us to love Him responsively.

Jesus taught us to “*love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind*” (Luke 10:27). But what sort of “love” is this? In our entertainment-saturated culture, it’s easy to have a corrupted view. The Savior taught, “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*” (John 14:15). The controlling legalist in me might interpret, “Great—just follow the rules and that satisfies Jesus’ command!” However, Jesus’ frequent rebukes of the ancient Pharisees demonstrate that religiosity and legalism are

not the way—good works and faithfulness are fruits of salvation and love, not their causes.

Biblical love—*agápē*—can be emotional, but transcends mere affection. *Agápē* is a volitional mindset and heart orientation wanting nothing but the best for the other, unconditionally. It is selfless and sacrificial. Its object can even be someone we don't like much. I know I'm able to love someone I don't always like—I need only look in the mirror to demonstrate this.

Keeping God's commandments, especially the "Law of Christ: loving God and loving others," is beyond us on our own. But God would love to enlarge your capacity for *agápē* "if you seek [Him] with all of your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Is loving God more your heartfelt desire? Prayerfully request His help here.

QUESTIONS

How comfortable and satisfied are you with your ability to love God? What does "biblical love—*agápē*—can be emotional, but transcends mere affection" mean? How can you increase your capacity to love God (and thereby others)?

PRAYERS

For Stephen & Kate

Permanent Team. The majority of the team's time is focused on language and culture acquisition. Pray for them to stay focused on this even in the midst of hosting the teams from America. Their long-term goals cannot be achieved until they become competent in the language. Pray, too, for unity among the team in this busy work season.

FRIDAY

Read **Proverbs 8:13; Romans 12:9-21; Luke 6:27-36**

“Glenkirk Church is a worshipping community, inviting everyone to join in the journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ, *loving* God and *His world*.”

Yesterday we considered the challenges in loving God in our lowly fall-
eness. Today’s aspect of Glenkirk’s mission, however—“*loving [God’s]
world*”—presents a seeming paradox. The same apostle who penned,
“*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son*” (John 3:16),
also wrote, “*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone
loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*” (1 John 2:15).
Synchronously, Jesus’ half-brother James scribed, “*Do you not know
that friendship with the world is enmity with God?*” (James 4:4).
Was John conflicted? Does Glenkirk’s mission statement’s aim to
“love God’s world” contradict James?

Though “*God is love*” (1 John 4:8), an aspect of God’s love is that He
also hates. Specifically, God loathes those things which destroy His
beloved; if He did not hate destructive things, God would be both
unloving and unrighteous. Topping God’s list of detested things are sin
and its byproducts: death, pride, exploitation, lying and all forms of evil.
These hated things comprise “*the world [and] the things in the world*”
that we are also to despise and oppose.

“The world” we’re to love are its people, those like us who are: made in God’s image; loved by God; in desperate need of the Savior. As addressed yesterday, loving people unconditionally (*agápē*) is what necessitated Jesus’ first coming mission and focused His earthly ministry. Jesus personified the “law of Christ”: loving God and loving others in His name. We are to do the same.

Living out “loving God and His world” will prompt a continual “divine discontent” within us. We are to hate the sin that remains in us, disables others and dominates fallen Creation. Concurrently, we’re to love the very people who are shackled by and advance sin and its hated outcomes.

Easy? Not at all! Achievable on our own? No! Godly? Absolutely! Amplify yesterday’s prayerful request: ask God for a heart that loves the unlovable, one more like His.

QUESTIONS

How can we “love the world” when the Apostle John and James advised us not to? What does God’s list of hated things say about Him and about us? What is “divine discontent” and how is it healthy?

PRAYERS

For Stephen & Kate

God. Thank You, God, for allowing Glenkirk to be part of this exciting ministry among young college students, for all the years of ministry preparation You have provided both Stephen and Kate. It is humbling to know the foundation for ministry for Stephen initially began at Glenkirk. We pray our youth program will raise more Stephens and Kates.

Sources

- Lexico quoted definition is from <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/worship>.

