

GLENKIRK CHURCH  WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JULY 31 - AUGUST 5, 2022



LIFE
IN THE
SPIRIT

Pentecost Series
Jun 12 - Aug 14

MONDAY

Read **Philippians 2:12-13**

“It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)

We need to start our days with trust. Trusting that God has a purpose and plan for our lives. Trusting that God has our best interest at heart. Trusting that He will work in us even when we feel inadequate and incapable. Let’s start this week with trust.

Maybe you have heard the song that goes like this: *“Trust and obey, for there’s no other way. To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”* This song has come into my mind lately as I have been thinking so much about obedience. I realize that to obey God we have to trust Him first. If we don’t trust God fully, we won’t obey what He asks us to do because often His will doesn’t make sense at first. When God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, it didn’t make sense. But Abraham’s trust in the Lord helped him to obey—trusting that God had a bigger and better plan for him and for his precious son.

There are so many things in my life that I didn’t understand at the beginning. There are countless times when I have wondered what God was doing—if He was even with me. But I look back and see He was there all along. Maybe you have moments like this too. I would encourage you to reflect on these times.

Let's trust that God is working in our lives and that He wants what is good for us. That can be difficult to do when we face suffering or hard times. That is why we need to hold on to all the times that God worked in the past, but we didn't realize it until later.

We can be thankful that our God uses our hard times to bring about good in us. He refines us and strengthens us through them. His good purposes may not mean that everything will always go wonderful in our lives, but it does mean that He can use every part of our lives to make us more like Him.

Start off this week trusting and obeying God. For any big or small act of obedience He has placed on your heart, step out in faith because He truly wants your good.

QUESTIONS

What act of obedience has God placed on your heart?
Will you trust Him enough to obey?

PRAYERS

For Neighborhood Homework House (NHH)

NHH Family. Raul Corona, the father of daughters who have long participated in NHH, was recently diagnosed with cancer. The family is asking for strength for his mind, body, and soul and for his treatment to be effective. Please also pray that he will experience peace and the love of God during this time.

TUESDAY

Read **Genesis 15**

Someone recently said to me, “There is no greater joy than when you finally accept and step into the call that God has placed on your life.” I have surely found that to be true. When I heard God’s call, I felt inadequate. I felt nervous. I wasn’t sure that I was hearing God correctly. I thought, “Anyone else would be better at that—call them.” Then, I accepted His call, and I felt this amazing peace pass over me. So much of my life now made sense. God was preparing me. When I finally stepped into His call, what incredible joy I felt.

There are many passages in Scripture about God calling people to do something and them questioning it. The story about Abraham is the perfect one to examine today. The call that God placed on him didn’t make sense. Abraham didn’t understand. It felt absurd. In verses 7 and 8, Abraham looks for assurance—“How can I know?” God accepted this question and responded. Abraham didn’t understand; he wanted some sort of assurance—and God gave it to him. God covenants with Abraham in one of the most astounding ways. God Himself passes through pieces of animals essentially saying in covenant imagery, “Should I break this promise, may the same be done to Me.” He swears on His life. That is the God of the Bible. When He calls, when He promises, He fulfills! We can trust Him.

How often have we been uncertain of God's work in us or in His presence with us? Hear what this passage speaks to us: God binds Himself to us. He is faithful to fulfill the promises that He makes to us. So, perhaps you felt God calling you to something. Perhaps you feel inadequate like I did. Maybe you are asking the same question that Abraham asked: "How can I know?"

God doesn't rebuke you when you ask these questions; He responds, for He is ever patient. He confirmed the call He placed on my life over and over and over again. I hope that you ask for that confirmation. Listen when you receive it and get the joy that comes from stepping into God's promise and into His calling. Watch as He uses you in remarkable ways.

QUESTIONS

How have you felt the gentle nudging of the Spirit within you lately? Have you responded?

PRAYERS

For Neighborhood Homework House (NHH)

Back-to-school. Prayer for wisdom as NHH finalizes its fall plans. The staff wants to offer comprehensive support for students who are coping with pandemic disrupted learning as well as being in need of social-emotional support. NHH staff is retooling their model; in particular, they will need to recruit at least 35 new volunteers.

WEDNESDAY

Read **Galatians 2:15-21**

What is *justification*? This common theme in the writing of Paul is a key to understanding the work of Christ in our lives. *Justification* is a legal term where someone is declared not guilty, innocent, or righteous. In Scripture it refers to God's act of grace and unmerited favor in making us right before Him.

In our passage today, we see an argument against justification by faith that Paul faced. The argument is that justification by faith encourages us to sin because there is no longer a focus on works of the law. Paul refutes that argument. He shows that the Jews have misunderstood the gospel of justification. Justification does not mean our status changes from guilty to not guilty while we remain unchanged. Instead, we are justified **IN** Christ—not simply **BY** Christ. Therefore, through justification, we are united with Christ. We are no longer the same person—we are changed. Therefore, we should not want to continue to sin—we are made new! Being united with Christ gives us a new desire for holiness. It gives us a new hunger for God. (John Stott)

Paul gives a great and clear picture of this reality: we have been crucified with Christ. He writes, “*I no longer live, but Christ lives in me*” (Galatians 2:20). What a beautiful picture. The focus of Christianity is not dying but living. We have been crucified with

Christ and so we have also been raised with Him. Thus, we can grow into more of His likeness. Christ lives in us; He is our power for living; and so we seek to be more like Him.

Not only is God good and trustworthy, but He has a purpose for us—to become more like Christ. We can trust that God wants what is for our good because what He truly wants is for us to be more like Christ.

QUESTIONS

How has God used hard circumstances in your life to make you more like Christ?

PRAYERS

For Neighborhood Homework House (NHH)

The High School Graduating Class of 2022. Six students in the high school program will soon be starting college. They will be attending Citrus, Cal State Fullerton, Grand Canyon University, UC Riverside and Cal Poly Pomona. Please keep them in prayer as they make this important leap in their young adult lives.

THURSDAY

Read **2 Corinthians 3:12-18**

Yesterday we saw how we are made more like Christ—united with Him in His death and resurrection. Today we focus on being glorified like Him. Today's passage so clearly shows how the new covenant has truly transformed us. I can picture Moses coming down the mountain with his face shining with the glory of God and the people cowering in fear.

In the days of Moses, people were carrying a burden that was just too heavy: the law. They couldn't follow all the standards of God. They were ashamed and guilty under the old covenant. They felt hesitant to come into the presence of God. Moses came down from the mountain with a veil over his face because the presence and radiance of God was just too bright for the Israelites, shining a light on their sin and failings. They couldn't handle it. It was frightening.

However, as we see here, we are now transformed. Through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we remove the veil from our faces and shine the light of the Lord brightly. We can now enter the presence of God without fear. As we saw yesterday, we were crucified with Christ—made right and justified before Him. Through that we are now able to enter into the presence of God; the curtain was torn from top to bottom on Good Friday, allowing us access.

We, then, “*are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory*” (2 Corinthians 3:18). What does this mean? The Spirit is the one who accomplishes this, which brings to mind the fruits of the Spirit we read of in Galatians 5:22. As we are transformed into the likeness of Christ, we bear the fruit of patience more readily; we are more faithful, joyful, peaceful, and kind. That is the work of the Spirit in our lives as we lean into Him.

QUESTIONS

Spend some time praying over the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness). How is the Spirit working these out in you? Do any of them stick out to you as something you need to grow in? Focus on one that you can integrate into your day.

PRAYERS

For Neighborhood Homework House (NHH)

The College Graduating Class of 2039. Seven students in the NHH preschool program will be starting kindergarten this fall. Pray for them as they continue their educational journey. Be in prayer for their families and the NHH team to partner together to help them reach their goals over the next season of their lives!

FRIDAY

Read **Romans 8:28-30**

Throughout this week, this passage has been broken into different parts. God works for our good; we can trust in that. As we grow to trust Him more, we can step into obedience, responding to how He calls us. We are called according to His purpose—His good purpose—which is to make us more like Christ. We are conformed into the image of His Son, as we die and are raised with Him. We, then, are made new and want to live a life that honors Him. We are justified and glorified, as we reveal His glory with unveiled faces by being transformed by the work of the Spirit in our lives.

God has a purpose for us that is outlined in verses 29 and 30. He creates, sustains, and brings us to glory. It says here that “*God foreknew.*” Douglas Moo says that this indicates entering into relationship with someone. God’s plan for us began in a decision to enter into relationship with us. In order to know us, He is in relationship with us. We can lean into Him.

God the Father’s goal for us is to make us more like His Son. That is His reason for calling us. We are to be conformed to Christ’s own glorious body. What matters to God is that we are becoming more like Jesus and sharing in a family likeness.

Overall, I hope that the biggest thing you get from this week is a greater trust in your Savior. You can trust Him because His plan for you is good: to make you more like Christ. Whatever you face, that is His good purpose. As we trust Him, hopefully we can then learn to obey those gentle nudging's of the Holy Spirit throughout our days.

QUESTIONS

How has God proven Himself to be trustworthy in your life?
What do you need to trust Him with now?

PRAYERS

For Neighborhood Homework House (NHH)

Volunteer Coordinator. Pray for the new NHH volunteer coordinator, Kaeyln, who will begin August 4. She will immediately run point on volunteer recruitment, which is still down considerably from the pre-pandemic levels. As well, she will be instrumental as NHH looks to pilot a traditional mentoring program in January 2023.

Sources

- John Stott, “Justification by Faith Alone.” Sermon (exact preaching date unknown). https://www.allsouls.org/Groups/139476/Sermons/Sundays/C002_Only_One/C002_Only_One.aspx?show_media=49994&show_file=58333.
- Douglas Moo, *Romans: NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 2000).



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