

**Devotions – May 5-11, 2019**

By Ray Berg

Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church, Munising, MI

**Sunday, May 5, 2019**

**Do We Believe?**

Text: Mark 10:27

**“Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”**

We must learn our utter helplessness as man.

With man this is impossible. But not with God. All things are possible with God. As we go about our daily lives and the problems we encounter on a regular basis, we sometimes find situations that are completely baffling to us. There are some things we just are not equipped to handle. These can be our hum-drum needs or problems within our Christian life. As we come face to face in our moral lives, we find some things impossible to take care of. But this brings home to us those words of Jesus: *“All things are possible with God.”* Are we really trusting God to handle those troublesome and difficult situations? Jesus said some things are not possible for man. But all things are possible with God. He knows. He is God and is all powerful and knowledgeable. At the same time, we humans are embodied with that very powerful sense of self-reliance. We can do it, we keep insisting. In order to learn that all things are possible with God, we must come to realize and acknowledge our utter helplessness. Whatever we face, however impossible our abilities, God will show us our abilities through Him.

*Let us Pray: Father, we come humbly before your presence in our helpless condition. We ask for your precious guidance and help. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



**Monday, May 6, 2019**

**Abraham's Faith**

Text: Genesis 22:9

**Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.**

Abraham and Sarah were old and had no children. God promised children. Finally, Isaac was born. They had waited a long time. Then God told Abraham to make a sacrifice of Isaac. Is it even

possible to imagine what is going on in Abraham's mind? And yet, he obeys. He had Isaac accompany him to the place where God had instructed Abraham to prepare the sacrifice. Isaac became curious about what was happening. He began to question his father. Isaac was even helping by carrying wood to be burned for the sacrifice. Abraham's heart was heavy! Isaac said, "But where is the lamb for the offering?" What could Abraham say? He said to his son, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." God was asking so much of Abraham. But then Abraham was faithful. At the last moment an angel of God called out to Abraham: "Abraham, Abraham! Do not lay a hand on the boy. Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not held back from me your son, your only son."

Then a ram was caught and sacrificed as a burnt offering. Abraham called the place, "The Lord will Provide."

Let us Pray: *Father, help me to trust You always to provide all my needs, from food and shelter to a strong faith and dependence on You. In Jesus' name. Amen.*



**Tuesday, May 7, 2019**

### **We Thirst for God**

Text: Psalm 42:2

**My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?**

It seems that conversations are sadly lacking in spiritual sensitivity. Whenever we hear talk on a Christian level, the words sound false. We wonder what is being said. It seems the speaker is afraid to say the words that make us feel the love of Jesus. Or the love of a person who loves Jesus. Trying very hard not to be judgmental while at the same time looking for warmth, sincerity and love. Are we praying in our private lives in addition to our public prayers? Are we waiting for God's power to begin our days? Do we endeavor to live our lives as a witness for Jesus Christ? May we cry out "My soul thirsts for the Living God!"

Let us Pray: *Heavenly Father, we beg for the desire and ability to live our lives as witnesses to Christ's love and humility. Help us to help others find their way to a personal love of Christ. Amen*



Wednesday, May 8, 2019

**Christ is Coming Again**

Text: Matthew 25:13

**Therefore, keep watch because you do not know the day or the hour.**

Over the years, folks have predicted Christ's return to a day. However, Matthew 25:13 tells us that we do NOT know. We must be ready, but we know not. This means we are meant to live our lives and moments as though He could and would arrive at any moment. We are these days taught that everyone and everything is already forgiven. Does that mean we are not to repent, not to ask for forgiveness? That it is not necessary to live our lives for Christ? Does that mean we can do whatever comes to mind? I think not. Does it not break your heart to have a beloved child do and say things contrary to your hopes and desires and teachings? Our heavenly Father lovingly gave us the ultimate example in His Son, Jesus Christ. When we are at odds with His example, it must break His heart. He loved us so much that He gave His Son for us.

Let us Pray: *Heavenly Father, make us aware of and appreciative of the blessed life of Christ and His sacrifice for us. In His Holy Name. Amen*



Thursday, May 9, 2019

**God Is Love**

Text: Jeremiah 10:24a: **Discipline me Lord, but only in due measure.**

Jeremiah 30:11b: **I will discipline you but only in due measure. I will not let you go entirely unpunished.**

Consider the remarkable prayer of the prophet: "Discipline me, Lord, but only with justice. Not in your anger, lest you reduce me to nothing." Even the godly are afraid of being reduced to nothing. The prophet asks that this not happen to him, but he acknowledges that discipline is deserved. He has already been humbled and acknowledged his guilt. He asks for God's grace. This remarkable prayer permits all of us to cry for help in our imperfection and we are given permission to appeal God's wrath to His mercy, to request justice, lest we perish. We see God's answer in Jeremiah 30:11: "I will discipline you but only with justice. I will not let you go entirely unpunished." Christ has truly borne the punishment of our sins and paid in full our penalty. The Lord promises to be just.

*Let us Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, we know that our lives fall so short of how you would have us live. Help make us aware of our shortcomings and to make a concentrated effort to live a life of love of Christ and of compassion. Amen*



**Friday, May 10, 2019**

### **“Be Gentle”**

Text: Philippians 4:5

**Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.**

We are to love our neighbor. This is expounded upon in Luther’s Small Catechism. We are to speak well of him, to interpret charitably everything he does. We must defend him when others attack him, but we must also defend him from ourselves, when suspicions and doubts about him threaten to devalue our thoughts about him. How might our words and thoughts prevail if we were to interpret more charitably all those things our neighbor did or said? There are so many examples of how we are exposed to our neighbor. Also, we must deal with the question of “Who is my neighbor?”

This opens up a whole new list of persons on the list of “our neighbor.” This is not an easy task. We are a proud specimen. We are justified. And on it goes. But we must try. We must keep on trying. Talk to God about it. And keep on trying anew every day. Luke 7:47: “Therefore, I tell you, how many sins have been forgiven? As his great loves has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little, loves little”.

*Let us Pray: Father, fill us with much love. Let us become aware of our sins and ask to be forgiven individually. Make us aware of our shortcomings and instill a desire to beg forgiveness in our quest for a more Christ-like life. Amen*



**Saturday, May 11, 2019**

### **The Beauty of a Christian**

Text: 1 Peter 3:4

**Your beauty should be that of your inner self. The unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of a great worth in God's sight.**

It was said and spoken by his enemies that Paul could not be a true servant of God because he was so understated and unassuming. It was their opinion that such a person as Paul who represented God, should demand greater attention and respect for himself. Surely he wouldn't be doing manual labor as his living. Those persons spoke publicly about their misgivings. There were people who listened, and it influenced their opinion of Paul. In time Paul responded to those comments. First Corinthians 6:4-5: "As servants of God, we commend ourselves in every way, in great endurance in troubles, hardships, beatings and hunger." In another letter he wrote, "The Lord's servant must not quarrel, instead must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful (II Timothy 2:24). Opponents must be gently instructed.

Let us Pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, we ask for our hearts to be filled with love. For those folks who are watching as we lead our lives on a daily basis, may our example show the love of Christ as He led His life. Amen.*

