

GLENKIRK CHURCH

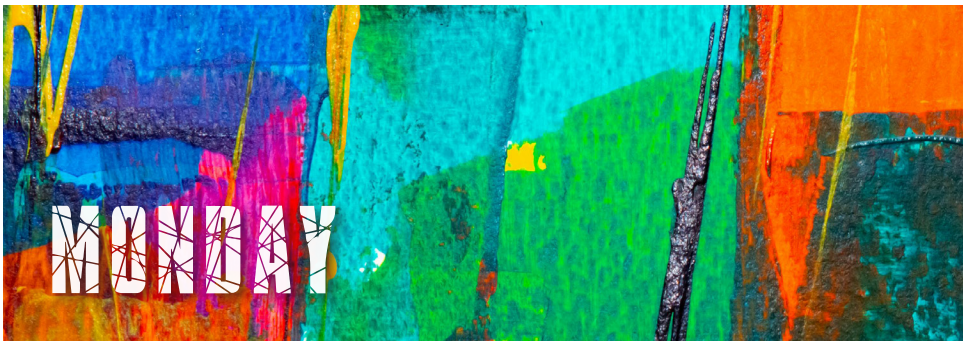


WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

DEVO

APRIL 22 - 26, 2024





Read Galatians 6:2

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

Paul has been talking about life in the Spirit. He continues to talk about the true law of the Spirit, which is the law of Christ. On the night of Jesus’ betrayal, Jesus said, *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34-35).*

The law of Christ is love, gentleness, and mercy, not the legalism of judging and pointing fingers. Jesus wants us to lovingly restore our brothers and sisters who are caught in a sin. This can be a lonely place to find oneself. Let’s face it. We’ve all sinned, yet Jesus has never given up on us. We need to follow His example. In this way, we can help them combat loneliness.

The Spirit empowers us to respond gently. However, we must examine ourselves before trying to reprove another. In this way, we will approach each other in humility, like Christ, for the purpose of reconciliation and restoration. This reproof is done for other’s good, not to humiliate them. *“The sense is, that every man has special temptations and easily besetting sins, which constitute*

a heavy burden. We should aid each other in regard to these, and help one another to overcome them.” (Albert Barnes)

We have been shown a love above all loves, and Jesus commands us to show His love to others who are struggling with the weight of their burdens “by gently reproofing them, by comforting them when overpressed with guilt, by sympathizing with them in their sorrow, by praying to God to manifest His pardoning grace to them, and by forgiving them themselves.” (John Gill) By our giving His love, we can guide others out of the loneliness and separation they might feel.

So often we expect perfection from others that we cannot display ourselves. Conversely, we expect perfection from ourselves and may not be able to display love and gentleness for others who do not measure up to our standards. Give and receive the love of Christ that He died for us to know and show.

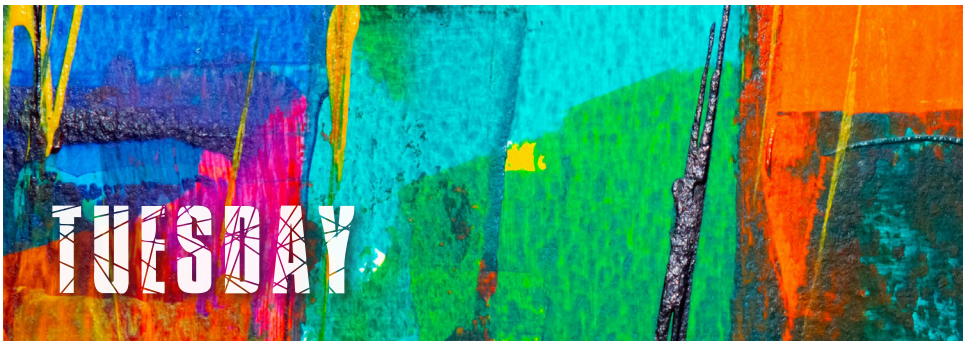
QUESTIONS

How do you react when a brother or sister is beset in a sin or weighed down with a burden? How can you show the love of Christ without your own agenda being met?

PRAYER

For Living Room Kenya—Juli Boit

Living Room’s vision is to create a community of compassion for Kenyans in need of hospice care. Pray for our staff of 150+ Kenyans who daily show up to care for our patients and their families. Pray for mercy and grace, for wisdom and discernment.



Read **Galatians 6:3**

“If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.” (Galatians 6:3)

In Galatians 5:25, Paul says, *“Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”* He restates that sentiment: *“If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves”* (Galatians 6:3). This same thought was also stated to the Roman church, *“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you”* (Romans 12:3). When someone is very full of him/herself, it can be very off-putting, and someone who is struggling would most likely not go to that person for help.

When you are feeling the loneliness of the weight of your actions or the depths of your sorrows, it takes courage to reach out to someone for help or a listening ear. There are people in our lives whom we love, but we know they aren't very good at listening. Soon your sharing becomes their diatribe on their own problems, whether they are related or not. It is a rare gift to find a brother or sister in Christ who will just listen and is comfortable with silence. When someone comes to me for help or comfort, I try very hard to actively

listen and often ask the other person if they want my feedback before I just offer it. We need to be the people whom others want to seek out in these times. Don't be a taker only. Be able to give of your time and your silence to listen.

Self-conceit, a chief hindrance in being able to be patient and show sympathy toward others, must be laid aside. If we can't do that, Paul says we are deceiving ourselves. We are dust. Our eyes must always be looking up toward God, not down on our fellow man. Up toward God because we are to be lowly and humble of heart as Jesus was. We are sadly mistaken if we think we have done anything of ourselves to be proud of. Pride is the stumbling block for us all.

QUESTIONS

When others need to talk about something that has been weighing on them and they want to spill their words, what are you doing while they are speaking? Are you thinking of something to say or actively listening? Do they feel heard afterward? Ask them.

PRAYER

For Living Room Kenya—Juli Boit

Living Room believes every person is created in the image of God. More than treating a disease, we are committed to caring for a person holistically—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Pray for our patients (*wageni* in Swahili) to experience the love of Jesus in tangible ways.



Read **Galatians 6:4; Proverbs 14:14; 2 Corinthians 10:12-14**

“The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good [will be] rewarded for theirs.” (Proverbs 14:14)

Paul wants us to exercise humility when dealing with others, and we should properly estimate our actions and character as we compare them to the Word of God. In doing this, we will be appropriately rewarded and satisfied. However, when we overestimate or underestimate our character, we will be sure to be disappointed. We will not be dependent on the applause or acceptance of others for happiness when we do what is right before God.

This can be a lonely but freeing place. When we are not dependent on the favors of others or worried about applause and recognition, we are freed up to act without strings attached or expectations to be fulfilled. We are not caught up worrying about competing with someone else in our Christian service. This can be a lonely place, though, because we are in essence being the invisible servant. But isn't that what Christ was? He came to serve, not to be served. Our recognition need only be from God alone to satisfy our hearts. This takes patience and wisdom and trust in God. When I am feeling alone in my giving, I know that I am not alone because Jesus is right there with me. He promised to never leave me or forsake me.

But when we form improper estimates of ourselves and think more highly of ourselves than we ought, we will be disappointed when the fickle applause of the world won't comfort us. We will be happy only when others smile, and we will be miserable when others frown. That indeed would be a lonely place to be. I prefer to have a good conscience and enjoy the favor of God as I struggle with the possibility of loneliness. Paul also talks about how we should not boast or overestimate ourselves in 2 Corinthians 10:12-14. *"But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you"* (v. 13). Let us be sober in our estimation of ourselves in that it be found in Christ alone.

QUESTIONS

How might a person feel lonely when doing the right thing?

PRAYER

For Living Room Kenya—Juli Boit

Living Room's ministry extends quality physical, psychological, and spiritual care to patients and their families on two campuses in Western Kenya. Pray for our leaders as we continue to grow; pray that we will have wisdom and favor as we seek to follow God's lead.



Read **Proverbs 3:27-28**

“Never walk away from someone who deserves help; your hand is God’s hand for that person. Don’t tell your neighbor ‘Maybe some other time’ or ‘Try me tomorrow’ when the money’s right there in your pocket.” (Proverbs 3:27-29 The Message)

I have always loved Proverbs 3:27. I am not rich, but I have been blessed with more than I need. My heart wants to help when I see a need. I try to use wisdom in how or whether to try to meet others’ needs myself or point them to a person or resource that could be of better use.

For years, when my niece and nephews were younger, I helped my sister when and how I could. Sometimes it was just being an extra hand or being the adult in the room or going on an adventure. Now that they are adults, my help has shifted to adult things with them. When their dad died unexpectedly, I was willing to be the probate administrator. The siblings were not speaking with each other, and no other adult relative was able to step in. I saw it as an opportunity from God to give my time and effort and try to be a peacemaker in my family. It has been a lonely place for me as the siblings don’t talk to each other. I have struggled greatly, but I have faith that the Lord will use everything to His glory.

I have a dear friend who has gone through a divorce and has struggled with raising her children, making ends meet financially, and enduring her own physical ailments. I have tried to be there for her through her journey. I have walked alongside her as a sister-in-Christ and “aunt” to her kids.

I want to be a solid example of someone loving the Lord and loving others. This often entails putting others’ needs ahead of my own. Philippians 2:3-4 says, *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”* God wants to bless others through us and transform us more and more into His likeness. Don’t walk away from someone who feels alone when you have the power to help.

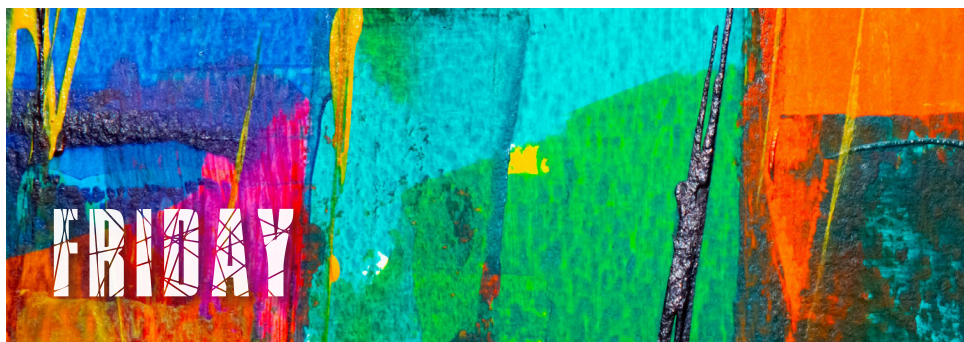
QUESTIONS

When you see someone in need, how do you respond initially?
How would God have you respond ultimately?

PRAYER

For Living Room Kenya—Juli Boit

Living Room’s mission is to provide dignity and a good quality of life to people in Kenya living with advanced diseases through holistic care and education. Pray for wisdom, favor and provision as we expand services. We are hoping to begin construction on an outpatient building that will include an emergency department and radiology unit.



Read **John 16:32**

“A time is coming and, in fact, has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave Me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for My Father is with Me.” (John 16:32)

*“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:20b)*

Our model for combating loneliness is Jesus. Jesus knew that His disciples would scatter and leave Him alone after His arrest. But He advised He would not be alone because His Father would be with Him. After Jesus had risen, He gave His disciples the Great Commission, ending with *“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20b). He gave us His Holy Spirit—our Comforter, Counselor, and Advocate—to accompany us. Through the Spirit, I have Jesus; I am never alone.

Even in Jesus’ darkest moment on the cross, the weight of all the sin of humanity laid upon Him and being cut off from His Father, Jesus thought of us, dying in our place, enduring the cross that we might not have to endure it. Everything we do should reflect thankfulness and gratitude to Him.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave

you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6). God will not forsake us. He will always be with us, so we should be strong and courageous in times of loneliness.

When I am feeling weighed down and lonely, I need to reach out and let someone in. I need to take my eyes off of myself and my circumstances and place them on Christ and others. In giving and receiving love, we can combat loneliness and find our satisfaction in Christ. Only He can fill the hole in our heart that nothing else can satisfy.

This brings to mind a favorite hymn, “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go,” by George Matheson. Here is the first verse, but I encourage you to read all of them.

*O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee.
I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.*

QUESTIONS

What is your go-to method for combating loneliness through either giving or receiving? What could you add to your arsenal here?

PRAYER

For Living Room Kenya—Juli Boit

Living Room runs a guesthouse for children who have traveled far and are undergoing cancer treatment. Pray for these children and families, as well as our care team. We are dreaming of how to expand our pediatric services to provide comprehensive care: outpatient and inpatient care for these children.



Sources

- Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Bible*, written 1834:
<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/galatians/6.htm>.
- John Gill, *Exposition of the Entire Bible*, written 1746-63:
<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/gill/galatians/6.htm>.
- George Matheson, Songwriter, “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go,” written 1882.

These devotionals are written by a team of Glenkirk volunteers who represent a range of beliefs within the evangelical spectrum. As such, some of the expressed views may not necessarily represent those of pastoral leadership. If you find yourself challenged by a devo, explore why that might be and, should you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Pastor Kate Wallace Nunneley at KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org. If you are interested in joining those who pen Glenkirk devotionals, please contact Pastor Kate.

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