

MONDAY 10.9.23 - John 15:10-11

If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Jesus said the first commandment is “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. ³¹The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” This is the standard we are called to as followers of Christ. It is also the thing that is going to bring us the most sense of fulfillment in our Christian life. I recently heard an acronym that fits very well here.

- J – Jesus first
- O – others second
- Y – yourself last

In today’s Scripture, Jesus essentially says, Do you want to experience great joy? Then you must learn to love as I have loved. There is another acronym that has gone out of vogue, but still fits well in today’s thoughts. As we walk down the path set before us each day maybe we need to remember WWJD and ask ourselves “What would Jesus Do”?

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 10.10.23 - Philippians 4:4

People love to read advice columns and how-to articles for tips to improve their lives. God’s Word is the greatest self-improvement manual with the way to change our lives for the better for now and all eternity by faith in Jesus Christ. That being said, God is a God of absolutes: all have sinned; Jesus died that all may come to repentance; our sins have been fully paid for; nothing can separate us from the love of Christ; our sins have been removed as far as the east from the west. In return, we have received absolute commands. We are to rejoice always; we are to pray without ceasing; and we are to give thanks in all circumstances (I Thess. 5:16-18).

Through our obedience, we reflect God’s love and live a life filled with joy, peace, and hope in spite of what life throws at us. That’s self-improvement!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY - 10:11.23 - Galatians 5:22-23

Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you” (John 14:27). Through Christ, you can experience genuine peace. Internal peace is a sense of wholeness, contentment, tranquility, order, rest, and security. Although nearly everyone longs for this kind of peace, it eludes most people. That is because genuine peace cannot be obtained directly. It is a byproduct of right living. Peace comes from obeying what God commands. “And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us” (1 John 3:23). The three dimensions of peace—with God, others, and self—are inseparably joined by God’s design. As author Tim Hansel states, “Peace with God, peace with each other and peace with ourselves come in the same package.” If you want to experience genuine peace, you must seek harmonious relationships with God and those around you.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 10.12.23 - Isaiah 26:3

This is a very famous and popular verse, and rightfully so. It is a bulwark of truth in times of question, doubt and fear. Our world is filled with trials; indeed, Jesus said it would be so and our experience confirms it. Those troubles overwhelm us on occasion, not one of us is immune. Yet Isaiah said in the first

verses that our salvation is like a strong city with great walls and towers, it cannot be breached or conquered. And its doors are open to us, who are its faithful citizens. That assurance is what keeps us and builds peace in us.

If all we have is stripped away, we will still have Jesus, that strong king of the shining city on the hill, that King who is our brother and friend. That gives peace, beyond what the world knows.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY- 10.13.23 - Psalm 4:8

Do you need sleeping pills to sleep well after a hard day of living in this broken world? I give you Psalm 4 as an alternative. How can we have joy and peaceful sleep as we seem to struggle while other prosper? Consider whether you have a divided heart, making success and relationships into idols... and repent. Consider whether you have a bitter heart... and forgive. Finally, in prayer, seek God’s face, a sense of His presence, and His love on your heart. Only then can you find peace knowing you are safe in God’s plan for you.

Pray with me... Heavenly Father, other “gods” compete with You for the allegiance of my heart. I harbor resentment toward people who have wronged me, and sometimes You. It is these things that keep me from knowing the joy of Your presence and the peace of Your protection. Help me remove them all and fill my heart with the joy and peace that can only come from You. AMEN.

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** FALL QUARTER
LOCATION: B11 with Bob Lehman
Explore the Bible - *Mark's Gospel*
LOCATION: B8-10 with David Hamilton
Bible Studies for Life
Begins Oct. 15th
LOCATION: B1-2 with Chris Domenico & Joel Day
Following Jesus in a Digital Age

SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

- Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)
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** SUMMER EVENING SPEAKER
LOCATION: Worship Center

E2 FALL SMALL GROUP

Women's TUESDAY EVENING STUDY

God of Deliverance - Study in Exodus 9/5 - 11/28
in B8-10- with Denise Whitfield & Elizabeth Williams.

Men's TUESDAY EVENING STUDY

Kingdom Man - understand your position under God as well as your position over what God has given to you.
9/5 - 10/24 in B1-2 with Mike Williams.

Women's THURSDAY MORNING STUDY

Abide -Study of the letters of 1,2,& 3 John - abide in the truth. 9/7 - 11/30 at 9am in the Youth Activity Center.

Women's THURSDAY EVENING STUDY

Desperate for Hope - find hope in your pain. Meeting at Kulp Church in Catawissa at 6:30 pm began 9/7.

Wednesday EVENING SMALL GROUP

Carry the Flame - Learn to obey the Spirit's direction and live out the gospel of Jesus Christ in today's world.
Begins October 18th at 6:30pm in B8-10 with Barry Wills.

Galatians 5:22-23 **The Fruit of Joy**

"But the fruit of the Spirit is ... joy"

Many Christians don't experience joy. They live under a cloud of disappointment when they could be walking in the sunshine of joy.

What steals their joy? The answer is: Four Thieves.

- C _____
- P _____
- T _____
- W _____

From the Book of Philippians, Paul describes the four attitudes of mind that will produce joy in your life.

1. U _____ Mind (1:21)

In chapter 1, Paul discusses his difficult circumstances and faces them honestly, but his circumstances could not rob him of his joy. That is because he was not living to enjoy his circumstances—he was living to serve Jesus Christ.

2. H _____ Mind (2:3-4)


Jesus Christ (vv 5-11), Paul (vv 12-18), Timothy (vv 19-24), and Epaphroditus (vv 25-30) displayed an attitude that put the concerns of others ahead of themselves.

3. S _____ Mind (3:20)

The only way to experience true joy is to look at events from God's vantage point.

4. G _____ Mind (4:7)

The peace of God can protect your mind against the pressures of life that bring you worry and anxiety.

 Edifying and Equipping Every Day

TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



October 9th - October 13th

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, "The Fruit of Joy" with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on 10.15, "The Fruit of Peace" with Pastor Doug Lyon.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23