



▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

Saturday/Sunday, 1/26-27/19

“Self”

Galatians 2:19-2

For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Family Activity: It is part of our human nature and even part of our survival to think of ourselves first. Being in a relationship with God means that we need to take time to put God first. Jesus told us that the most important commandments were loving God and loving those around us. This week, see how many different ways you can show love to God and those around you. It might be something simple like letting someone go in front of you, or it could mean planning ways to help others.

Discuss: How does it feel to think of others first?
What is difficult about trying to be selfless?
What did you learn from this?
How did you experience God through loving others?

Monday, 1/28/19

“Building Up”

Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

- In our society, we have many venues where we are invited to share our opinions without even needing to personally see the impact that it makes on others. It can be easy to feed into negativity and “unwholesome talk.” How have you seen your spiritual life affected by this? How do you see this impact others?
- This scripture challenges us to consider how we communicate. What would it look like if you asked yourself these questions before you speak (or type) today?
 - Is this helpful?
 - Does this build them up?
 - Is this something they need?
 - Does everyone benefit from hearing this?

Prayer: Holy God, we thank you for the gift of this day. We ask for you to guide our conversations so that our words may be uplifting and pleasing to you. Help us to see your face in the faces of everyone we encounter today. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

Tuesday, 1/29/19

“The Good of Others”

I Corinthians 10:24

No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

- Putting our own wants and needs ahead of others is often celebrated and encouraged in our culture. This week in worship, we talked about how that can result in making ourselves idols. In what ways have you personally struggled with this?
- In the area where you have the most influence, how could you work to make good for others? Who would you need to be intentional about hearing from so that you could seek out the good of others?

Prayer: Dear God, we thank you for the gift of this day. Help us to be open to seeing others around us in a new way. Help the needs of others be on our minds more than our own needs and give us the strength to work for the good of others today and every day. In the name of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.

Wednesday, 1/30/19

“An Acting Witness”

I Corinthians 9:19

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

- The seminary that I attended was surrounded by the campus of Northwestern University. We planned on a cold winter day to provide hot chocolate and cookies to students passing by. I was astonished at how many students asked us what we were selling or completely avoided us because they were suspicious. They simply couldn't believe we would offer them something for nothing in return: they assumed kindness was conditional. When have you received unconditional kindness? When have you been able to offer unconditional kindness?
- This scripture calls our attention to those who do not yet have a relationship with God and reminds us that our actions speak louder than words. How can you help make yourself available to be a witness to God's love through your actions? Who do you know that needs that witness today?

Prayer: Kind and loving God, we thank you for the gift of this day. We thank you for those whose actions have shown us your kindness and love. We pray today for those who do not yet have a relationship with you. Help us to witness to them through our actions and put us in the places where we can make an impact for you. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Thursday, 1/31/19

“Caution”

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God — having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

- This passage from Paul's letter to Timothy could unfortunately just as easily have been written about people today. Take a minute to read this list again. If you take Paul's instructions as a word of caution, who would you need to have “nothing to do with”?
- Read a different way, this list can be a word of warning in our own lives. Which of the above descriptions is convicting for you today?

Prayer: Holy God, we thank you for the gift of this day. We ask for your healing and forgiveness in our lives. Help us as we grow in our faith and draw us closer in relationship with you. May we love as you have loved us and forgive as you have forgiven us. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Friday, 2/1/19

“Selfless”

John 15:9-17

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit — fruit that will last — and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.

- The ultimate act of selflessness is Jesus dying on the cross and overcoming death so that we may have eternal life. How does this act of love and selflessness impact you personally? How does this reality affect how you live out your faith?
- What does it mean for you to love others as God loves you? How could you live out Jesus' command to love others today?

Prayer: Loving God, we thank you for the gift of this day. We thank you that your love has granted us eternal life. Help us to fulfill Jesus's command to love others. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that your love and peace and grace may be overflowing. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

*This week's devotional was written by
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