

..... Daily Devotions

November 25 – December 1, 2018

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I think you might be surprised with where I got my inspiration for these seven days. I mentioned to my friend that I was scheduled to write NGLS devotions and I was having a hard time finding something to get me started and he promptly handed me a Narcotics Anonymous *Just for Today* book. It is truly wonderful. In the following reflections I have changed quite a bit. I used the theme that the NA book was going on and brought it into my Christian perspective, but I want to give credit where credit is due. Know that the titles came from this book and it definitely directed my writing. This was just another wonderful reminder that God/Higher Power finds us where ever we are at in the most surprising ways.

Sunday, November 25, 2018

Meditation

Text: Psalm 46:10a (NRSV)

“Be still, and know that I am God!”

If we are willing to take time for ourselves each day to be in silence what we find is that our inner voice, what we Christians would call the Holy Spirit, becomes louder. We stop living rushed and only half paying attention and open our eyes. We become more in tune with God’s wishes for ourselves, our neighbor, and our world. We are no longer fighting God to get what we want but walking with God through both the calm days and the storms. We become more helpful to those we come across in the world and to those we love. It all starts with taking a little bit of time each day to be in silence and feel the Holy Spirit’s presence.

Today: *I will pay attention and listen quietly for God’s guidance.*



Monday, November 26, 2018

Responsibility

Text: Luke 10:41-42

“The Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’”

Some days you might find you just don’t want to do everything that you are supposed to get done. Perhaps you have a housing project that you have put off for a very long time, a commitment to another person you just don’t feel like fulfilling, a job that on certain days can

just feel too boring to go to. We are called to fulfill a lot of obligations in life. Whether it is to family, friends, or neighbors sometimes those obligations feel tedious or frustrating. That's when we have to change our mindset. If we are dreading a house project, we ask ourselves: what is it about this house that I really like? If we signed up for a church activity or told a family member we would do something for them, we ask what is it about this church I like or do I love that family member? More often than not we find that the stress of responsibility is replaced by a thankfulness that we have that house, church, friend, or family member. Only then do we move forward to do our work. What we found tedious before we often find we are now thankful for.

Today: *I will remember that each moment is special. I will be thankful for both the challenges and the gifts each day brings.*



Tuesday, November 27, 2018

Seeking God's Help

Text: Psalm 34:4-6

I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord, and was saved from every trouble.

You have heard it before: In the waters of baptism God claimed you and named you as God's own. As beautiful as that is, sometimes we forget. We rush through our day and completely overlook the great gift God gave us which is relationship with God. There is something sacred about taking a little time each day to ask God for help. Whether it be for something as simple as having a hard conversation with someone or as challenging as asking to be carried through a potentially terminal illness it is good to ask God for help. You and I both know that our prayers are not always answered just the way we want them to be but in asking for help we keep the conversation going, we strengthen our faith, and that helps us to get through life's challenges. Don't be disappointed if your prayers don't turn out exactly how you wanted. Often God's plan for you is much bigger than you could have imagined.

Today: *I will remember I am not alone. I will ask for God's help throughout the day.*



Wednesday, November 28, 2018

Being Ourselves

Text: Philippians 2:8

"He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death. Even death on a cross."

Humility can be a hard thing to grasp. Often, we turn into a pendulum swing going back and forth between pride/ego and feelings of inadequacy. We might think we are about the best at something until we get knocked off the pedestal and start feeling inadequate. Jesus overcame this. He died a humiliating death but at no point was Jesus ashamed of his message or the task God laid out before him nor was he ashamed of his death. Despite being the Messiah, he never acted any better than others in the world. That is because he was never comparing himself to others. He was self-assured but not prideful. What an impressive task he accomplished and through his example we can live this way too. In our own lives when we try to measure up next to our neighbor what we find is that we are comparing apples to oranges. Each life is so different it just doesn't work that way. So we leave pride at the door and live lives as honestly as possible. Christ calls us to be humble, repent when we mess up, but never to feel inadequate. This way of living is a wonderful gift God gives us.

Today: *I will not compare myself to my neighbor. I will just be me.*



Thursday, November 29, 2018

God's Care

Text: Matthew 6:6

“But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Prayer doesn't have to be a thing done with a lot of people around, it doesn't have to be words that come out of a book, it doesn't have to sound good at all. Prayer is just a conversation with God that sometimes can become so constant that it is the very breath we take in and exhale. Prayer is a way of living. Some days we will wake up feeling anxious. Hand that to God. Some days we will be crabby, angry or desperately sad. Hand those things to God as well. Some days we will wake up excited. Hand that to God. Some days we will be patient and at peace. Hand that to God too. Make prayer a constant conversation, the very air you breath. Prayer doesn't have to be words. Prayer can be the way you move through the world. When you put all the parts and pieces together and step back years from now what you might find is prayer was your very life. All the messy and beautiful parts of you; that is prayer.

Today: *I will notice all I do throughout the day. I will pay attention to all that goes on and find beauty in it.*



Friday, November 30, 2018

Sharing the Real Me

Text: Acts 4:32-35

“Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

No man is an island. I am sure you have heard that saying before. We are not destined to be isolated in this world. We are called to come into deep relationship with one another as the first Christians in Acts did. In order to do this, we must know ourselves and be honest with others. Not everyone will like everything about you but that is okay; they don’t have to. It is only when we put ourselves out there in honesty that we can form truly deep relationships. When we do this, we free ourselves from loneliness and isolation and we help others to do so as well.

Today: *I will share honestly and openly with people trusting that God will watch over me.*



Saturday, December 1, 2018

Life’s Rewards

Text: Matthew 6:10

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

There is another part of prayer that sometimes we forget about. Often we don’t pray to God for help; we simply pray to get on the same page as God, to understand what God wants us to do in the world. In my limited attempts with electricity this is what I know: when you wire in a light you need both the hot and the neutral wire to connect to the circuit. You need to create a circle in order for electricity to flow and the light to come on. We ask God for help and we also ask how we can help God. We work in partnership. For prayer to become a constant life journey we show up honestly, ask God for help whenever we would like to and offer help as well. We complete the circle and in that way we continue to grow and to be renewed daily.

Today: *I will seek God’s will in the world and help to serve both God and my neighbor.*

