

Devotions – September 29 – October 5, 2019

By Pastor Tammy Barthels
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rhinelander, WI

As I discern what I will write for these devotions, I reflect on where my journey has led me this past year. I have lost both my mother and my sister to death. I struggle with the deep desire to serve God and yet seek a balance to also spend quality time with family. Where do these two desires meet? (And isn't part of serving God, spending time with family whom God has given me?) I often hear the phrase, "Death wakes us up to life," discovering that each time a person dies, we re-evaluate how we will live our life and what is important. Too often in ministry I hear stories of struggle and worry. People not knowing where to turn. Most often, I sit and listen. Then I pray asking God to guide them in all that they need.

I have noticed that there is a pattern to the scripture I reflect on. First, I read how we should not worry, then it leads to setting our hearts on things above, for where our treasure is there our hearts will be also. It then leads to deeper prayer, finding solitude and sabbath. It leads to trusting God versus relying on my own understanding of the situation, for God does not give as the world gives. And finally reassuring me that God gives me a future filled with hope.

I invite you this week to reflect upon the scripture given for each day. Where is God speaking to you? I hold you in prayer as you read these devotions and discern where the Holy Spirit is leading you.

Sunday, September 29, 2019

Text: Luke 12:22-23 (NRSV)

²² He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing."

There are things in our lives that we seem to worry about more than others. For example, will we have enough money to pay the bills, or will our jobs be secure with the changing economics? Yes, there are times when we need to worry, but as Jesus told his disciples, "Do not worry about your life." We are invited to hand our fears and worries over to God, praying and trusting that all will be well. More times than not, when I do this, I am put at ease, my fears erased, and my attention is re-centered in Christ.

Let us pray: *Good and gracious God, our lives are full of worry and we focus too much on scarcity versus abundance. Encourage us to lean on you, knowing that you give us all that we need through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Monday, September 30, 2019

Text: Luke 12:25-26 (NRSV)

²⁵ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁶ If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest?

Worry many times has robbed me of my peace. Does it rob you of yours? Worrying does not add to our lives, but takes away from our living.

Let us pray: *Trustworthy God, help us to trust in your unfailing love. Knowing that you are with us always, guiding us through all that brings us worry through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Text: Luke 12:34 (NRSV)

³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

I have often heard that this verse should be reversed. "For where your heart is, there your treasure will be also." I believe if we set our hearts on God's love, there is where we find our treasure and vice versa. Our treasures are not found in earthly things, but in God's love. Place your trust there.

Let us pray: *Loving God, set our hearts on you, knowing that where our treasures are, there our hearts will be also through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Wednesday, October 2, 2019

Text: Mark 6:31 (NRSV)

³¹ He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while."

Our culture does not create many places or opportunities for us to go away and rest. I often find this needs to be the intention of the heart. We know when we are weary and needing a rest. Jesus went away to a deserted place often and rested. Jesus sets the example for us to do the same. I invite you to find a place where you can find rest, solitude and sabbath.

Let us pray: *God of rest, guide us to finding opportunities and places to rest in your love and peace so that we may be refreshed and renewed through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Thursday, October 3, 2019

Text: Proverbs 3:5 (NRSV)

**⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.**

How often in life have we relied on our own understanding of a situation? Most often than not, when we can release our control and trust in the Lord, new insights are given.

Let us pray: *Trusting God, with all our heart we lift our needs to you. We ask that you give us your wisdom and insight so we can see anew through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Friday, October 4, 2019

Text: John 14:27 (NRSV)

²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

The Lord does not give as the world gives. This is a difficult concept to grasp in a world surround by our wants and desires. As we re-center our lives in God's love we are encouraged and given the strength not to be afraid.

Let us pray: *God of peace, surround us with your peace and help us not to be afraid through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen*



Saturday, October 5, 2019

Text: Jeremiah 29:11 (NRSV)

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

God loves us and desires us to set our hearts on God. God's plans are for good and not for harm. God reassures us a future of hope through God's Son, Jesus Christ. As we rely on Christ's love for all people, we are shown a new way of life.

Let us pray: *God of hope, all things come from you. Guide us as we look to you for guidance in all things, knowing that you have a plan through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen*

