

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

AUGUST 5 - 9, 2019



# MONDAY

## John 13:35 – Opportunities

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**“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” —John 13:35**

We'll be given many opportunities to love God and love our neighbors. How well we follow God's commandments will be part of our legacy of faith. Our actions will also stand as proof of the One to whom we belong, Jesus. James 2:26 says, *“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”*

Have you been out to lunch or dinner with a friend and chosen not to pray before the meal as you usually would? Maybe you weren't sure where they were at with their faith, or they simply weren't believers. It is easy to justify our thinking that we didn't want to offend our friend or make them “uncomfortable”—when really we are the ones who are uncomfortable.

How do we live boldly, as unashamed disciples of Christ? What does that look like? What if before we pray over a meal while out at a restaurant, we say to our server, “I'm about to thank God for my meal, is there anything I can pray for you?” What kind of door would open or relationship built beyond patron/server? An invitation to church or better yet ... Jesus?

Another opportunity that may rock some of us out of our comfort zones is coming face to face with the homeless in our cities. How do you respond to serving the least of these? Do you give them eye contact, smile, or acknowledge them? If not we the church— then who?

Consider packing a few one-gallon Ziplock bags with water, food, and other essentials to keep in your car to hand out to the homeless. As you come across those in need, ask them their names. Ask if you can pray for them. Consider inviting guests to Open Arms at Glenkirk, the opportunity to take a shower, have lunch, and get assistance.

Do not fear. Step out in faith. You will find yourself blessed immeasurably more than the one you are helping. It is God's economy. Matthew 25:40 says, *"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

## CHALLENGE

Wake each morning this week and ask God to give you opportunities to trust Jesus and love others. See who and what He places in your path today ... be ready to slow down enough to recognize the opportunity to partner with God to build the kingdom.

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN

Pray for Chris and Christine Kernaghan, who work with Cru San Francisco, leading the ministry to the area's 100,000 college students. They seek to reach out to college students with the Good News of Jesus, build them up to become lifelong disciples, and send them into the world to live in their families and communities.

# TUESDAY

## James 1:2-4 – The Adventure

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**“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” —James 1:2-4**

When I was younger, I didn't want to become a “Christian” because I thought they were boring. Seriously. Then at the age of 22, I was a full-blown “seeker” with lots of questions about faith. Once I understood the Gospel and the Holy Spirit got a hold of my heart, the rest has been an adventure! This epic journey is thrilling and full, exciting and deep, full of God's love and grace.

Along the journey tough things happen, as Jesus warns us in John 16:33: *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

In our troubles, Jesus proves Himself faithful again and again. It is always through difficult circumstances when I need God more than ever, and when I feel His strength, grace and presence the strongest. Through rough seasons, I have seen God's loving and caring fingerprints upon me. James 1:2-4 is absolute Truth. I don't prefer difficulties, but if I'm faced with one, I know my relationship with the Lord will deepen, and for that I am grateful. During adversity our faith roots grow, anchoring us for the storm. When the storm blows over, we are left with depth, stability, and a faith like never before—if we choose to trust in the Lord and receive His peace.

A research experiment was conducted with trees in a controlled environment. They were planted in a huge dome structure, where no wind or adverse weather could hinder the trees from growing. The results were surprising. Instead of flourishing in these pristine conditions, the trees fell over and died. The conclusion was that due to the lack of adverse pressure from winds and weather, the trees' roots stayed shallow. Normal conditions cause root systems to anchor and dive deep to stabilize, but when adverse conditions are removed, weakness becomes apparent and there is a failure to thrive.

As disciples of Christ, we will face storms in this life. Embrace what comes your way as an opportunity to grow in faith, becoming refined as a strongly anchored disciple. God doesn't let our challenges occur without the opportunity to share our lessons learned with others. We may be called out of our comfort zone to start a new ministry, serve where we have compassion, or help those in the same situation that we were once in. It's all part of the great adventure!

## QUESTIONS

Recall God's faithfulness to you on your epic journey. How can you use a lesson learned from an adventure or difficulty while giving service to the Lord?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN

Pray for a fledgling small group at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Chris and Christine have found a dozen students who desire to follow Jesus together and share Him with their peers, but busyness complicates their ability to gather.

# WEDNESDAY

## John 17:3 – Knowing God

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**“Now this is eternal life: that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.” —John 17:3**

Do you consider yourself a disciple of Jesus? A student, apprentice, and follower of Jesus? Not just a “Christian,” but one who is committed to live a life fully surrendered to learning who God is and who He called you to be?

In his book, *Eternity Is Now in Session*, John Ortberg talks about many Christians getting by with the “minimum entrance requirements” to enter heaven—a simple prayer and acknowledgement of Jesus, then no further transformation or growth. Ortberg explains, “The kind of ‘knowing God’ that is eternal life is an interactive relationship where I experience God’s presence and favor and power in my real life on this earth. To know God is to live in a rich, moment-by-moment, gratitude-soaked, participatory life together.”

We don’t have to wait till we get to heaven to live in this grace-filled bond of friendship with God. It is not some final relationship we enjoy once we die. Jesus brought His kingdom to earth and by His grace we have the privilege of living eternally right now. According to Ortberg, “Eternal life in the individual does not begin after death, but at the point where God touches the individual with redeeming grace and draws them into a life interactive with Himself and His kingdom.”

Does this sound like your relationship with God? Is there a personal relationship of mind, will and feeling? As you get to know God, you will better be able to discern His voice, will and ways. You will be able to see with His eyes and hear with His ears.

In his book, *Knowing God*, J. I. Packer gives an illustration of what it means to know God. “Knowing God is a relationship calculated to thrill a person’s heart.” Packard goes on to say, “The action of God in taking Joseph from prison to become Pharaoh’s prime minister is a picture of what He does to every Christian: from being Satan’s prisoner, you find yourself transferred to a position of trust in the service of God. At once life is transformed.”

## QUESTIONS

What have you learned new about God this week? Are you finding yourself transforming, growing and changing into the person God created you to be? If not, how can that change?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN

Pray for this fall’s incoming freshman class at San Francisco State University, as Chris and Christine reach out to them in new ways, with the hope of providing a safe landing pad and authentic community.

# THURSDAY

## Romans 15:13 – Hope

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**“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” —Romans 15:13**

Hope is powerful. It is what keeps us focused and keeps us going. We all hope for something—a job, the love of our life, a baby, a special dream trip, healed relationships, an education.

About ten years ago, our family’s hope was buying a house. We were ready to move back to Glendora, as our kids would be enrolled in three different schools that year: elementary, middle, and high school. Our family prayed as we put in offers to buy a house ... nothing worked out. We revisited a perfect house that we once saw two years prior, but it had been out of our price range. It sat on the old Glenkirk Church property—the same place I first raised my hand in junior high to know Jesus more. It was the only church that felt like home.

The builder/owner was willing to negotiate the price at this point. We continued to pray that we could move in before school started. By God’s grace, we bought that house we now call home. We knew it was a gift, orchestrated from God and to be used for ministry, small group gatherings, and His purposes. We moved in two days before school started. I am still in awe that the place which I called my first church home and where I learned about Jesus, I now call my family home.



God is so good to our hearts. He is the God of hope. We can trust in Him for His perfect timing, plan and purpose. Isaiah 55:9 says, “As the heavens are *higher than the earth*, so are *My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.*” We serve a big God who can handle all of our hopes, dreams, thoughts, fears and concerns. He knows each one of His own, including the number of hairs on our head.

Romans 15:13 says that as we trust in God, turning over our hopes to Him, we can experience joy and peace. Giving over to God what we are shouldering and letting the Creator of heaven and earth take control, we receive joy and peace. God is always faithful to answer in His own timing and do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

## QUESTIONS

What hopes, dreams or concerns are on your heart? Are you willing to really trust God and experience joy and peace?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN

Pray for the young military veterans involved with Chris and Christine at City College of San Francisco, SFSU, and Academy of Art University. Many people deal with depression and need help reintegrating into civilian life.

# FRIDAY

## Hebrews 4:12 – Conviction Through the Word of God

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***“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.” —Hebrews 4:12 NLT***

Has a Scripture passage jumped off the page and cut you to your core? Maybe you had been on a slippery slope, veering off a bit, and God’s Word reached out and grabbed your attention like never before. The truth is that it’s alive and active, able to powerfully expose us and correct us.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

We are being transformed, which means getting rid of the old and becoming new. If we are still living in ways that are not pleasing to God or are destructive to us or others, God will use His Word to convict us. God convicts our hearts in a gentle and loving way that encourages us to change. He nudges us back to continue our race to the finish line. Yet, when you feel condemned, that is the work of the enemy, not of God. Romans 8:1-2 says, *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”*

What needs transforming in you? To set apart Sundays as the Sabbath Day—a day of rest, free of homework and chores—to spend time with God? Or is it your language—harsh or intense words, cussing, gossip or angry responses? Have you built idols—things that draw you away from God or things that you focus far too much attention on? Think about what just struck a chord in you.

This will look different for everyone, and it will change for you during each stage of your life. That's why we are not done transforming until God brings us home to heaven. God meets you right where you are, but He loves you too much to have you stay the same.

## QUESTIONS

Do you read God's Word daily, confess your sins to God, and ask for forgiveness and help in not being caught in that sin? If you are not sure if there is a sin you need to turn from, ask God to show you. He is loving and full of grace, and will gently transform you. He will forgive you, making you clean and blameless in His sight.

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN

Pray that Chris and Christine might continue to grow significant relationships with local churches. Their desire is for their students to be more deeply rooted in the local church and also to train congregants how to disciple/mentor this generation.

## Sources

- John Ortberg, *Eternity Is Now in Session*, Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2018.
- J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

