

GLENKIRK CHURCH



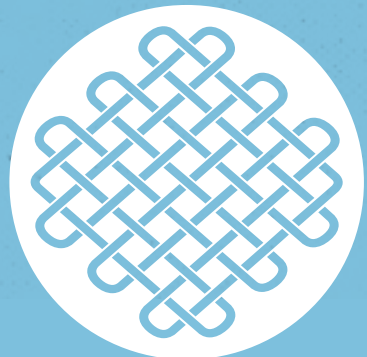
WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

SEPTEMBER 12 - 16, 2022



GLENKIRK ON MISSION



# MONDAY

Read **2 Corinthians 3:18; Hebrews 2:10-11**

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## Become

“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.” These words of Glenkirk’s mission statement overlap, but notice how closely “becoming” is related to the other three; that is, we are learning to become worshipful, inviting, and loving people.

Spiritual formation is central in our Glenkirk Church life. According to M. Robert Mulholland Jr. in his *Invitation to a Journey*, the definition of **spiritual formation** is “the process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others.” How important is this, and how does it happen?

We are not left to our own devices to make this happen. According to today’s Scripture portions, “[We] are being transformed into His image with every increasing glory, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18). And Jesus Himself is “the one who makes people holy [sanctifies us]” (Hebrews 2:11).

*Becoming* what we were created and redeemed to be is God’s idea. And *becoming* fully devoted followers of Jesus is God’s idea. Because of who He is and what He does, we *worship* Him. Amazingly He *invites* us and includes us. He entitles us and enables us to be part of His plans and program in our *becoming* winsome children of God.

He made us His children and gives us His DNA of love and joy. We often hear adults compliment young people saying, “My! Aren’t you becoming quite the young lady/man.” Well, here is how we become devoted Christ followers:

1. We participate in our own character transformation by celebrating and practicing the spiritual disciplines, such as giving, praying, and fasting (Matthew 6:1-9).
2. We encourage others by our love, cheering them on and building them up, because together we are the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16).
3. We love the nations of the world. We are “*a house of prayer for all nations*” (Mark 11:16). We want to see the kingdom of God expand and include people from all over the world.

## QUESTIONS

What is helping you to become the person you want to be? How are you helping others to become the people they want to be?

## PRAYERS

### For Sowing Seeds for Life

Pray for the time, talent and treasure of kind hearts to volunteer with Sowing Seeds for Life. Help SSFL to fulfill its mission to help the Lord’s people.

# TUESDAY

Read [Luke 2:40, 51-52; 22:28](#); [Romans 12:16](#); [Philippians 2:7-8](#); [Hebrews 2:17-18; 5:8](#); [James 4:6](#)

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## Nurture

Jesus modeled for us how to submit to our parents and be nurtured by them into adulthood. Jesus didn't have to *become* our Messiah. He was our Messiah from eternity past. But He did have to be tested and put through the paces far more than we do. He went through the same kind of rigors we face. He showed us how to trust God in the process.

Social scientists debate *nature* versus *nurture* as to which makes the biggest difference in human behavior. Of course, we are the product of both *nature* and *nurture*. If we are not adopted, our mother and father give us our DNA (*nature*) and they nurture us into adulthood. If we are adopted, our DNA comes from our birth parents, but it is our adoptive parents who nurture us into maturity.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. His DNA came from His Father, from the Holy Spirit, and maybe from Mary, but not Joseph. Jesus' (adoptive) father Joseph's job was to nurture Jesus as He grew from infancy to manhood. Joseph did this in concert with his wife Mary and God Himself.

We may not understand why Jesus "*learned obedience through the things that He suffered*" (Hebrews 5:8). But we do understand that

suffering humbles us and keeps us from conceit (Romans 12:16) and “*being wise in our own eyes*” (Proverbs 3:7). God gives grace to the humble, and since we need grace (and mercy) so badly, we can be grateful for the humbling process that suffering brings.

## QUESTIONS

How does Jesus’ story help us to raise our children in God’s ways?

How does Jesus’ story help us to grow in our life of faith?

## PRAYERS

### *For Sowing Seeds for Life*

We pray for the goodness that comes from helping others; from the volunteers who drive our trucks and deliver food to the elderly to those who pack food in cars at the pantry for families. May more kind hearts join them in mission.

# WEDNESDAY

Read **Psalm 23:3; Matthew 4:4; 6:1-9; 7:7; Mark 1:17; John 6:63; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 3:20**

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## Follow

By following Jesus, His contemporary disciples were disciplined. But how are we to follow Jesus today? When Jesus said, “*My sheep listen to My voice, I know them, and they follow Me,*” He is telling us that He speaks to us and leads us. In other words, we learn to listen to His words, and we follow His lead.

Here are a few simple and important things to remember:

- We live by God’s words.
- God’s words are alive, powerful and life-giving.
- The Scriptures correct us and instruct us in right living.
- The Scriptures thoroughly equip us in every good work.
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to live right and communicate the gospel in love.
- Prayers to God do not fall on deaf ears.
- God wants a healthy conversational relationship with us.
- Spiritual disciplines like giving, praying, and fasting, when conducted in secret, are seen by God and rewarded openly.
- If we have any questions (and we will), ask God and He will answer.

When we immerse ourselves in the gospels, we notice a confident humility in Jesus that is winsome and attractive. It is said that we become like the friends we keep. Hang around Jesus long enough, and you will begin to act and talk like Him. His best friend John put it this way: *“Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did”* (1 John 2:6).

I heard of a woman who lost her faith but not her friends. Some of her friends counseled her to read the Bible but limit her reading to the gospels, where she could “soak in” stories of Jesus. Gradually her faith was restored.

## QUESTIONS

How does Jesus being our Savior (redeeming my life) help me become the person He and I want to be? How does Jesus being our Lord (inspiring my obedience) help me become the person He wants me to be?

## PRAYERS

### For Sowing Seeds for Life

Pray for Sowing Seeds for Life to continue to serve those in need, especially through this difficult year. Help them to receive the blessings of the community so that they can share them with those in need.

# THURSDAY

Read [John 1:12-13; 17:16-17](#); [Romans 7-8](#); [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Ephesians 2:1-10, 22-24](#); [Hebrews 2:10-11](#)

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## Love

Jeremiah and Ezekiel talk about God giving us new hearts. Jesus told Nicodemus he must be born again. These are *nature* and *nurture* issues.

Sometimes we Christians exhibit a spiritual schizophrenia. We are sinners saved by grace. We are “*the righteousness of God*” (2 Corinthians 5:21) because of Jesus’ atonement in our place. We are “*not of this world*” (John 17:16), even as Jesus is not of this world. Paul tells of his personal wrestling with this issue in Romans 7, and about taking off “*the old man*” and putting on “*the new man*” in Ephesians 2:22-24.

Gregory Boyle’s life and ministry (Homeboys Industries) illustrates how this works. A culture of love and acceptance has developed in central Los Angeles, where former gang members and ex-cons are transformed toward wholeness. His books (*Tattoos on the Heart*, *Barking to the Choir*, and *The Whole Language: The Power of Extravagant Tenderness*) are full of stories illustrating the power of love to accomplish this.

God did make us in His image (*nature*) and He recreated us in Christ Jesus (*nature*) for good works (*nurture*).



As followers of Jesus, our identity is wrapped up in His identity. Jesus was killed for claiming to be who He is—God’s Son and the Savior of the world (including us). Jesus is an amazing Savior who saves us completely—past, present and future. He has saved us (justification), is saving us (sanctification), and will save us (glorification).

As Sanctifier, Jesus is making us holy. When we receive Jesus, we experience a new birth, a new heart, and a new nature; and we have the right to *become* His children. Confusing? Perhaps. But love is the greatest tool in God’s toolbox. And love is the greatest tool in ours, as well. It is God’s love that will see us through.

## QUESTIONS

Have you ever been confused about your identity in Christ?  
How have you reconciled the *now* and *not yet* parts of your identity?  
How did God’s love help in doing this?

## PRAYERS

### For Sowing Seeds for Life

Pray for the light of the Lord to shine on and direct the programs of Sowing Seeds for Life and those who provide them. Help them through the difficult times personally and professionally so that they are always able to do good works.

# FRIDAY

Read [Proverbs 3:5-6](#); [John 5:24](#); [Hebrews 11:6](#)

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## Trust

Once I belonged to an informal Theological Journal Club where professors and students would discuss journal articles on different subjects.

One of the professors, who is more learned than I, responded to my assertion that “God has faith” with “God doesn’t need faith.” Maybe that is true, but surely God has faith in Himself. I think it helped us to think of things from God’s point of view, not just our own.

For example, God did not question His decision to invest His Son Jesus in us. He just did it. *“If He gave us His Son, will He not also with Jesus freely give us all things?”* (Romans 8:32). The answer to Paul’s rhetorical question is “Yes!” And if God’s investment in us is so great, should we not reciprocate with the investment of our lives in Him and others? If He loves us, should we not love Him? If He believes in us, should we not believe in Him? If He includes us, should we not include Him in our daily lives? If He enlists us in His family and His kingdom work, should we not enlist Him to help us do this?

Isn’t being a fully devoted follower of Jesus what being under His “new management” is all about? John says, *“Loving God means obeying His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome”* (1 John 5:4). This week, we’ve explored some aspects of what it means

to become the people we want to be—God wants this for us too. Our pastor strongly emphasizes this present tense aspect of our salvation—*spiritual formation*. Let us step out and take our part in this journey together.

To do this as a church community, we need to be secure enough in God's love to trust one another and allow each other to “see others as better than ourselves” (Philippians 2:3), to “not be wise in our own eyes” (Romans 12:16), and to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15).

## QUESTIONS

What does *spiritual formation* mean in your life? How are you involved in this process? How do other people help you in this journey? How do you encourage them?

## PRAYERS

### For Sowing Seeds for Life

We ask for continued prayer for Sowing Seeds for Life, that all who go to them are nourished in body, mind and spirit.

## Sources

- Glenkirk Church's full mission statement can be found at <https://www.glenkirkchurch.org>.
- M. Robert Mulholland Jr. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993).
- Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboys Industries, author of *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* (New York: Free Press, 2010), *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017), and *The Whole Language: The Power of Extravagant Tenderness* (New York: Avid Reader Press, 2021).

