

Devotions – January 3-9, 2016

By Confirmation Students of
St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Stephenson, MI and
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Sunday, January 3, 2016

By Ally Schultz - 8th Grade

“The Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.” Psalm 146:8

I often wonder what it would be like to be blind, to not be able to see wondrous things, or admire beautiful creations. To only hear the things around you and not be able to recognize a face. Being blind is hard to imagine, but at least now, in our time, there’s technology to guide us and treat our conditions. Something they didn’t have a long time ago.

Imagine what being blind would’ve been like 2015 years ago. How hard it would’ve been to manage. And you feel useless, when all you see is darkness. And there’s a man who performs miracles traveling close by. And you have a spark of hope. When he enters your city you try to find him, and when you do, you beg and plead for him to help you. He dips his fingers in mud and wipes your eyes. You feel the coolness on your eyelids. Then you get a glimpse of light. You open your eyes wider, and the light expands. You can see! And the first thing you see after escaping from a life of darkness and wonder is Jesus, the man of miracles.

Let us pray: Dear God, open the eyes of the blind, spiritually and physically, so we can understand you and your miracles; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Monday, January 4, 2016

By Isabella Mack - 7th Grade

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” John 3:16

John 3:16 is my favorite verse from the Bible. It is very deep. If you believe in God you will not perish but have eternal life. If you believe in God and ask for forgiveness and do your best as a Christian you will go to heaven. For God promises us our second life. Jesus died for us on the cross so we could get our sins forgiven. Forgiveness is like having millions of pounds of bricks being taken off your shoulders. Without going ever to God for help or asking for forgiveness you would go to hell. Life to me should be lived being a good Christian. Not believing in God

can make it so when you die you would never see your loved ones. As a Christian you should obey the Ten Commandments. If you break a Commandment, you should ask for forgiveness. If you go to church or pray you could get your sins forgiven.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, Please bless the people of the Earth to understand Christianity is the right thing. Please forgive those who ask for forgiveness so they may walk in your kingdom of heaven. Amen.



Tuesday, January 5, 2016

By Gwendolyn Erickson - 8th Grade

“Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.” Romans 13:8

I like this verse because what it seems to be saying is not to owe anyone anything but love. If you love everyone then you have fulfilled the law.

A way people show their love for others is by helping you in times you need help. I go to school Monday through Friday. My sister sometimes brings me, my mom sometimes brings me, but mostly my bus driver drives me. Sometimes it is frustrating, but she gets through it, and she is very helpful and so are all the other bus drivers.

Another way people show love for others is helping others with work stuff. My brother used to help me with my work for school. He was helpful.

People help each other in many different ways. In many, many of those ways they show love in some way.

Let us pray: Dear God our Lord, please help us remember the reasons we love others, and please help us love people we may not know yet or at all. Amen.



Wednesday, January 6, 2016

By Isabella Mack - 7th Grade

“Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:1-3

Exodus 20:1-3 is about the First Commandment. If you break this Commandment, you are breaking all the other commandments. The First Commandment includes that you shall not have any other gods, but God our Lord. If you don't believe in him, you don't believe or have the other Commandments included to you. I think you should believe in God and only him, because He is what created us and the Earth. God has done many miracles for us and other creatures. Without God, we would not be alive or have rules like the Ten Commandments. You shall not even worship other things as your god like food, TV, phones, movies, clothes, shoes, or anything else you do too much of instead of worshiping God. If you don't obey this Commandment, you could go to hell instead of heaven. No one really knows if you will go to heaven. It is God's decision on if we will go to heaven. We as Christians know that we will, though, because he died on the cross for us to have our sins forgiven to get there. God will guide us to get there.

Let us pray: Dear God, please let the ones in need know you are the ruler and God of all. Keep everyone in your heart and let them join you in Heaven. Amen.



Thursday, January 7, 2016

By Ally Schultz - 8th Grade

"I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need." Philippians 4:12

A couple years ago my family and I took a trip to Chicago. Chicago, as you might already know, is a very large city. There must be about 3 million people living there. So it wasn't a surprise at all that when we would walk on the sidewalks to get to our hotel, there was no sidewalk. People were everywhere in every direction. People were all you could see, aside from the skyscrapers touching the atmosphere.

Walking on the streets, you see a lot of "interesting" people with "interesting" fashions and styles. You would see pigeons, lots of them. If you were lucky, you'd see a dollar or two on the ground. But there was always somebody who needed help around every street corner. The homeless were one of the sadder sights to see, with their belongings in just a holey plastic bag. Sometimes they had their children or pets sitting by them. Seeing their sad, starved faces always caused a feeling of sympathy.

Sitting in a restaurant eating my burger or deep dish pizza, while laughing with my family, I'd often see a homeless individual settle on a bus stop bench to fall asleep for the cold, miserable night to come. Seeing people have to sleep on a park bench while I eat a delicious deep dish pizza makes you feel a little weird, but reassured, because there are people who are rich, and people who are poor. There are people who are well-fed and hungry, people who have little and people who have plenty.

But the reassuring part about it all is that God loves you. He doesn't label you like humans do. He loves either way. It doesn't matter rich, poor, hungry, well-fed, in need, or living in abundance. He's there for you to help you through it all.

Let us pray: Lord, please help me to understand what it is to be rich, poor, hungry, well-fed, in need, or plentiful. Help me realize it doesn't matter what I am, that you love me either way; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.



Friday, January 8, 2016

By Gwendolyn Erickson - 8th Grade

"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." Matthew 7:12

The Golden Rule

I picked this verse because it says that everything you do to others they might do back or worse. If you bully someone they might bully you back or tell an adult, teacher, principal, or a friend. If you judge someone they will probably judge you back or tell someone. As Matthew 7:1 says, "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged."

If someone bullies you or picks on you, what will you do? You might go tell a teacher or an adult, maybe even a friend. But what would you do at the moment they bully you? He/she might not let you run or walk away. So you would probably say a rude comment back.

I like this verse because you shouldn't do anything to other people you do not want to happen to you.

Let us pray: Dear God, please help us love everyone and not bully. Bullying hurts others and sometimes reflects back on you. Amen.



Saturday, January 9, 2016

**By Isabella Mack - 7th Grade and
Gwendolyn Erickson - 8th Grade**

"But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him." Genesis 37:4

Joseph had dreams of greatness, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more for his dreams and his words. Hate is a big word. Hate means you wish that they were never alive. Joseph's brothers were jealous when his father gave him a colorful coat. So they punished him by selling him and putting him in the pit. Jealousy is not a good thing. Everyone is unique, so no one should be jealous. Be happy with what you have. Jealousy can lead to bad things. You must know that you are special and nothing should bother you. If you are jealous, you should express your feelings before they get worse. You should go to someone you rely on and trust to talk to. You will feel better then.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, please help us all to understand we should not feel jealousy. Instead we should talk things out and not let things get out of hand. Amen.

