

MONDAY 11.27.23 - Matthew 25:21

His master replied, Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness. In what areas of your life is God calling you to be faithful? Is it your finances? Or maybe your witness to others. How about in your marriage, or at your job. After Jesus’ agonizing time in Gethsemane He returned to His disciples and told them, “Be alert and pray for the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak”. This is good advice for us as well. Being faithful is easy in the easy places of life, but difficult in the difficult places of life. May I encourage you today to be alert and spend time in prayer, asking God to help you remain faithful in both the easy and the difficult places of life. Remember, he who is faithful in a few things; will be put in charge of many things. What’s more, in doing so he will experience his masters happiness. Do you really want to find happiness in Christ? If so be faithful in both the easy and the difficult places in your life.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 11.28.23 - Revelation 2:10

The Bible makes it clear that we will not have an easy, obstacle-free road as we follow along on the path God has laid out before us. In fact, quite the opposite. We are told time and again how much pain and suffering we may encounter as we try to be more Christ-like in our lives. Suffering is uncomfortable, so we tend take the path of least resistance to try to stay comfortable, straying from God’s path as we do so. Have you ever seen the graphic that shows a rough path leading to paradise alongside an easy path leading nowhere? That is what I picture when I read today’s scripture. Do we choose the more difficult path, even death, that leads to heaven? Do we take the easy, more comfortable path that leads to faithlessness? Life can be tough at times. But, as a Christian, what incomprehensible rewards await those who remain faithful, staying on God’s path, whatever rough, uncomfortable terrain it may include?

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY - 11.29.23 - Galatians 5:22 -23

The word “gentleness” doesn’t mean weakness or laziness. Rather, it describes power under control. Dr. J. Hudson Taylor was a great missionary in China who often dressed in Chinese clothing. One day, he waited for a boat to take him across a river. When the boat arrived, a Chinese businessman decided to move up in line. Not recognizing Taylor as a foreigner, he pushed Taylor aside into the mud. Taylor responded with gentleness. When the man realized that Taylor wasn’t a native, he said, “Are you a foreigner and you didn’t strike back?” Taylor replied, “Friend, this is my boat. Get in and I’ll take you to wherever you want to go.” Dr. Taylor told him about Christ. By the time they got to the other side of the river, the man trusted in Jesus as Savior. Taylor was a strong, powerful person who demonstrated gentleness in a challenging situation.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 11.30.23 - Proverbs 15:1

As I write this, there is a news report of a political protest going on in the Big Apple. One person was in the face of a politician screaming louder than I am even able! Even for a New Yorker, of which I am technically one, it was obnoxious. How fitting that this passage was before me! Admittedly, it is hard to be wronged, even more so with loud, abusive language and not fight back! What is a “soft” answer? The word carries the thought of tender, delicate, gentle, even, perhaps, weak. Not really a picture of the strong independent American!

But God’s wisdom instructs us to do just that. In our churches, in our jobs, in our social circles and, most cutting, in our homes. We are to be a gentle people, conformed to the image of Christ, our kind, tender and gentle Shepherd.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY- 12.1.23 - Psalm 37:11

This verse follows verse 10, claiming that “in just a little while, the wicked will be no more”. It is hard to believe while we watch Hamas, Hezbollah and other terror groups attacking Israel daily, as well as shooting rockets at our own installations and facilities around the region. Yet, with confidence, verse 11 asserts that “But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.”

Could be that ‘the land’ is Israel as we know it. But for us, ‘the land’ could be where we live, in our time and place; and we are ‘the meek’ exhibiting God’s spiritual gift of gentleness, which promises to bring ‘peace’. Not only is peace a promise, but abundant peace is promised. However, in light of the world we see, ‘meek’ is not Weak, but surely involves gently standing for God, firmly and steadfastly. Meditating on His law day and night to do everything it demands of us, by His spirit. God help us to be gentle.

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** WINTER QUARTER - Begins December 3rd
LOCATION: B11 with Gene Steinruck
Explore the Bible - Genesis 1-19
LOCATION: B8-10 with Randy Hutchison
Bible Studies for Life "A Name Like No Other"
LOCATION: B1-2 "Goliath Must Fall"
with Chris Domenico

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** Dive Deep with Doug
LOCATION: Worship Center

E2 WINTER SMALL GROUP

- Men's** TUESDAY EVENING STUDY- Begins December 5th
Daniel by JD Greear - with Vince Diloretto
6:30pm in B1-2

ADVENT 2023

- Wednesday** EVENING SMALL GROUP
Because of Bethlehem by Max Lucado - Discover the hope and promises of Christmas because of one baby born in Bethlehem. 11/29 - 12/20 at 6:30pm in B8-10 with Barry Wills.

Galatians 5:22-23
The Fruit of Faithfulness

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

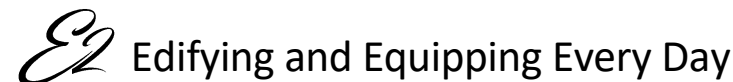
God requires you to be faithful ...

1. To your _____
• 1 Timothy 5:8
2. With your _____
• 2 Corinthians 9:6-7
3. To your _____
• Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
4. In your _____
• Hebrews 10:23-25

How To Cultivate Faithfulness

- _____ on God's faithfulness to you
- Be faithful in _____
- Be faithful in _____
- Remember the _____ of faithfulness

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" ~ 1 Corinthians 4:2



TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



November 27th - December 1st

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 Faithfulness" with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on 12.3, "The Fruit of Gentleness" 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