

Daily Devotions

September 11-17, 2022

By Members of the Synodical Women's Organization

Sunday, September 11, 2022

By Mary Ellen Perkins

Text: Psalm 140:1-2

**¹Rescue me, LORD, from evildoers;
protect me from the violent,
²who devise evil plans in their hearts
and stir up war every day.**

We are witnessing increasing violence in the world. On this day we remember the most destructive attack on United States soil by foreign foes, the 9-11 destruction of the Twin Towers. This led to the longest war in U.S. military history, the 20-year war in Afghanistan, and also the Iraq War. Though these conflicts ended, they did not bring real peace in the Middle East. And now we are watching the Russian attack on Ukraine and its civilian population.

But we confront not only foreign warmakers but domestic violence as well. We have suffered several episodes of domestic terrorism, mass shooters, and political violence in our communities. Citizens call out for gun control, while others call for an increasingly armed populace.

Psalm 140 is an apt prayer for these dark times. We can only put our faith in God to guard us against evildoers and plotters. Help us to be peacemakers among our neighbors, to renounce violent uprisings, and to provide aid to innocent victims of warfare and crime. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." ~Matthew 5:9

And further, let us not forget that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" we must "put on the full armor of God;" and we must "pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." ~Ephesians 6:10-18.

Monday, September 12, 2022

By Pam Chouinard

Making Joy Our Daily Choice

Text: Philippians 4:4

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!

I love to be outdoors! It doesn't matter how old I am and how many times I've walked down the same path. I'm totally amazed at the beauty around me. Being surrounded by God's creation fills me with joy and I say it again, "Rejoice!"

We may not be able to choose our circumstances, but we can choose our attitude and our focus. We can choose, like Paul, to rejoice in the Lord – not necessarily to be joyful about our circumstances, but to find joy in God whatever our circumstances.

And when we choose that attitude, like Paul it can impact others and bring joy to them too. We can spread joy like confetti! Think about the things that give you joy and praise. And thank God for giving you those blessings.

Some days it might be hard to find joy but remember joy is your choice!

Let's Pray: God, we thank you for providing us the feeling of joy. For giving us the strength to overcome obstacles that stand in our way and make our choice to find something that brings us joy. We rejoice in knowing we are not walking alone on this earth. Amen

Tuesday, September 13, 2022

By Kris Carlson

Text: Psalm 141:3

Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can break a heart."

How easy it is for the words to slip out without even thinking. Maybe it's a casual remark in passing or something said in the midst of a heated discussion. It can't be unsaid or unheard. Sometimes we don't even realize this until after the fact. I've had that happen. After the fact, I'm mad at myself for being so thoughtless and unthinking and I'm sending mega prayers to God. Do I try to forget it and hope the other person has as well? Should I apologize and ask for their forgiveness or leave "well enough alone?" With God's help, I will learn from past actions, so they won't be repeated in the future.

Let's pray: Lord, please help me to be more mindful of my thoughts, words, and actions. Amen.

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

By: Melzee Jacobson

Text: John 13:34-35

³⁴ *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”* ³⁵ *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”*

God gave Moses the Ten Commandments for the people to live by. They can be read literally and can be used to condemn those who do not follow them to the letter, or they can be interpreted by imperfect humans as a set of rules they strive to live by. God knows that we are not perfect and that we carry a sinful self within us. God justifies us by his grace and forgives those who ask for forgiveness and strive to change their ways.

Then we are given a new command to “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.” Following rules is difficult for all of us, at least doing it 100%. We make choices that sometimes leave us on the outside, but God loves us enough that he has given us his grace. Grace through which we are justified.

Loving one another with all our faults and theirs should be easy, yet our inner self-ego tends to hold us back from doing so. Outside influences create biases whether we want to recognize them or not. Some differences can be unreconciled. Therefore, I remember Jesus telling his disciples that if they are unwelcome that they should dust the dirt from their feet and move one. God has given all of us gifts. Those gifts can help to encourage some, but others may have the gifts that are needed in a situation that we do not have. In those cases, it is time to dust off the dirt and move out of the way so God can send those with the gifts needed to help that situation.

The most important command is to love one another unconditionally even if you must remove yourself from a situation. Pray for everyone to feel the love of God. For God has a plan and through our free will we can certainly mess that plan up. Let God be in control and give him the praise for whatever happens. As we find out later, God always wins, and we always grow from what we have discovered in hindsight.

Let's pray: *Dear Father in Heaven, help us to let go and let God. Our decisions do not always show love to one another, and we should continually ask for forgiveness for our shortcomings. Please send the Spirit into each of us to be able to accept this and turn our love towards all in every situation. It is not ours to understand but to go forward in faith trusting in you. Shower us with your grace and help us to move forward showering others with that grace. Amen*

Thursday, September 15, 2022

By: Dawn Holmgren

Thankfulness

Text: Hebrews 12:28

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so, worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

There are many reasons to be thankful. God answers prayers, God provides for our needs. We are thankful for God's blessings; we can be thankful for God's character and wonderful works and last, we can be thankful for our brothers and sisters in Christ. In a world where there is so much negative, we can be thankful.

Let's pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, during this fall season of colors, please keep us mindful of all the glorious things we should be thankful for, all this and so much more. Amen.*

Friday, September 16, 2022

By: Holly Guerin

God is Good

Text: John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

The world offers you many solutions to your fear. Anxiety medication, relaxation techniques, psychotherapy exercises or even escapism through alcohol or drugs. But here is what God offers you: God. God offers you the peace of love, the steadiness of protection, the rock-solid foundation of God's promise. And God's promise is that if you step into the legend you were created to be, you will succeed. It does not matter what other people say. There is greatness in you. God designed you to reach your full potential, to be powerful beyond measure, to have success and joy and abundance in your life. Do not let fear make you quit. Do not let the terror of what "could" happen affect how you take the next step forward.

As a daughter of Christ, I have been given the incredible gift of God's peace. This means I do not have to let fear trouble my heart, I do not have to let the unknown shake my fight. I leave it in God's hands because God knows exactly what God is doing. Believe me, sister of Christ, you can do everything God designed you to do. God knows exactly what God's doing.

Let us pray: *Lord, keep me aware that this moment is the most precious moment of my life. Help me to use it to decide to reach out in your name. Amen*

Saturday, September 17, 2022

By: Karen Reitz

Text: Mark 8:2

“I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat.”

Compassion is a desire to help someone who is suffering. How do we show compassion today? We can show compassion while driving in our cars or shopping at the grocery store. We can show it through our giving to the local food pantry or homeless shelter. Jesus called his disciples to care for the crowd. How? By gathering what they had, then giving it to Jesus. Then Jesus gave thanks and provided what the people needed, their fill of food for the day. We are called to show compassion to people in our area. I am so grateful for the food that is shared with others today at the food pantries and in homeless shelters.

Let's pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for providing us with what we need to live today. Thank you for supplying a Savior to save us from our sins. Thank you for your promised eternal life. In Jesus precious and holy name, Amen.*
