



# Daily Devotions

Week #2

February 14<sup>th</sup> – February 20<sup>th</sup>

  
Clearbranch  
United Methodist Church  
8051 Glenn Road  
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# Daily Devotion

Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>

By Jerre Rhoades



Matthew 6:20 Jesus teaches about money.

*"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moths and vermin do not destroy; and where thieves do not break in and steal".*

It is so easy in this competitive world to strive for money and materialistic treasures. These are all things we can't take with us. Jesus made it clear that having the wrong treasures leads to our hearts being in the wrong place. Jesus told the rich young man: "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven". (Luke 18:22)

Our instinct so often is to give to those who will give us something in return. If we give to those who can't reward us, Christ guarantees He will personally reward us in heaven. (Luke 14:12-14)

People often ask me; where are the golden years, because of financial problems or health issues. My answer is that our time on earth is the "golden years" we have to serve the Lord through helping others and as a reward we will be blessed when we enter eternity.

If you want to receive spirit-filled blessings, go visit the sick, feed the hungry and cloth the naked. Jesus said; "When you do this to the least of those, you did it for me. (Matthew 25:40)

When he comes, there will be no time to start over or fix anything, so be sure today your walk is where Jesus wants you.

Father, help me to live in the moment. Help to see the value in serving others as a true treasure. Turn my "treasure focus" toward heavenly things. Amen.

Are you laying up temporary or permanent treasures?

Are your treasures investing in God's people?

Are you willing to use God's gift to you to help other people?

## Daily Devotion

Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>

By Kathy Jo Baker



*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.*

*Ecclesiastes 3:1*

I prayed long and hard for God to send me a husband. Someone to love and that would love me and together we would have 2.5 children, live in a beautiful home in a beautiful neighborhood, and live happily ever after...well, it didn't quite turn out like that. I also wanted this all done in my time frame; you know, by the time I was 23! But you see, God had other plans! Instead, when I was 27, I met an amazing man with three children. Hmm...was this what I prayed for? Not exactly what I planned. But I did fall in love with him and his three children! We got married a couple of years later and I became a step-parent. YUCK! I didn't like that term!! I loved these children and I never wanted to step on them and I really didn't want to get stepped on either! So, I searched and prayed for something to call them. Why? They are my children! I might not have given birth to them, but I loved them and helped provide for them and would love them unconditionally until the day I die. God gave me the privilege to love them with all of my heart so I decided to call them my heart children! When I took vows to love my husband and I said "I do", I also said "I do" to loving those three beautiful children and raising them as my own. I would go to the ends of the earth for them, and my six (soon-to-be eight!) beautiful grandchildren!

When I realized the path that God had chosen for me, I trusted him and prayed really hard that I would love my heart children with my entire being. I didn't want to be like some of those other "step-mothers" and just be married to their dad. When I put my heart into God's hands and fully trusted him, he helped me realize early on that Joseph was the first "step-parent"...loving Mary with all his heart and opening himself to love a child that wasn't his own...wasn't his blood. I've tried to do the same. My heart and my life are filled with so much joy for everything God has provided me and my family and I praise Him every day for blessing me with such special gifts...three gifts, that is.

So, fast forward several years and I found out that I might not have been able to have children of my own. Which again proves that God knows what you need and when you need it! I thank him every day for my "heart children" because I don't know if I could have handled two or three miscarriages before finding out I couldn't carry a child full term without help.

Heavenly Father, thank you for wanting the best for me! It was hard for me to understand your timeline for my life, but when I did and turned it all over to you; my life became so much richer! My season for love had not come yet and if I had rushed that, I would have missed the best things in my life! Thank you for loving me! Amen.

Are you an "I want it now" person?

Does it scare you to think that God is in control of your life and you're not?

What is something that you have been praying for that you just can't seem to let go of?

What can you do to just let it go?

## Daily Devotion

Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>

By Spencer Gargus



*"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."*

Romans 12:1 NASB

Here we see Paul pleading with the readers and with us to become a "sacrifice" in order to please God. As we apply this to other scriptures and God's love, this slides into the framework God has created and shows us that submitting ourselves as a sacrifice honors and glorifies him; the ultimate reason we were created from the beginning. That is what it is ALL about.

Many times I notice today's definition of "sacrifice" altering the way we see this verse and our relationship with Christ. We tend to see sacrifices as short-term setbacks in which we begrudgingly give up things for an experience, persons or product, forget and move on with our lives. But to learn the true context of the word "sacrifice" here, we have to go back to Biblical times.

Old Testament priests would sacrifice only the purest and healthiest animals, burning them and submitting their best to God, in order to please Him. This is KEY because I believe this burning the sacrifice shows exactly it means for Christians to sacrifice today.

In science, there are two types of changes: physical and chemical. A physical change does not cause the substance to be fundamentally different, such as the freezing of water. A chemical change changes reactants into products, creating an entirely new compound. When priests sacrificed and burned an animal, they essentially took its life and offered that to God, creating a chemical change. It was never the same again.

Just like this, we can apply it to our lives now to grasp how we can sacrifice ourselves and live out our "spiritual service of worship." A ram was not sacrificed and then afterward simply walked home and went back to being a ram; it was chemically changed, it was a different thing altogether. In this same way, when we commit ourselves to be a sacrifice to God, we offer the best we have to give for the one who gave his best for all of us. BUT then, we need to undergo a Christ-fueled transformation so powerful that it changes the makeup of our entire mindset, so that this offering of ourselves has changed us into a new being. This sacrifice should change the way we see, hear, and do all things, now focusing them on God, not ourselves or this world.

Lord, thank You for Your sacrifices given for me. Help me to see past the offerings of this world as I offer my life and myself as a living and holy sacrifice to you on a continual basis. Help me to focus on You first in every situation as I offer myself in my spiritual service of worshipping you. Help me understand that I was created be a sacrifice for Your Glory. Thank you God that because of You, I will never be the same again.

What, if anything, is holding you back from committing yourself fully to be a sacrifice to Christ?

Are you glorifying Him in every aspect of your life, and letting the world see how his transforming love creates new beings?

How can you better devote yourself to this spiritual transformation in order to accept your calling and fully Glorify Him?

## Daily Devotion

Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>

By Amanda Logan Wilson



*"This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24*

Do you ever think, "I wish this day was over. This is the worst day ever!"? Or perhaps, "I can't wait for tomorrow", or next week, or the next season of life? Our days can become busy, frustrating, difficult or just boring with routine. Sometimes it may seem that the weight of our burdens, fears, illness or responsibility are smothering us and we can't see a light at the end. Sometimes it is difficult to smile at a new day.

This scripture reminds us that each day is from God. We already have victory through Him each day. The seriousness of our situation may be nothing to smile about, but knowing our Heavenly Father, The King of Kings, is on our side is definitely a reason to rejoice and be glad. Every day is another day we can share God's love and his joy. Shouldn't we be grateful to have a personal relationship with Him? To have another day in His presence? Another day to spend with family and friends? We can allow the joy of the Lord to pour through us, changing our attitudes from dread to expectation.

When we begin our day with prayer, with rejoicing and thankfulness, and trust in the Lord with all of our heart, this opens opportunities for Him to move and work on our behalf. His peace can overwhelm us as His joy flows through our hearts and minds. I challenge each of us to face each new day with expectation and confidence, knowing this is a day the Lord has made. Rejoice in Him! Be glad that we have another opportunity to receive the blessings He has in store. When we find ourselves fretting over what may happen on a far off tomorrow, our joy and comfort begins to fade. If we start each day by turning to God and casting our cares upon Him, we allow room for His joy and His blessings.

Father God, thank you for the reminder that you hold each day! Thank you for sharing your joy with me. Help me to cherish each day and stop wishing them away. Open my eyes to see the blessings and opportunities you provide each day. I want to rejoice and be glad! Remind me of this in my moments of doubt and worry. Help me be the person you created me to be, to show your love and your joy to others each day. Amen.

Where is your attitude today? Are you rejoicing in the Lord or wishing your day away?

How is rejoicing in the Lord different than just having a positive attitude?

What can you do to remind yourself to start your day with gladness?

What do you have to be glad about today?

## Daily Devotion

Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

By Beth Bolton



*Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.*

I Corinthians 16:1-2 NIV

When my children were little my father-in-law, their granddaddy, would tell them stories. At the end of each story he would say "I always minded my mommy when I was a little boy, do you always mind your mommy?" Paul the author of I Corinthians is telling all of us as Christians to do a specific thing with our money. If we as Christians would always "mind our Lord" oh what a different world we would live in. The Bible was given to us by God as a guide for us. If we could do all the things it instructs us to do, life would go so much smoother.

I think about our entire church family setting aside according to their income. Do you think our church would need anything? Do you think we would have more money than we even needed?

Lord, thank You for giving me talents that have enabled me to have a good job and make a good income. All good things come from You, and my job is a good thing. I know that I am nothing without You, and I owe You everything. But You ask for only a small portion of the money I make. Thank You for the ultimate sacrifice that You gave in Your cruel and unjust death.

What is God asking us to do?

What is God asking you to do?

## Daily Devotion

Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>

By Joel & Rita Dobbs



*To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more. His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more. His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you. His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 25:15-30 NIV

A talent was not a coin but a measure of weight. The most common metal measured in talents was silver. A talent of silver was worth a lot of money, about 15 years' wages for an average laborer. Don't miss the fact that in this story the one who had the least still had a lot! That is true for each of us.

One of the greatest tragedies in life is to see someone waste their gifts. While in college, Joel had a close friend who was, to put it mildly, brilliant. I have no idea what his IQ was but with minimal study he could make B's in the most complex courses. So he became a famous scientist, a great surgeon, a brilliant professor? No. The last contact I had with him he was tending bar in a hotel. Now there is nothing wrong with tending bar unless you have the intellectual gifts that this guy had. He squandered his talents. He not only got no return, he got a negative return. That is truly a tragedy.

Be faithful with whatever God has given you. When we use what God has given us in His service, whether spiritual gifts or material wealth, he can multiply it for His glory (remember the loaves and fishes!). It isn't how much we have; it is how faithful we are with what we have been given. If we are faithful, we can trust God to multiply the value of our gifts for His purposes.

Father God, help us to see everything you have given us through the lens of gratitude and abundance. Help us to be faithful stewards of whatever "talents" you have entrusted to us trusting that you will multiply and use them for Your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Are you hiding your talents in the ground? How and why are you doing this?

What are you afraid of and what steps do you need to take to confront this fear? Ask God to help.



# Daily Devotion

Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>

By David Black



*So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Matthew 6:31-34 NIV

God, being my heavenly Father, wants me to understand that He is here for me and will take care of my every need. If I will seek Him first and seek Him daily, put my total trust in Him, make Him the top priority in my life, there will never be any need to worry. I must take one day at a time, focus only on today, allow God to do what He does best....be in total control. Earthly fathers, including myself, we will do anything to take care of our families. If I will just have the faith of a child, and trust in my heavenly Father, just like my children trust that I will take care of any need they have, He will provide.

This scripture makes me think of a time a few years ago when I was off work for a year, due to multiple knee surgeries. Pam and I talked and decided that even though I was only going to be receiving about 70% of my pay, and even though 100% of the bills would still be coming in, we were determined to still tithe our normal percentage. We were determined not to worry, that God was in control. That all sounded well and good for the first couple of months, then it started getting a little tight. So I started looking into what bills I could possibly eliminate, and I thought about how our house was getting close to being paid off, but we were still paying insurance premiums the same as when the house was originally purchased. So I called up the insurance company and proceeded to let them know that we no longer needed their services and asked the lady to cancel our policy, and she placed me on hold to get the paper work. While waiting I looked over our policy and I noticed a website, as I continued to wait on her to return, I got online and looked up our account. When she returned, I asked her why are there two different policy numbers? I assumed one life policy for me and one for Pam. She said, well you have a life policy on you, and a disability policy on you. My reply was, "You mean that one policy is not a life policy on me and one on my wife?" She said no, both on you, one life, and one disability....after picking up the phone, I said, well let's kick that baby in. So for the next 10 months, we paid nothing toward our house payment. Needless to say, we never missed paying our regular tithe either.

God honored our original decision that we made to honor Him, by putting Him first, by committing to tithe, as we are called to do. I still believe we originally signed up for two life policies, but somehow in our time of need, we had exactly what we needed. If we will seek Him first, God will always provide in our time of need...God is good!

Father God, I thank you for who you are to me and my family. First, You are our heavenly Father that loves us more than we can ever know. You are always watching out for us, just like we watch out for our own children, as their earthly father. I ask that You always give me the strength to trust in You, even during the times that the enemy tries to make me doubt, or the times that life seems so over whelming that I throw up my hands and cry out for You to step in, knowing that we can't do it anymore unless You make it ok. I ask that when the enemy thinks of me and my family, he thinks of us like he did of Job in Job 1:8 & 10, when You



asked, "Have you considered my servant Job"? and the enemy's reply was....<sup>1</sup>"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has"? That is how I feel when I think of how you love, protect and provide for me and my family....thank you Father, I love you, your servant, David.

I challenge you to seek God first...prepare for your day by spending the first with our Father.

I challenge you also, to trust and believe that He will protect and provide for you, and do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.