

Devotions – October 14-20, 2018

By Karen Carter

Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church, Sayner, WI

Sunday, October 14, 2018

Covered with Love

Text: Psalm 103:4

“He . . . loads me with love and mercy.”

It’s time to let God’s love cover all things in your life . . . all secrets . . . all hurts . . . all times of evil . . . minutes of worry. The years you peddled prejudice and pride? His love will cover that. Every promise broken, drug taken, penny stolen, every cross word, cuss word, and harsh word . . . His love covers all things.

Let it. Discover along with the Psalmist, “He. . . loads me with love and mercy.” In your mind picture a huge dump truck chock-full of love. There you are behind it. God lifts the bed until the love starts to slide. It comes down slowly at first, then quickly down until you are hidden, buried. covered in His love.

“Hey, where are you?” someone asks.

“In here, covered with love.”

Let us pray: *Thank you, Lord, for such enormous love. Amen.*



Monday, October 15, 2018

The Kindness Yoke

Text: Matthew 11:29

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your soul.”

In ancient Israel farmers would train an inexperienced ox by yoking it with an experienced one with a wooden harness. The straps around the older animal were snugly drawn. He carried the load. But the yoke around the younger animal was loose. He walked beside the more mature ox, but his burden was light. In this verse Jesus is saying, “I walk alongside you. We are yoked together. But I pull the weight and carry the burden.”

How many burdens is Jesus carrying for us that we know nothing about? We're aware of some: He carries our sins, He carries our shame, He carries our eternal debt. But could there be others? Has He carried our confusion so we wouldn't have to? . . . Those times when we have been surprised by a sense of peace? Could it be that Jesus has lifted our anxiety onto His shoulders and placed a load of kindness on them?

Let us pray: *Thank you, Lord, for yoking us with you. Amen.*



Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Kindness Makes the Coffee

Text: Luke 6:35

“He is kind even to people who are ungrateful and full of sin.”

How often do we thank God for His kindness? . . . not often enough. But does our ingratitude limit His kindness? It does not, because “He is kind even to people who are ungrateful and full of sin.”

Originally the word for “kindness” carried an added idea as an act of grace. But it also refers to a deed or person who is “useful, serviceable, and adapted to its purpose.” Kindness was used to describe food that is tasty and also healthy.

But the usage makes sense. Isn't kindness good for you? . . . pleasant and practical?

Kindness not only says “Good morning.” Kindness makes the coffee.

Let us pray: *Lord, your limitless kindness astounds me. Thank you. Amen.*



Wednesday, October 17, 2018

He is Our God

Text: Hosea 11:9

“I am God and not a human; I am the Holy One, and I am among you.”

Before you read on, reflect on those four last words: “I am among you.” Do we really believe that? Do you actually believe that God is near? He wants you to do just that. He wants you to

know that He is in the midst of your world. Wherever you are as you read these words, He is present in your car, on the plane, in your office, your bedroom, your den. He is near.

God is in the thick of things in your world. He has not taken up residency in a distant galaxy. He has not removed Himself from history. He has not chosen to seclude Himself in some far-removed castle.

He has drawn near. He has involved Himself in the carpool, heartbreaks, and funeral homes of our present time. He is as near to us on Monday as on Sunday, in the schoolroom as in the sanctuary, at coffee break as much as the communion table.

Let us pray: *Lord, knowing You are among us helps me face each day with trust and confidence. Amen.*



Thursday, October 18, 2018

God's Surprises

Text: I Corinthians 2:9

“No one has ever imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Have you got God figured out yet? Have you got God captured on a flowchart or frozen on a flannel board? If so, listen up: listen to God's surprises.

Hear the rocks meant for the body of the adulterous woman drop to the ground.

Listen as the Messiah whispers to the Samaritan woman, “I who speak to you am He.”

Listen to the widow from Nain eating dinner with her son who had been pronounced dead.

God appears at the strangest of times, doing the strangest of things, stretching smiles where there had only been frowns, placing twinkles where there were only tears.

Let us pray: *God of surprises, thank you for preparing them for those who love You. Amen.*



Friday, October 19, 2018

Our Servant Master

Text: Matthew 10:82

“The Son of Man did not come to be served. He came to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many people.”

As a young child I read a Russian fable about a master and his servant who went on a journey to a far city. I have forgotten many of the details, but the ending I remember. Before they could reach their destination, they were caught in a blinding blizzard. They lost their sense of direction and were unable to reach the far city.

The next morning concerned friends went searching for the two men. They finally found the master frozen to death, face down in the snow. When they lifted him, they found the servant – cold but alive. He survived and told how the master voluntarily placed himself on top of the servant so he could live.

I haven’t thought of that story in years. But when I read what Jesus said He would do for us, the story surfaced – for Jesus is the Master who died for His servants.

Let us pray: *Thank you, Master, for such love for me. Amen.*



Saturday, October 20, 2018

The Overflowing Cup

The overflowing cup was a powerful symbol in the days of David. Hosts in the ancient East would use it to send a message to the guest. As long as the cup was full, he knew he was welcome. When the cup sat empty, the host was hinting that the hour was late. On those occasions, however, when the host really enjoyed the company of the person he filled the cup to overflowing. He didn’t stop when the wine reached the rim; he kept pouring until the liquid ran over the edges of the cup and down on the table.

Have you noticed how wet your table is? God wants you to stay. Your cup overflows with joy; it overflows with grace. You have a place at God’s table – and He is filling your cup to overflowing.

Let us pray: *My cup is overflowing. Thank you, Lord. Amen.*

