

MONDAY 7.24.23 – John 15:5

John 14 closes with Jesus telling His disciples, “Come now; let us leave.” This suggests that the next two chapters might have been spoken on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. It is possible that they were passing some vineyards when Jesus gave the analogy of the vine and branches in the beginning of chapter 15. The analogy teaches one main truth—the importance of a believer remaining in fellowship with Jesus in order to be a fruitful Christian. To remain in Christ does not mean to keep yourself saved. A believer is eternal secure in Jesus Christ (John 10:27-29). Rather, it means to live in His Word and pray (v 7), obey His commandments (v 10), and keep our lives clean through His Word (vv 3-4). A believer who remains in fellowship with Jesus moves from producing “fruit” to “more fruit” (v 2) to “much fruit” (v 8).

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 7.25.23 – Colossians 1:9-10

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

The focus of today’s Scripture is as much on prayer as it is on spiritual growth. I think that is because the two-go hand in hand. I do not think that a person will grow spiritually if they are not in touch with God and seeking His will, and this will only come from an attitude of prayer. The flip side of this train of thought is that spiritual growth is inevitable if we have a genuine attitude of prayer. Further, if we truly want to grow in our faith, we will get others involved in the process as we fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ and enlist their prayers for us as we seek God’s will for our lives. Do you want to grow in your faith? I would recommend two things.

First, be purposeful in spending time in God’s Word and in prayer each day.

Second, fellowship with fellow believers regularly, and ask them to be praying for you as you seek God’s will for your life.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY – 7.26.23 – Nehemiah 4:20

Sometimes you struggle. Sometimes you have trouble completing a task. How do you respond when this happens? Do you **choose** to listen to the external voices insulting and criticizing you? Do you **choose** to listen to the voices of doubt and confusion you hear from within? Or do you **choose** to be the voice of encouragement and strength pushing yourself forward? That’s right... **CHOOSE!!!** You will encounter opposition in your life. The way you respond in these situations defines who you are. Will you be like Sanballat... mocking, insulting, and combative? Will you be like Judah... doubtful and disheartened? Will you choose to be like Nehemiah... empowering, supportive, and encouraging? You have a voice! Use it to be a positive influence in your own life and the lives of those around you! Sound the trumpet... rally... fight!!!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 7.27.23 – Lamentations 3:55-59

Everyone reading this devotional has known heartache. Heart break is a common ailment of the human soul. If family members or loved ones did not let us down or if others did not oppose us unreasonably, then we would fail on our own accord. It is just so much the nature of the brokenness of our world.

But out of the depths of our malignancies we cry to our God because we have no other place to turn, knowing in our hearts that he hears us, but not seeing him with our eyes. Our own experiences tell us that he is the faithful one, always ready to answer us and bear our sorrows. More than that, the verses scheduled today say he actually fights for us, he fights our battles for us and takes up our cause. It just cannot get better than that. Thank you, Lord.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY – 7.28.23 – Psalm 55:16-18

The humanity of David and the other psalmists is revealed in their songs of joy, hope, despair, praise, and prayers. We find their thoughts and concerns relatable to our own lives, no matter how different the situations. Psalm 55 reveals a speaker (presumably David) in crisis, in great fear. Like him, how often we sink into anguish over our circumstances whether they be financial, relational, emotional, or physical. Like him also, we can follow his 3 steps to deliverance. First he calls out to God, whom he loves and worships. Second he makes it clear that the Lord is listening 24/7. Finally, he declares that the Lord has rescued him, even though opposed by many. David put his trust in the Lord in his darkest hours, so should we give Him our every care and all our needs. He will not fail us. Praise the Lord!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:40am

Kids CHILDREN’S CHURCH (Ages 4 — 4th Grade)
 LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service
 NURSERY (through Age 3)
 LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service

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

Adults SUMMER QUARTER BEGINS JUNE 4th
 LOCATION: B8-10 with Scott Naus
Explore the Bible – *Jeremiah and Lamentations*
 LOCATION: B11 with Barry Wills & Shawn Devlin
Masterwork
 6/4 - *Good Life* by Dr. Derwin L. Gray
 7/23 - Gideon
 LOCATION: B1-2 with Joel Day & Vince DiLoretto
 6/4 - **Everything You Need** – *by David Jeremiah*
 7/23 - **In the Steps of the Savior** – *by Max Lucado*

SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

Kids MESSIAH KIDS (Kindergarten — 4th Grade)
 Break for summer. **RESUMES AUGUST 6th.**
 LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level

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

Adults DIVE DEEPER WITH DOUG
 LOCATION: Worship Center

E2 SUMMER SMALL GROUP – Beginning 7/26 at 6:30pm

LOCATION: B8-10 with Barry Wills
The Awe of God, by John Bevere

Do you long for an intimate relationship with your Creator, but He seems elusive? Perhaps it is because something utterly essential is missing—holy fear. Don't let this frighten you. Fearing God is very different than being afraid of God. It's the key to everything.

In The Awe of God, John Bevere invites you to take a fresh look at what it means to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. This healthy, holy, and largely forgotten virtue is the uncommon path to a more fulfilled and fruitful life.

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

Galatians 4:12-20
Pilgrim’s Progress

In Galatians 3 and 4, Paul has appealed to his readers’ heads. He’s presented logical and theological arguments to prove that believers in Christ are free from the Old Testament Law.

Now in chapter 4, Paul appeals to his readers’ hearts. He’s appealing to the Galatians based on their relationship with him. Paul wants to encourage the Galatian Christians to progress in their journey with Christ. He does so in six ways. These are the same six ways that you can encourage fellow Christians in their journey with Christ.

1. Be _____ (v 12)
2. Be _____ (vv 13-14)
3. Be _____ (v 15)
4. Be _____ (v 16)
5. Be _____ (vv 17-18)
6. Be _____ (vv 19-20)

The writer of Hebrews tells us to “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” ~ Hebrews 10:24

God wants to use you to encourage fellow believers to remain faithful to Him and to make progress in their Christian life.



TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



July 24th – July 28th

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 Sunday’s message, “Pilgrim’s Progress” with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday’s through Friday’s devotions will help prepare us for the message on 7.30, “Progress in Spite of Opposition” with Ken Lewis.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE: “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Galatians 1:3-4