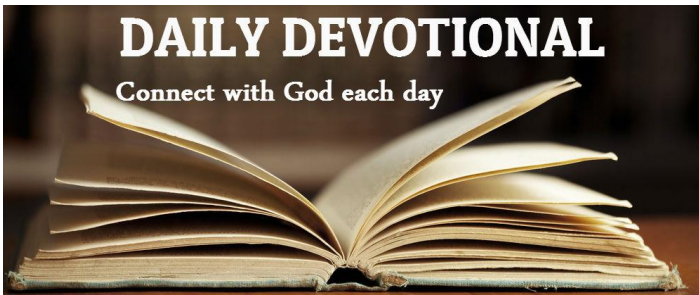


*South Burlington
Church of Christ*



September 14-20

2020

Monday
September 14, 2020

Reaching Out

The story of the Lord's encounter with a Samaritan woman is a wonderful example of His loving response to those who hurt. Jesus is always reaching out in love, even when we do not recognize His extended hand.

Although this meeting may have appeared accidental, it was really a providential appointment with the Messiah. As the woman reached the well, Jesus initiated conversation by asking for a drink of water. His direct approach surprised her and opened the door for a dialogue that would change her life forever.

Throughout the exchange, Jesus' goal was to help the woman recognize her greatest need so He could supply the only gift that would meet it: salvation and the forgiveness of her sins. She had spent her life trying to find love and acceptance in all the wrong places. The Lord offered her the living water of the Holy Spirit—the one thing that would quench her spiritual and emotional thirst.

Like the Samaritan woman, we can at times be so intent on getting our immediate needs met that we fail to see God's hand reaching out to us in love, offering what will truly satisfy. Only Christ can eternally fill our empty souls and provide for our essential emotional needs now.

This world is filled with “wells” that promise to provide love, acceptance, and self-worth but never fully satisfy. When your soul is empty and the well runs dry, look for Jesus. He has a divine appointment scheduled with you, and He will quench your thirst with His Spirit—if you let Him.

John 4:1-42

Tuesday
September 15, 2020

If We Only Knew...

Our adversary, the devil, is a master of deceit. He has found some very creative ways to persuade us to move toward him rather than toward God. He knows that what we want is joy, and he shrewdly tempts us to seek it on his terms. His argument runs something like this: “I’m not asking you to desire anything different; I’m just showing you a better way to get what you desire.” But that is a lie. The path he offers is not simply a better path to the same destination; it is a different destination altogether. The devil is asking us, in the most ultimate sense, to switch goals.

How many people would do what the devil suggests if they knew what he was up to? If we knew that death, not joy, would be the result of going his way, we would not go there, would we? But many of us do know what the devil is up to. Why do we let ourselves be seduced into changing the direction of our lives?

For most of us, the answer is not hard to find. When we switch goals, we think of ourselves as doing it only temporarily! After we have indulged ourselves, we will get back on the path to God.

We need to see sin for what it is: a worshiping of the wrong god. Sin — any sin — is a denial of God. Samuel summed it up starkly when he said to Saul, “*Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*” (1 Samuel 15:23).

Wednesday
September 16, 2020

Back to School

Usually this time of year, our children are headed back to school. Now this year, with Covid-19, it's all in the realm of the unknown. Once schools do open, our little ones who are headed to kindergarten are in for a new adventure. Some of them are excited, and some are not. One of the things most children have been practicing, and something that they will be learning in school, is their ABC's. You know how it goes, A is for Apple, B is for Boy, C is for Cat, D is for Dog, and so on. It's a time proven way to learn your ABC's, which is the foundation for learning to communicate.

Why can't we adapt this early learning process to our prayers in the ways we describe God? What would you list? Ideas include Almighty, Blessed, Creator, Divine, Elohim, Faithful, Gracious, Holy, and so on. If Q and X stump you, relax the rules a little bit: Quitting? Never! And Xcellent! surely describes our Lord.

Try a similar approach to think of people and things to thank God for: Apples, Books, Cats, Daddy, Elephants, Friends ... and on and on!

"Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:20

Thursday
September 17, 2020

Living by Son-Light

Some of our days seem very dark. Sickness, the death of a loved one, the loss of a job or another struggle overshadows life. In our despair, it can be difficult to sense God's presence. If God were here, we reason, surely he'd be shining his light on our dark circumstances.

When life is bright and joyous, it's easy to sense God; the sun becomes a natural metaphor for God's Son, Jesus, the Light of the world. But even on cloudy days, the sun still shines, its presence not bound by our limited vision. And in the darkest night, the sun remains; the warmth it gave before dusk lingers, enough to preserve us into the dawning of a new day. Sometimes we even catch its reflection in the moon.

"Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning" (Psalm 30:5b).

Trust in God; even in life's dark times, the Son still shines!

Friday
September 18, 2020

Don't Just Do Something...

A Christian at a retreat center saw a sign on a walkway path that said, "Don't Just Do Something, Stand There!"

The sign hinted of Psalm 46:10: "*Be still, and know that I am God!*" Only by being still can we sense God's presence and know him intimately. Experiencing calmness requires taking frequent respites from our feverish lives.

When Jesus visited the home of Mary and Martha, Mary sat quietly at his feet - observing, listening, learning. Martha, however, was fretting about, "distracted by many things," fuming because Mary offered no help at all.

Jesus, sensing Martha's fury, told her to stop dashing about because there was need of only one thing: focusing on Jesus, his fellowship, his teaching and his friendship.

"Mary has chosen the better part," the Lord said to busy Martha (Luke 10:42). When we make the choice to be still, we choose the better part as well.

Saturday
September 19, 2020

Our Place in the Universe

When we look at the stars and galaxies on a clear night, when look at the incredible brilliance of creation and think that this is what God is like, sometimes we feel incredibly intimidated and diminished by it. Instead of feeling diminished by God's creation, feel enlarged by it. We should rejoice that we are a part of His marvelous creation.

How wonderful — and mysterious — that the Creator of the universe not only knows and loves us, but He also wants us to know and love Him. Incredibly, we are at once infinitesimally small and yet immeasurably significant because of who we are.

Sunday
September 20, 2020

Dollars & Sense

Trusting in money instead of God to like trying to make a purchase with play money. Pretend bills from Monopoly or other board games might look real to children, but even kids soon learn those don't do any good at the cash register.

Sure, money is essential to meet our basic daily needs, and conventional wisdom urges us to save for retirement. But that's a far cry from seeking security in accumulating things we don't really need and spending more energy growing our financial accounts than our relationship with God.

Paul's words to Timothy still ring true in our modern-day economy: *“As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not ... to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment”* (1 Timothy 6:17).

Daily Devotionals
Provided by the

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