

## Devotional Notes 2022

1/6/22

### Dealing with Disagreement

Colossians 3:12-14

**12** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Love and unity are constant themes throughout the New Testament, and Paul highlights both concepts in Colossians. In 3:11, Paul pointed out how believers in Jesus enjoy an unprecedented unity. This is a radical unity that totally disregards traditional barriers of class and ethnic division. Instead, "Christ is all, and is in all." Such unity is to live itself out in a radically different way: in "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (v. 12). Never has this counsel been more appropriate than today. Instead of rancorous disagreement, we're to "bear with each other" (v. 13). This implies a patient understanding of others that grows out of an awareness that we're not without fault either. Such self-awareness enables us to empathize with those with whom we disagree. Paul concludes: "Over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (v. 14).

1/11/22

John 16:25-33

Only after He'd risen from the dead and sent His Spirit would they understand the self-sacrificing goodness of God. Jesus exposed the accusing lies of Satan (v. 11), overcame with love the worst of our sins, and conquered death by showing His power over the grave.

1/23/22

Acts 2:32-41

Oh, the irony of grace. The people could only be forgiven because of Christ's death—a death they were responsible for. How gracious and powerful is God! He's used humanity's greatest sin to accomplish our salvation. If God has already done this with the sin of crucifying Jesus, we may assume there's nothing He can't turn into something good. Trust the One who "in all things . . . works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28).

2/13/22

Heb 6:9-12

his purpose was to urge his readers to never slide back into something less than a living demonstration of the Spirit of God. Whether or not our work is recognized or rewarded by the people around us, God is faithful. He'll never forget us.

2/19/22

Isaiah 26:3

Perfect peace means that no matter how many turns life takes, we can remain calm, assured that God will be with us through our problems and trials. He's the "Rock eternal" (v. 4)—the ultimate "spot" to fix our eyes on—because His promises never change. I'm

2/20/22

1Thes 5:12-24

It is a well-known fact that in 1 Thessalonians every chapter ends with a reference to the second coming. See 1:10; 2:19, 20; 3:11–13; 4:13–18; 5:23, 24." We must not lose sight of the day when Jesus will return and rule as the righteous Judge. Reading and following 1 Thessalonians will help prepare us for that day.

2/21/22

Exodus 4:10-15

Moses offered several objections to being the one chosen to lead Israel out of Egypt: he was unworthy (Exodus 3:11), had inadequate knowledge of God (v. 13), lacked any special powers (4:1), and had a speech impediment (v. 10). In each case, God responded by pointing Moses to a deeper understanding of God rather than focusing on himself. For it's ultimately God's presence and power that qualifies people (3:12), not their personal strengths and weaknesses.

2/25/22

Prob 1:2-7

The wisdom spoken of in the book of Proverbs is multi-faceted, so much so that in Proverbs 1:2–7 (which introduces the book) seven terms are used to reflect its breadth and brilliance: insight (v. 2)—the ability to see between issues; prudent behavior (v. 3)—wise dealing; prudence (v. 4)—good judgment or good sense; knowledge (vv. 4, 7); discretion (v. 4)—the ability to plan ahead and plot a course of action with foresight; learning and guidance (v. 5).

2/27/22 Deacon of church today.

3/5/22

PS 32

It's dangerous to assume that physical affliction is a sign of God's judgment (see the book of Job), but the biblical poets knew well that sin wears us out emotionally and physically. A failure to repent will have an adverse effect on our spiritual and physical health. Confession is good for the soul and for our entire being.

3/13/22

Colossians 3:12-15

**12** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

**15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:5–9

Now, as God's "chosen people" (v. 12), we're to "clothe" ourselves in a completely different lifestyle—one marked by Christlike qualities. **When we react to life's irritations and injustices with the grace and peace of the Spirit of Jesus, the world will see the difference.**

3/27/22

1 Peter 5:6-10, James 4:6–7, 10

Most scholars believe 1 Peter 5:6–11 represents an early Christian tradition of encouraging humility because of the presence of Satan. This idea is underscored by the fact that verses 6–9 show a striking similarity to James 4:6–7, 10. When the end of 1 Peter 5:5 is read along with verse 6, the similarities are even more evident. This shows that the idea of being humble and submitting to God when we're confronted by our enemy was common in early Christianity.

4/6/22

James 1:22-25

So James' command in 1:22 would literally read: "Be, and continue to be, doers of the word and not merely hearers, deceiving yourselves." James is emphasizing that actions guided by the Scriptures and the enabling of the Spirit are to define the believer in Jesus.

4/11

Matthew

Matthew's gospel, written primarily to a Jewish audience, is built around Jesus' five major teaching discourses (chs. 5–7, 10, 13, 18–20, 24–25).

4/14

John 13:21-32

When it seems as though the darkness is winning, we can recall that God faced His dark night and defeated it. He walks with us. It won't always be night.

4/18

1 Peter 2:11-21

Heavenly Father, help me to continue to honor You in my response to those in authority despite the difficult situations I may face. Help me to live each day in a way that glorifies You.

- still do my job to the best of my ability.
- Maintaining integrity in a tough work situation isn't easy. But Peter gives us a reason to continue doing good: "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God" (v. 12). Additionally, this helps us set a godly example for other believers who are watching. When we submit to authority, we have an opportunity to give others reason to follow and glorify God.

Encouraging believers in Jesus living in an unbelieving and hostile world, Peter exhorted them to live godly lives—to submit to authorities, respect everyone, love fellow believers, fear God, do good works, and persevere when unjustly treated. We're called to do good and to follow Christ's example in enduring suffering. Paul made similar calls to live such God-honoring lives in a pagan world in Romans 13:12–14; Philippians 2:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:9–12; and Titus 2:7–8; 3:8, 14. His instructions for the slave-master relationship in Ephesians 6:5–8; Colossians 3:22–24; 1 Timothy 6:1–3; and Titus 2:9–10 would have resonated with Peter's audience (1 Peter 2:18–21)

5/3

Psalms 62

David uses four different words in Psalm 62 to describe God's protective power: rock, salvation, fortress, and refuge. While these words all evoke the idea of defense and deliverance, their specific meanings create a much fuller picture. The main meaning of the Hebrew word *tsur*, translated "rock," is that of a rocky wall or cliff, a place that's difficult to access. The word for salvation is *yeshuah*. Jesus (*Iēsous* in Greek, *Yeshua* in Hebrew) means "the Lord is salvation" (see Matthew 1:21). While *yeshuah* is most often translated "salvation," it can also be translated "deliverance," which makes God the one who brings us out of threats, which, for the psalmist, were both physical and spiritual. "Fortress" translates the word *misgav* and refers to a place of retreat; God offers us a safe place when trouble threatens. Finally, *machseh* is translated "refuge" and refers to a place of hope and trust.

5/6

Romans 3:22-31

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

5/8

Romans 5 **Faith Brings Joy**

21 So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**God's gracious gift, gift of forgiveness, gift of righteousness, brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.**

For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins.

6/2

Ephesians 4: 29-32

As believers in Jesus, Paul told us we're to live differently from nonbelievers. Our lives are to be holy—set apart and devoted to God (Ephesians 4:20–24). Our speech is to be characterized by words that are truthful and that help, edify, build up, encourage, and benefit others (vv. 25, 29). Through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, we'll put away unwholesome and abusive language, along with bitter, angry, harsh, slanderous, or malicious words (vv. 29–31). How we forgive others is the defining virtue of believers in Jesus. We're to forgive as God has forgiven us (v. 32; Colossians 3:13). The evidence that we're forgiven by the Father is when we're willing to forgive others, for the forgiven believer in Jesus is a forgiving person (Matthew 6:12, 14–15; 18:21–35; Luke 7:36–50).

6/24/22

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Paul divided the world into two groups: those who consider the cross “foolishness” and those who view it as the “power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18). What is “the message of the cross”? Jesus, an innocent man, willingly suffered crucifixion for crimes He didn’t commit to pay the price for our sins—and then rose again. All who turn to Him in sorrow for their wrongdoings will live eternally with Him. That’s the “power of God”!

7/4

Matthew 5:11-12

God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

7/16

1 Corinthians 13

While English gives us only one word for love, the Greek language uses several words. **Eros** expresses romantic or sexual love; **storgē** speaks of family love, as in the love of a parent for a child; **phileō** describes brotherly or friendship love; and **agapē** describes the highest form of love, a love that sacrifices itself for the one loved. This is the word frequently used in the New Testament to describe God’s love, most notably in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.”

8/2

Proverbs 15:31-33

In the book of Proverbs, the wise are the righteous who obey God and live according to the Scriptures (15:31; see 2:20; 9:9; 10:8). The fool, on the other hand, despises His instructions (1:7; 2:12–15; 10:23; see Psalm 14:1). Solomon contrasted the attitudes, actions, and words of the wise and the foolish (primarily in Proverbs 10:1–15:33). Proverbs 15 describes a godly person as one who is discerning (v. 21), seeks godly counsel (v. 22), speaks graciously (v. 23), lives cautiously (v. 24), and shows humility (v. 25). The righteous are pure in heart (v. 26), honest (v. 27), self-controlled (v. 28), prayerful (v. 29), joyful (v. 30), teachable (vv. 31–32), and fear God (v. 33). The imperative for such a God-honoring life is stated in Proverbs 1:7 and again in 9:10: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

8/7

Isaiah 40:31

but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.

8/30

Matthew 5:13-16

Ponder for a moment the connection between being the salt and light in Matthew 5:13–16 and the Beatitudes in the previous section (vv. 3–12). In the Beatitudes, Jesus lists many of the characteristics that describe people who’ll benefit under the kingdom of heaven—the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, and so on. Immediately following these descriptions, Jesus speaks the words of today’s passage. So who is the salt of the earth and the light of the world? Taking these two sections together, we see that those who are salt and light are characterized by the attributes listed in the Beatitudes. Our good deeds—humility, meekness, showing mercy, righteousness, having a pure heart, peacemaking—are to be on display to those watching (vv. 3–10). These are the actions that point people to our good Father in heaven.

**Meekness** is an attribute of human nature and behavior that has been defined as an amalgam of righteousness, inner humility, and patience. Meekness has been contrasted with **humility** alone inasmuch as humility simply refers to an attitude towards oneself—a restraining of one’s own power so as to allow room for others—whereas meekness refers to the treatment of others.

10/7

Matt 6:25-33

In Matthew 6:25–33, Jesus used a principle for logic and interpretation sometimes called *qal wahomer*, Hebrew for “light and heavy.” **Qal wahomer** was one of the principles recorded by the revered Jewish teacher Hillel (who lived 110 bc–ad 10). The principle argues that if something is true for something less important (“light”), it’s also true for something more important (“heavy”).

Jesus used this principle to emphasize that if God cares for the birds, how much more must He care for His beloved children (v. 26). And if God “clothes” fields with breathtaking beauty, how much more must God care about clothing His children (v. 30). This principle strengthens Jesus’ emphasis on exchanging worry for trust (vv. 25–34). When we trust God, we can exchange our preoccupation on what’s less important for a devotion to what’s most important: His “kingdom and his righteousness” (v. 33).

11/2

In Psalm 19, using the poetic device of Hebrew parallelism, David listed six things “of the Lord” that guide us: the law, the statutes, the precepts, the commands, the fear, and the decrees. Most of these might appear to be synonymous, but each has a slightly different connotation. Each “of the Lord” phrase is followed by a statement describing its individual properties or benefits. In total, they refresh the soul, make us wise, give joy, give light, endure forever, and exhibit God’s righteousness (vv. 7–9). Most distinctive is “the fear of the Lord” (v. 9), which is a healthy and proper reverence for God.

12/5

Matthew 6: 6-13

There are no self-made believers in Jesus, and we’ll never graduate from His grace. Throughout our lives, may we always begin our day by taking the posture of dependence as we pray to “our Father in heaven”

12/13

1 Cor 15:50-58

As the apostle Paul concluded a masterful defense of bodily resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:54–55, he quoted from two Old Testament passages that highlight the defeat of death (see Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14). The word victory is used three times in 1 Corinthians 15:54–57. The “Lord Jesus Christ” gets the credit for victory over death (v. 57). The Greek word for “victory” is *nikos*. A popular shoe company uses a form of this word as their brand name (*nikē*). In Revelation, we see the word victorious (*niv*) from the same root (see 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 15:2; 21:7). Other translations use the terms *overcomes* or *conquers*. In Romans 8:37, the word appears in compound form and is translated “more than conquerors.” How assuring to know that the One who was victorious over death is our source of victory in all of life.