

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

DEVO

JULY 14 - 18, 2025





Read **Ephesians 6:10-18; Romans 7:14-25; Matthew 4:1-11**

This week's devotionals parallel the daily themes steering our concurrent Vacation Bible School curriculum, "Racing with Perseverance." We'll have 350 campers with us this week, learning more about Jesus while drawing closer to Him—pray for a successful, God-honoring VBS week. Today's devo theme: "Racing with the Armor of God."

God faces opposition and—if we are His children—God's enemies are also ours. However, the adversary is no mere human. Our principal enemy is the enemy, the devil. Satan is not God's equal, but a fallen creature infinitely less powerful than the Almighty. However, he is formidable to mere humans. Satan influences the fallen world surrounding us—enemy #2. And our final nemesis can be the most challenging still: our own sinful tendencies—sometimes causing us to displace God from His rightful throne in our lives, supplanting Him via pridefulness, selfishness or other sin. Even the Apostle Paul wrestled with enemy #3—he shares his related struggles in Romans 7:14-24.

Per today's featured Scripture, Paul uses a battle gear metaphor—"the full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11)—to represent preparation for inevitable spiritual challenges. The "belt" worn to hold things together is "truth" (v. 14)—God being truth's ultimate Source (Psalm 119:160), the Bible truth's platform. "Righteousness"—

portrayed as a protective "breastplate" (Ephesians 6:14)—is right behavior toward others, strengthening our faith while repelling evil.

"Feet fitted with ... readiness" (v. 15) indicate alert watchfulness and responsiveness. "Faith" is characterized as a "shield" (v. 16), protection against enemy attacks. "Salvation"—saving faith in Jesus Christ—is a "helmet" (v. 17) protecting the mind. The only offensive weapon referenced is "the sword of the Spirit, ... the word of God" (v. 17), which Jesus—"Truth" (John 14:6) personified—used to repel Satan amidst His 40-day wilderness fast as the Savior's ministry commenced (Matthew 4:1-11).

Some misapply Ephesians 6:10-18, interpreting it and hymns like "Onward, Christian Soldiers" as calls to "attack" with "truth bombs" via contentious conversations. Such people misunderstand who our true enemies are. Jesus' Way is that of peace; He is the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Does your Christian "gear" enable peace? Where are you most vulnerable?

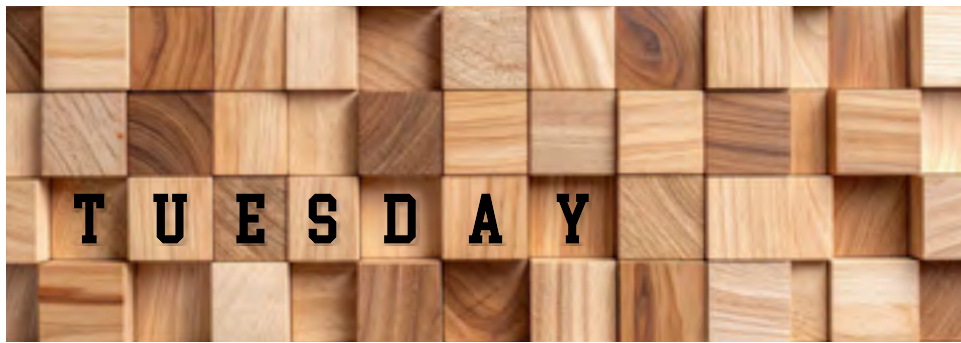
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Why did Paul use "armor" metaphors to represent spiritual readiness? How can you make sure you're "wearing the Armor of God" every day? What "piece of armor" do you think is most important for you right now?

PRAYERS

For His Children

Financial Provision. FHC is currently behind where it would like to be in meeting its annual budget and would deeply appreciate prayers for God's provision, creative solutions, and new opportunities to connect with supporters. Please pray for a time of positive fund-raising.



Read **Exodus 13:17-22, 14:13-25**

In racing, the driver starting before the green flag waves faces disqualification. Though God is forgiving and gives second, third and even more chances (Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 18:22), it's hazardous to "jump the gun" and get out ahead of Him. Scripture reminds us to "wait for the LORD" (Psalm 27:14), for "He [makes] everything beautiful in its time" (Ecclesiastes 3:11) and "establishes [our] steps" (Proverbs 16:9). Today's theme, "Green Means Go!" is a lesson hard-learned by ancient Hebrews during their Exodus from Egypt.

For Israelites trekking toward the Promised Land, God Himself was their guiding Light. "By day [He led] them in a pillar of cloud ... and by night in [an illuminating] pillar of fire" (Exodus 13:20). Their journey, if direct, would have lasted about eleven days. However, it took them forty years to enter the Promised Land. Why so long?

One reason: for their own protection and encouragement. A direct route through Philistine country would have exposed them to battles for which they weren't yet ready (Exodus 13:17). God led them via the Red Sea route both to demonstrate His mighty, miraculous provision for them—God enabled Moses to part the sea to provide passage (14:21-22)—and defeat pursuing Egyptian forces (14:26-28).

A more ominous reason for the Hebrews' over-extended journey was their mistrust and grumbling despite God's continuing, faithful

provision. Among the Jewish spies sent to survey the land, only two—Caleb and Joshua—gave reports encouraging its occupation. Others faithlessly emphasized related obstacles: numerous, mighty, well-armed locals. Because of this—symptomatic of ancient Israel's general rebelliousness—God extended their journey until the older, unfaithful among them died in the wilderness. Only Caleb and Joshua of that generation eventually entered the Promised Land (Numbers 14:26-35).

Sadly, if you're like me, you might mirror the ancient, exodus-ing Israelites occasionally. We sometimes overlook God's goodness and power amidst challenges, losing hope. God always answers believers' prayers, sometimes with "Yes." However, "No, I've got something better for you" and "Not now" are also legitimate answers. Don't take off before God's "green light"—His timing, like God Himself and His love, is always perfect.

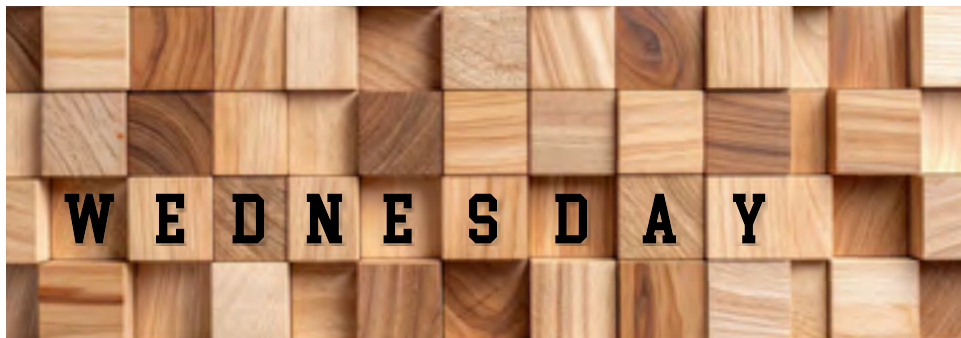
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Why was Israel's exodus from Egypt so lengthy? What lessons from Israel's journey to the Promised Land do you find most useful? Why is it important to trust God even amidst life's challenges and uncertainty?

PRAYERS

For His Children

Political & Economic Climate. Ecuador re-elected President Daniel Nobo and there seems to be a bit more stability politically, but there is still economic uncertainty, which impacts the children and families FHC serves in various ways. Pray that economic and political stability continue to improve.



Read **1 Kings 19:1-8; Jonah 4:1-10**

Successful drivers know their personal limits and those of their car—they cannot complete a race without a pit stop for refueling and repairs. Otherwise, they’d risk crashing or losing. This is likewise true of God’s own people, even among those used mightily by Him. Today’s theme: “Refueling with God.”

Elijah was Israel’s most revered prophet, used by God to discredit and destroy the pagan idol Baal’s 450 prophets at Mt. Carmel. God’s powerful display there via Elijah demonstrated that He is the only true and living God. (1 Kings 18:20-40). However, wicked Baal-worshiper Queen Jezebel then vowed to have Elijah executed, prompting the prophet’s fleeing to Beersheba. There he despaired before God, deeply depressed (1 Kings 19:1-5).

God is all-knowing—there is nothing we can say, do, feel or think that surprises Him. Therefore, we are wise always to be open and vulnerable before Him. He can handle it. He is the One who powerfully spoke everything into existence and created humankind for intimate relationship. Our Creator knows that “*we are dust*” (Psalm 103:14) and that our earthly lives are “*a mist that appears [temporarily] and then vanishes*” (James 4:14). God loves us regardless, wanting us to dwell with Him eternally in Christ.

When Elijah’s courage failed, God didn’t rebuke nor discard him. The LORD refueled and restored Elijah, then commissioned the

revitalized prophet to “go to ... *Damascus* ... [and] anoint Hazael king over Aram ... [and] Jehu ... king over Israel ... [along with] Elisha [as your prophetic successor]” (1 Kings 19:15-16). I’m reminded of Jesus’ reinstating Peter after the apostle had denied the Lord three times. The Redeemer told Peter to “*feed My sheep*” following His three “*Do you love Me?*” questions (John 21:15-17). Similarly, God patiently endured the prophet Jonah’s obstinance, teaching him that God’s compassion is not exclusively toward Israel.

Do you know anyone maintaining, “God would never want anything to do with me—I’ve done too many awful things”? That’s the enemy’s narrative—no one is beyond almighty God’s redemption. Draw alongside them empathetically. Help them know the loving Restorer who is “*mighty to save*” (Zephaniah 3:17 BSB).

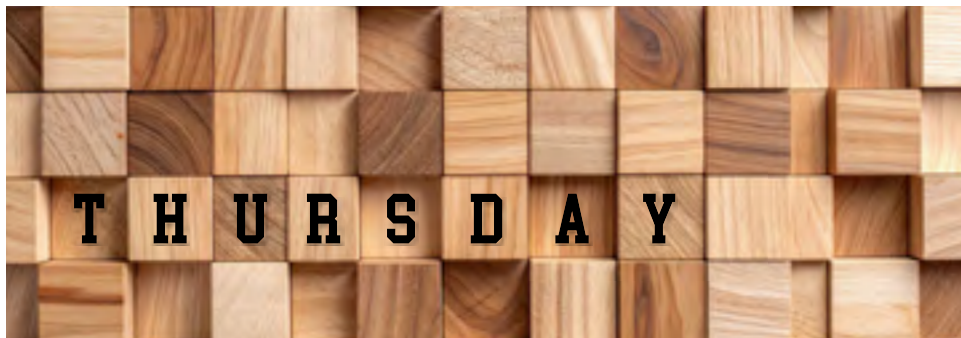
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

What caused Elijah to give up hope? How does Elijah’s story parallel the prophet Jonah’s and Simon Peter’s? Who do you know who feels hopeless and how will you help them?

PRAYERS

For His Children

Community Engagement in Latacunga. It is encouraging to see growth in FHC’s community connections in Latacunga, which has allowed for unique opportunities for its young adults to develop life skills, explore vocational paths, and engage meaningfully with their community. It’s a joy to see them gaining confidence and independence in this way. Pray that the positive community engagement continues.



Read **Philippians 3**

Charles Templeton was evangelist Billy Graham's key 1940s ministry partner. His impact in witnessing to crowds of up to 30,000 people convinced some that he'd surpass even Graham in "soul-winning." However, Templeton began questioning Christianity, eventually falling away. In his book, *Farewell to God*, the 80-year-old author longingly confessed his admiration for Jesus Christ, the relationship he missed most as a then-longtime atheist. Sadly, Templeton did not finish well.

The Apostle Paul, penman for Philippians 3, implored his readers—and us—to press on in following the Lord, in order to enjoy and share His victory. Jesus Christ, God's Son, left heaven and came on a mission to save, ransoming a world lost in sin. The Savior lived a perfect life, took the penalty each of us deserves via His crucifixion, and rose from the tomb—defeating both sin and death. Through saving faith in Him, we receive God's forgiveness, Christ's victory, and eternal life.

Some argue for "perseverance of the saints"—that true believers are "once saved, always saved." They cite John 10:28, wherein Jesus promises that "[His followers] shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of My hand." Others maintain that no one can "lose their salvation" unwillingly, but could intentionally discard it. They might cite Charles Templeton as a forlorn, ominous example.

Regardless of your view here, it is clear that "finishing the race well" is even more important for Christians than race car drivers. Jesus Himself warned believers that "*you will have tribulation*" (John 16:33). But Paul encourages believers to "[strain] toward what is ahead, [pressing] on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 3:13-14). That goal is spiritual strength, deeper faith, and the fullness of God's love—showing up in "*the peace of God, which transcends all understanding*" (Philippians 4:7), a byproduct of faithful perseverance.

If you ever feel overwhelmed by strong opposition, don't despair. As Monday's devo emphasized, we face formidable enemies. But Jesus enables us to finish well, promising "*I am with you always*" (Matthew 28:20), for Christ Himself "[has] overcome the world" (John 16:33).

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

How can we have hope even amidst life's inevitable trials and disappointments? Do you know anyone like Charles Templeton, living in emptiness apart from Christ? How will you help them know the Source of "*the peace ... [transcending] all understanding*" (Philippians 4:7)?

PRAYERS

For His Children

Exploring Expansion in Quito. FHC is in the process of analyzing how it might expand its services in Quito to support not only children, but the entire family system. While the specifics are still being worked through, FHC looks forward to sharing more in the future as these plans take shape. Pray for wisdom and clarity as the process moves forward.



Read **Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 12:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:7-10**

How would you feel if, upon winning the big race with your fastest time, no one else was present to share the moment? What if your victory lap was isolated, you there alone? Would that be fulfilling? Jesus was the greatest conquest ever—defeating sin and death! But instead of keeping it to Himself, Jesus commissioned His followers: Tell everyone! Our gift of salvation in Christ is not something to clutch greedily or hide; it's meant to be shared.

“Evangelism” sometimes evokes images of money-grubbing TV charlatans. Fears keep many from faith-sharing: rejection, worry about offending another, awkwardness, feeling ill-equipped, lacking giftedness, etc. However, Jesus didn't preface His “Great Commission”—“*go and make disciples of all nations*” (Matthew 18:19)—as exclusive to professional pastors or others specifically gifted. Sharing your faith is the responsibility—and privilege—of every believer.

If you were awakened by a 3 AM flickering glow through your bedroom window and witnessed your next-door neighbor's house burning, would you dismiss warning them due to fear of rejection or offending? Aren't the consequences of eternal judgment for those dying without Christ even greater? If you are reluctant to evangelize, is it because you don't truly “*love your neighbor*” (Galatians 5:14)? Perhaps you disbelieve the Bible's many warnings

regarding judgment (e.g., Mark 9:31 and 30+ other scriptural references). Or maybe you overvalue personal comfort, discounting that we're called not to comfort but to faithfulness.

Jesus promised that in surrendered, loving witnessing, the Spirit will help us (Luke 12:11-12). You have a personal, indisputable story about what God has for you since accepting Christ. Listen to others who are struggling, asking them compassionate questions informed by their circumstances. You don't need a theology degree to love others, invite them to church, and/or share your hope in Jesus. And you can meet anyone in the world's fallenness—any mature, sensible person sees that “things are not as they should be” (Romans 8:18-22). Share with others that God will fix this upon Jesus' return (Revelation 21:1-4).

The “race” is never finished in this life. But you can enjoy the Victor and His victory now. Invite others into Jesus' “victory lap.”

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Which of the fears associated with evangelism most resonates with you? What prevents you from more actively witnessing? Which of these will you do next: Invite someone to church? Tell your personal story? Meet another in the world's fallenness?

PRAYERS

For His Children

Adoptions & Family Outcomes. Several children are in various stages of adoption or family reunification, while others remain in long-term care due to complex needs. Each story is unique. Pray for the right outcomes and lifelong healing for each child.



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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