

Daily Devotions

October 30 – November 5, 2022

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Sunday, October 30, 2022

Rest

Text: Psalm 46:10

“Be still and know that I am God!”

I am what some people affectionately call a dog mom. I have two dogs that are a huge part of my life. My pups have taught me many things and are often great reminders of Christ. This week I'll be sharing some of these reminders with you.

Every Sunday after worship I come home, eat lunch, and take a nap with my dogs. This has been my routine since following the call to ministry. It is how I take time to be still and to rest. However, there are some Sundays where I can't take my afternoon nap. While this can be a bit disappointing it doesn't usually affect my weekly routine all that much; I simply must find another time to rest.

My dogs always provide a reminder to take this rest. They sit on the couch and stare at me until I take just a minute to sit with them. If I take too long, they will place their head or paw on my lap after I'm seated. Anything to make me stay still for a moment. This time to be still, to rest, and to be present is so important.

My pets need this time with me just as I need time with God. Time to see how God is at work in my life. To give thanks or ask for guidance. Time to appreciate this beautiful world that we live in.

Prayer: *Compassionate God, thank you for reminders to rest. In a world that is constantly on the go, help us to be still. Help us to be present with you and those around us. Amen.*

Monday, October 31, 2022

Chosen

Text: 1 Peter 2:9

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

Both of our household dogs were adopted from shelters. In both cases going into the shelter my partner and I had a dog in mind. We had been looking at the available pups online and had picked out which one we wanted to meet/take home. In both cases we went home with a different dog than we had originally thought. We had a plan, but our dogs chose us. In the same way God chooses each of us.

Through baptism we are children of God chosen to be a part of God’s mission. There are times where we have ideas on how life will go. We make plans that don’t always work out. We make mistakes. But God chooses us time and time again. God calls us back to the body of Christ where we receive grace, love, and mercy.

Prayer: *Gracious God, thank you for choosing me. Help me to remember that you will always choose me. Even when I feel lost, you bring me back to the body of Christ. Amen.*

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Joy

Text: Psalm 47:1

“Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.”

My two-year-old niece LOVES dogs. When we video chat, she spends most of our time asking me to switch the camera from one dog to the other. She shouts and giggles with joy as the dogs do tricks, lick the phone, or simply lay where she can see them. These video chats give the dogs great joy as well as they get lots of treats and attention.

With all the happiness around it is hard not to find joy in these video chats myself. They are noisy, delightful times spent with loved ones. These chats are reminders to me that we must also take time to be noisy and joyful with God. Sometimes it seems easy to go to God only when we are in need of assistance. Or when we want to ask for something to happen. However, all good things also come from God. Let us shout thanksgiving to God for the things that bring us joy today.

Prayer: *Jubilant God, thank you for all the things in our lives that bring us joy. Help us remember to take these moments in, and to be loud in our praises. Amen.*

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Always Present

Text: Ruth 1:16

“But Ruth said, ‘Do not press me to leave you, to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God.’”

In this passage Ruth is promising her mother-in-law that she will not leave her. Ruth feels a deep sense of loyalty for her. I see this sense of loyalty in my dogs. These dogs follow me everywhere - I mean everywhere! If I move from one room of the house to another, they are right behind me. When I make the slightest sound, they are right there to check on me.

This sense of loyalty that I experience in my dogs is just a glimpse of how loyal God is to us. God promises to never leave or forsake us. God walks alongside us even when we do not take the path that was intended. Although we may not be able to see God following us or hear God approaching like the clicking of dog nails - God is always present. There is nothing we can do to separate ourselves from God.

Prayer: *Faithful God, we give thanks for your devotion to us. You are with us each step of the way, whether we go where we are supposed to or not. You move where we move, and you are always there to check on us. Help us to give this same loyalty that you have shown us to others. Amen.*

Thursday, November 3, 2022

Waiting for You

Text: Isaiah 30:18

“Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.”

I think that pets are a great example of patience. When I go to work my dogs stay at home. They wait for me to come back to walk them, give them attention, and feed them. They don't complain about my schedule or make me feel too guilty about leaving them. They simply wait. Now, I don't know what they do all day while I'm gone, but I do know that they rush to the door to greet me the second I get home. Tails wagging, excited that the wait is finally over.

My dogs patiently waiting for me to come home reminds me that God is also waiting. God patiently waits for us to reach out. Or to understand how our prayers have been answered. God waits for us to take part in God's mission. No matter how long it takes us, God simply waits.

Prayer: *Patient God, thank you for always waiting for us. Help us to remember that you are present at all times. Support us as we learn patience from you and from those around us. Amen.*

Friday, November 4, 2022

Lean on Me

Text: Psalm 18:2

“The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

Our dogs are champions of something my husband and I call the “big lean.” It's a moment where our dogs put their whole body into leaning on us. Once their weight is securely placed on us the dogs get a clear look of success on their faces. While these “big leans” are adorable, I often find myself questioning if they are necessary. These dogs are allowed anywhere they want. They could stretch out on a couch or bed, yet they choose to be right next to or on top of us.

I think my dogs may be on to something. They lean on my husband and I for support, to feel our presence, and to show their love for us. This is something that we can and should

do with God. With the Lord as our rock, we can be fully supported. Sure, we could go wherever we want to, but being with our biggest advocate is better.

And even though I complain about how I lose feeling in parts of my body from the weight of these leans, if I'm being honest, I love them. I love feeling close to my pups and knowing that I help them to be happy and comfortable. Perhaps "big leans" between pets and owners, friends, and us and God are beneficial for all who are involved.

Prayer: *Caring God, thank you for always supporting us. Thank you for being a loving and comforting presence. Help us to remember that we can always lean on you and those who you have given us to walk life with like friends and pets. Amen.*

Saturday, November 5, 2022

Unconditional Love

Text: Jeremiah 31:3

"The LORD appeared to him from far away, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you."

Having rescue dogs has shown me a special kind of love. Both dogs in my household have experienced things I can only imagine before coming home to us. They spent time on the streets, didn't know where their next meal was coming from, and weren't sure who was going to help them. Yet they love us. Regardless of what they have been through, even when we make mistakes, they love us unconditionally.

This kind of love reminds me of the love of God. As humans we mess up over and over again. Yet God continues to love us. Our mistakes are forgotten, and our sins are forgiven. Wherever our lives take us, God's love for us remains the same.

Prayer: *Loving God, thank you for the gift of your love. Help us to see this gift in those who surround us. Guide us as we do our best to love others as you have loved us. Help us to remember that your love for us is never ending. Amen.*
