

**MONDAY 8.22.22 – Matthew 11:28-30**

I have shared my testimony regarding my life in overseas missions with people, and often their response is “I could never do that”. In most cases I am not sure that statement is true, but let’s for the sake of this devotional say that it is. The next logical question to ask is, if you cannot go, is there more you could be doing where you are? To help you unpack this question let me ask you a few more:

1. *Do you have missionaries /mission organizations that you support?*
2. *Do you pray for these people/organizations regularly and specifically?*
3. *Do you pray specifically for the people they are working with?*
4. *Do you write them letters/emails with a word of encouragement?*
5. *Do you know their birthdays, and do you send them cards?*

When Deb and I were serving in Suriname, South America we had a supporter who would write a short note about once a quarter. The note would read, I am praying for you and the work God has called you to. Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 take the family out for pizza. The fact that any pizza we got we had to make was irrelevant. The fact that this person was invested in our lives and the ministry we had been called to meant the world to us.

Being a missionary and being mission minded are two different things. The real question is, do you have a heart for a lost world.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**TUESDAY 8.30.22 – 1 PETER 3:15**

In his letter Peter has already told believers that they are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” (2:9). As a “holy nation,” believers are set apart to be different from the world and Peter is reminding his readers to expect these differences to lead to suffering as Christians. Just as Christ suffered for us as our example of gentleness and suffering for righteousness, he is also an example of hope (1:21; 2:21-23).

In a world where we fear suffering, Peter reminds us that our focus should be on honoring (*treating as holy, regarding reverently*) Christ the Lord. In other words, we are to treat Christ with a special status (see Hebrews 9:13-14). This is not

an option but rather a command to all believers. And this is the holiness we are called to strive for. And Peter tells us that this will require an explanation because it sets us apart (2:11). Those to whom we give an answer are “anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.” Every believer is being commanded to honor Christ the Lord as holy in their hearts and to give a reason for the hope they have, the hope that is within each of us who revere Christ as Lord and claim Him as Savior.

What is the hope in the face of a Christian’s suffering? It is a living hope, the hope of a life to come (1:3-4).

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**WEDNESDAY 8.31.22 – ACTS 17:1-15**

Paul’s preaching made a tremendous impact in Berea. The Jewish people in the city eagerly and openly listened to Paul as he shared the gospel in the synagogue. However, they were cautious. They did not indiscriminately embrace Paul’s teaching. Rather, they “*examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*” They carefully and systematically sifted the evidence and concluded that the gospel that Paul proclaimed was the truth that fulfilled the Old Testament promise of the coming Messiah. Today, it is important for us as believers to follow the example of the Bereans. How dangerous it is for Christians to blindly accept what people teach without studying the Word of God for themselves! When listening to a Bible teacher in person, on the radio, on television, on a podcast or whatever the venue, compare what they say to what the Word of God teaches. Be a Berean!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**THURSDAY 9.1.22 – JEREMIAH 29:11**

Jeremiah 29:11 is an important reminder that while we are sure to suffer here in our earthly lives, God has a plan for us. A

plan filled with hope, not disaster. Do not give up! We will experience illness, war, financial instability, relational strife, and emotional distress (among other things). Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us that these things are temporary, and that God has bigger and better things planned for us. Just like the Jews in Babylon, we will be challenged by false prophets like Hananiah. This verse reminds us not to believe in things that are too good to be true. Instead, trust in God and His process. It is in His process alone that we can be assured of hope for our future. Finally, we are reminded that if we seek God in our hearts, we will never grow tired, even as we experience suffering in our earthly lives. Take heart! Our Father has big, awesome plans for us

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**FRIDAY 9.2.22 – Psalm 37:1-6**

DON’T FRET. “Fretting” is a common activity of our age. It is composed of worry, resentment, jealousy, and self-pity. It is dominant online. It chews us up inside while accomplishing nothing. David gives three practical remedies. Look forward (verse 2)—those whose main happiness is found in this world are living on borrowed time. Look upward (verses 3-5)—neither repress nor vent your frustrations but redirect them to God. Leave your burdens in his hand (“commit”) and learn to find your heart’s deepest desires in who he is and what he has done (“delight”). Finally, get busy with the things that must be done—“do good” (verse 3). Self-pity can lead you to cut corners ethically. Don’t add a bad conscience to a heavy heart.

Prayer: Father, your son, Jesus, did not begrudge me a far better life than I deserve in your grace or his blood shed to secure it. Make me generous to others and content in your great love. Amen.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES**

**SUNDAY MORNINGS – 9:40AM\***

**Kids** CHILDREN’S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)  
 LOCATION: Kid’s Wing on the Lower Level  
*\*available during 9:40 **AND** 11:00 services*

NURSERY (through Age 3)  
 LOCATION: Kid’s Wing on the Lower Level  
*available during the 9:40 service*

**Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)  
 LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)

**Adults** EXPLORE THE BIBLE–Room B8-10 (Lower Level)  
*1 and 2 Kings with Lane Kemler*  
 MASTERWORK–Room B11 (Lower Level)  
*Mere Hope: Life in the Age of Cynicism with Shawn Devlin*  
 You Are Never Alone–Room B1-2 (Lower Level)  
*with Joel Day*

**SUNDAY EVENINGS – 6:00PM**

**Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)  
 LOCATION: Kid’s Wing on the Lower Level  
 CURRENT SERIES: Answers for Kids

**Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)  
 LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)  
*5th–8th Grade meet downstairs*  
*9th–12th Grade meet upstairs*

**Adults** DIVE DEEP WITH DOUG  
 LOCATION: Worship Center  
 CURRENT SERIES: **Journeys of Paul**

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS – 6:30PM**

**WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? (beginning July 6th)**  
 LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)

*TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY GROUPS OR CLASSES,  
 PLEASE USE THE CONNECT CARD IN YOUR BULLETIN. THANK YOU!*

**SERMON NOTES**

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**E2 Edifying and Equipping Every Day**  
 TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



**August 29<sup>th</sup> – September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

OVERVIEW:

Monday's and Tuesday's readings will be a follow up on today's Quarterly Mission Sunday. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for next week as we jump back into our study of the book of Acts.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE:

“All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.”

–ACTS 10:43