

MONDAY 12.9.24 - Matthew 6.26

A study preparation guide for the national nurse examination lists 32 antidotes that nurses need to know. An antidote is a substance that can neutralize or counteract harmful effects of a poison or toxin. We find our verse for today in a passage (verses 25 - 34) where there is an inspired antidote for worry in seven 'inoculations' our Lord gives to take away our anxiety! Of course, there are legitimate, even Biblical concerns that we are to have for our families and our lives, too!

But, when we worry, we are exhorted to "Look at the birds of the air." Each of us has marveled at the beauty of a bird, whether on our feeders or in flight. The intricate patterns of a Baltimore Oriole. The staccato rat-a-tat-tat sound of a Downy Woodpecker. The graceful soaring of a Bald Eagle.

"Are we not of more value than they?"

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 12.10.24 - 2 Corinthians 5:7

For we live by faith, not by sight.

You have heard it said that trust is earned. If you are a believer, I think you would agree that more than anyone else God has earned our trust. Unfortunately, if we are honest, there are still times when we doubt if we can really trust in God to do the right thing. God knew this would be true of both the Israelites of the Old Testament and of us today. That is why He told Israel to go back and to remember His faithfulness to them, Joshua 4:1-24. That is why it is also important that we set up our own stones, so that we can go back and remember God's faithfulness. As we remember what God has done for us in the past, it will make it easier for us to trust in Him for what we need in the present and the future. Remember what He has done for you. Trust what He will do for you. He truly has your back.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY 12.11.24 - Luke 1:67-79

God chose Zechariah to be the father of the Messiah's forerunner—John the Baptizer. Zechariah received this amazing news while performing his priestly duty in the Temple in Jerusalem. At first, Zechariah didn't believe the angel Gabriel's message. Because of his unbelief, Zechariah became mute, but his tongue was loosened at the time of his son's circumcision eight days after his birth. Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he proclaimed the greatness of God—how the Lord promised the people of Israel both physical deliverance from their enemies and spiritual deliverance from their sins. This deliverance would come through Israel's long-awaited Messiah. Zechariah's son, John, would have the privilege of announcing the coming of the Messiah and encouraging the nation to repent in light of His arrival. Join Zechariah in praising "the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people."

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 12.12.24 - Jeremiah 29:11

Today's verse is one of the great favorite verses of all Scripture. Much hope is wrapped up in these words. We have read them with joy. Yet our lives have tribulation. Defeat happens to us. Abandonment and hopelessness sometimes prevail over us, and we wonder what else can happen.

It is good to remember that this hope-filled verse, in context, was written to people taken from utterly defeated Israel as captives to the land of Nebuchadnezzar. They were living in Babylon as exiles. They are told to live as if they are staying, for they are, for seventy years. But God has a plan for them. The truth is that in our dry days, our common days, when we seem to be going nowhere, remember that God has a plan for us. And He knows that plan. It is for our good and it should give us hope.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY 12.13.24 - Psalm 33:18

But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,

During this time of year we often hear people speak of "hope". Children are hoping to get that special item on their Christmas List. College students are hoping for favorable scores on final exams they have just taken. And many of us are hoping to spend quality time with those family members and friends that we may not see any other time during the year. As Christians, though, our greatest hope has been fulfilled in the person, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All other "hopes" pale in comparison to the fulfillment of God's unfailing love for us in His greatest gift, salvation through Jesus Christ. As we celebrate this joyous Christmas season, let's not forget the source of our joy. Let's also be praying for opportunities to share the gospel, the reason for our joy, with those who don't know Jesus.

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
NURSERY (through Age 3) *9:40AM ONLY
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
- Youth** E2 CLASS (5th – 12th Grade)
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** **WINTER QUARTER** - began December 1st
LOCATION: B8-10 - Gene Steinruck - began Dec.1st.
EXPLORE THE BIBLE - Exodus and Leviticus remind us that imperfect people can depend on a perfect God to lead them through whatever wilderness they face.
LOCATION: B11 - Teacher: TBA - began Dec.1st.
BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE
Looking Forward to Christmas Be reminded that Christmas is, first and foremost, a celebration of Christ's coming to earth.
LOCATION: B1-2 - Joel Day - began Dec.1st
GOD NEVER GIVES UP ON YOU - What Jacob's Story Teaches Us About Grace, Mercy, and God's Relentless Love.
LOCATION: B11 - Shawn Devlin - began Jan. 19th
THE HEART OF WORSHIP - Learn how Scripture tells us God is the One we are to worship, and it shows us the ways we are to engage in worship, so we are drawn into a deeper walk with Him.

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)
- Adults** LOCATION: Worship Center

WINTER E2 SMALL GROUPS

WEDNESDAY EVENING STUDY - Dec. 4th-18th- 6:30pm- Room B8-10.
ADVENT 2024 - THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTMAS
Teaching from the Gospel of Luke in three sessions, bestselling author and pastor Rick Warren helps you see not one but three purposes of Christmas. Celebration, Salvation, and Reconciliation.
Leader: Barry Wills.

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY OF THESE GROUPS OR CLASSES,
USE THE CONNECTION CARD IN THE BULLETIN. THANK YOU.

Luke 1:46-55 **The Songs of Christmas:** **Mary's Song of Trust**

There are four Songs of Christmas, and they are found in the Gospel of Luke chapters 1 and 2:

The song of Zachariah is in 1:68-79. It is called the *Benedictus*, which is Latin for "Praise Be."

In 2:14, we find the Angels' song referred to as the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, which means "Glory to God in the Highest."

Then there is the song of Simeon in 2:29-32. We know it as the *Nunc Dimittis*, meaning "Now Dismiss."

Luke 1:46-55 contains the words of Mary's *Magnificat*. The title means "Glorifies."

Mary expresses her trust in God in three statements.

1. S _____ (v 34)


The Holy Spirit will cause Mary to become pregnant, and she will remain a virgin until she gives birth to Jesus.

2. S _____ (v 38)

Will you, like Mary, trust God to work out your problems and to willingly yield yourself to Him?

3. S _____ (vv 46-47)

People do not need a Savior unless they are a sinner, and Mary was a sinner. However, Mary was not trusting in herself or her good works to forgive her sins. Mary trusted in God alone to give her eternal life. We must do the same.

 Edifying and Equipping Every Day

TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



December 9 - December 13

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 from December 1st, "The Songs of Christmas", with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on December 8th, "The Songs of Christmas", with Pastor Doug Lyon.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE:

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
John 10:10