

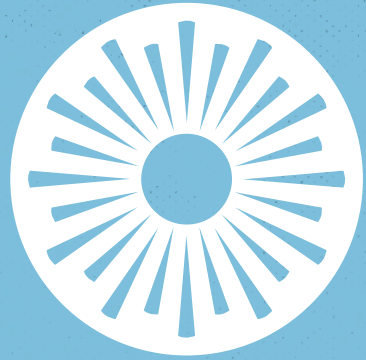
GLENKIRK CHURCH



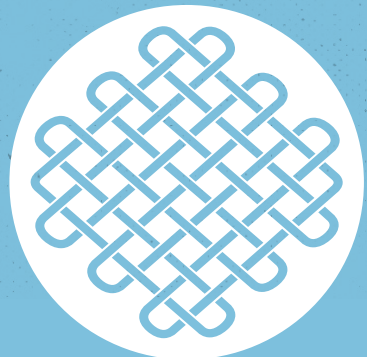
WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

SEPTEMBER 5 - 9, 2022



GLENKIRK ON MISSION



# MONDAY

Read **Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15**

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*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20)

Matthew 28:19-20 is the last command that Jesus gave to His disciples before His ascension into heaven. First, He mentions that He has all authority in heaven and on earth, that He has the full authority of God to command them. Then, He orders them to go and make disciples of all nations. Notice that Jesus does not just say to preach the gospel, but to make disciples. Leading people to become Christians is not enough. They must be helped to become strong disciples of Jesus. They must be taught to fully obey the Lord in all things. Then, Jesus gives them assurance that He will be with them always, even until the end of the ages.

Today, we will focus on the authority of Jesus to command us. We obey Him because He is Lord, He is God. We have no option but to obey. God said it; therefore, we do it. “We obey because the boss said so.” However, this motivation by itself might make it a chore, a grind, drudgery.

In 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, Paul reminds us of the Christian’s motivation for obeying the Lord. *“For Christ’s love compels us.”* We were totally lost in our sin, living in disobedience, rejecting God, and wanting nothing to do with Him. While we were embedded in this horrendous state of

sin, Christ died for us. How great was His love for us, to die for one who is totally unworthy of His love.

We are so touched by this act of undeserving love. “Why should He love me so? Why should He love me so? Why should my Savior to Calvary go? Why should He love me so?” (Robert Harkness)

We cannot help but love Him in return. Therefore, we no longer want to live for ourselves but for Him who died for us. This is our motivation for sharing our faith. The Lord’s love for us compels us to love and obey Him. We want to share the Good News out of our love for Him.

## QUESTIONS

What effect does His love have on you?

## PRAYERS

### For African Enterprise (AE)

Praise God for the new team leader in Tanzania, Emmanuel Mbaaga. Pray that God will guide him and his team as they respond to the needs of Tanzania and bring people to faith in Christ Jesus.

# TUESDAY

Read **Luke 24:45-49**

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*“And He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and in His name repentance and forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.’” (Luke 24:46, 47)*

The gospel message involves the death and resurrection of Jesus and the need to respond with repentance to receive forgiveness of sins. The gospel is more than doing good deeds or loving other people. These actions may open the door for hearing the gospel. However, in time, we need to get down to the core message that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead, that we must repent of our sins and trust in Christ for our forgiveness.

Sometimes we may share with others various scriptural truths and never get around to the core message. It might be helpful to learn various ways to present the truths of the gospel. For instance, as a college student, I learned to use a Campus Crusade for Christ pamphlet, *Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?* which provides simple steps to accepting Christ, with drawings to illustrate the various points of the gospel.

I went through this pamphlet with two different people on different occasions. We took turns reading out loud each page. At the end of the pamphlet, there was a suggested prayer for one to receive Christ.

I asked each person to take it home, read through it, and think it over. A week later, I met with each, and each said that they had prayed the prayer to receive Christ. The pamphlet was very helpful in assisting me, a young believer, to share my faith.

In time I learned a simple drawing for sharing the gospel, “The John 3:16 Diagram.” One shares the simple truths of the gospel using drawings on a single sheet of paper. The drawing involves the Cross as a bridge that lost humankind can use to reach God. The first four times I used this drawing, the hearers responded by trusting in Christ. I thought there might be some magical power in it; however, in subsequent uses, I did not get positive responses. The point is that using some aids can help us in sharing the gospel.

## QUESTIONS

Do you love the Lord enough to learn how to share the gospel?

## PRAYERS

### For African Enterprise (AE)

Give thanks for the many pastors with the African Enterprise (AE) Pastor Training Course, which was developed by Moore College in Australia. Pray for continued partnership with these pastors and churches as they join AE in mission.

# WEDNESDAY

Read **Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:6-8**

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*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)*

For the timid soul, sharing one’s faith can be difficult. However, God has promised the Holy Spirit to empower us to be witnesses. Jesus has also promised He will always be with us and never leave us nor forsake us. Therefore, we do not have to be timid. We can be bold knowing that God will empower us.

We can start in small ways to share our faith by first working at building relationships with others. For instance, in our cul-de-sac there are 25 houses. Since most of our neighbors tend to be private people, we have come to know people in only seven homes on our street. We are trying in small ways to develop relationships with them. For instance, I repaired a broken lawn sprinkler for one home. One neighbor had a bee problem that I helped to solve. I have tried to help with some gardening issues, loaned tools to others, repaired the community mail boxes, and picked up the mail for others when they are out of town. We have shared persimmons from our backyard tree with our neighbors. When my wife and I take walks in the early evening, we pray for certain neighbors when we pass their houses. Our long-term goal is to start a home Bible study with some of them.

In a “solo effort” it may be scary to try to share one’s faith. Sometimes it is much better—and easier—to witness with another person; then both of you can pray together before venturing out. This will provide mutual support, encouragement, and greater boldness. This team approach was very helpful when another person and I did “cold calling.” We visited strangers in their homes to get to know them with the goal of building relationships, inviting them to church, and sharing the gospel. We were both very nervous in the beginning. But we trusted the Lord to go before us and lead us to the people whom He had prepared for our visit. We had many fruitful visits.

## QUESTIONS

The Lord will empower you to be a witness. Start with small things. Are you willing? How and where can you witness to others this week?

## PRAYERS

### For African Enterprise (AE)

Pray that AE will be able to launch more literacy programs (like the ones in Rwanda and South Sudan) to teach literacy through reconciliation and trauma healing.

# THURSDAY

Read **1 Corinthians 9:19-22**

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Paul made great efforts at sacrificing his own conveniences in order to share the gospel: *“I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ... I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.”* (vv. 19, 22) Sharing your faith may require you to sacrifice your time, resources, and convenience. Are you willing?

When I was a college student, I started a Bible study on campus with two non-Christian students. We met once a week during our lunch time to study the Bible. This involved some effort on my part—preparing study questions, studying the passage ahead of time, setting aside time for the meeting, etc. Sharing the gospel requires some sacrifice on our part.

At our previous home in the Chicago area, we were able to quickly build relationships with families in our neighborhood who had children the same ages as ours. Through the children we came to know the parents. In time we invited four sets of these parents to our home for dessert. There we presented the idea of a Discovery Bible Study, a study for those who know nothing about the Bible. This study presents an opportunity to see what the Bible says and then to formulate one’s own conclusions about it. All four couples were interested. We met twice a month for several years.



These occasions also required some effort on our part—studying the scriptural passage in advance, preparing study questions, getting our house ready for guests, preparing some refreshments, providing childcare, etc. However, we were glad to make whatever sacrifices required in order to share the gospel.

## QUESTIONS

Are you willing to inconvenience yourself in order to reach out to others and share the gospel with them? If you love the Lord enough, you will.

## PRAYERS

### For African Enterprise (AE)

Pray for all the students who have successfully completed the Pastor Training Course that they will be filled with the Holy Spirit and go out and proclaim the gospel faithfully and in context.

# FRIDAY

Read **Colossians 4:2-6**

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*“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”*  
(Colossians 4:5, 6)

Paul speaks about our need to “make the most of every opportunity” and be prepared to “know how to answer everyone.” This involves being alert for every occasion to live out our faith in the midst of unbelievers. Sometimes the Lord provides wide-open doors for us to share our faith; however, we might not be prepared to take advantage of these golden opportunities.

I remember a wide-open door that I was not prepared to enter. I was in the U.S. Army stationed in a foreign country. A fellow soldier and I arrived at our unit on the same day and were assigned to the same barracks. After several months there, that soldier got caught up in the common off-duty pursuits of drinking and womanizing.

One day he said to me, “We both arrived in this country at the same time; however, you have managed to stay straight while I have been caught up in wild living. How have you managed to do it?” I was not prepared for the question and gave an off-the-cuff simplistic answer. Sometime later I saw that I had missed the golden opportunity to speak about my faith in Jesus helping me to do what is right.

I had another missed opening. In the Discovery Bible Study that I mentioned yesterday, one man said, “I don’t believe the Bible. It is only the opinion of men and full of errors.” I did not expect his statement and did not have a well-thought-through answer to give. Some time later, after thinking through his statement, I thought of a much better reply I could have given:

“You are the perfect person to be in this study. Many people have strong opinions about the Bible and yet have never studied it. Their opinions are based on hearsay information. The purpose of our study is for one to gain firsthand information about the Bible. And then, based upon this data, to formulate one’s own conclusions grounded in what they have studied. You are in just the right place.”

## QUESTIONS

How might you prepare yourself to answer people’s questions about your faith?

## PRAYERS

### For African Enterprise (AE)

Pray for the protection and strengthening of Christians in Zanzibar, especially “Muslim Background Believers” who live in this 98% Muslim part of Tanzania.

## Sources

- “Why Should He Love Me So?” Robert Harkness, author, 1914. *The Celebration Hymnal: Songs and Hymns for Worship #325*.
- “The John 3:16 Diagram” can be found at <https://canaanland.church/home/the-one-verse-witness-of-john-316/>.
- Bill Bright, *Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?* (Campus Crusade for Christ, 1993).
- The Discovery Bible Study referenced in Thursday’s devo can be found at <https://discoverapp.org/discovery-bible-study> and <https://www.dbsguide.org>.

