



## Devotional Guide for May 22-28, 2023

These devotions are prepared for you each week by Pastor Kevin to use for your own personal devotions with the Lord, and are designed to prepare you for the message next weekend.

### **Monday, May 22<sup>ND</sup> “Born of water and the Spirit”**

**Scripture: John 3:5-8**<sup>NIV</sup>

This is part of the teaching moment that Jesus had with the curious Pharisee named Nicodemus. Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus meant when He said that believers must be ‘born again,’ so Jesus explains that “no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit” (v.5). The best interpretation of “born of water and the Spirit” is the purifying and transforming new birth. Since Jesus expects Nicodemus to understand what he means (vs.7,10), the background to the concept can be found in previous passages. Water in the Old Testament is often symbolic with renewal or cleansing, and the most significant Bible connection that brings together water and spirit is Ezekiel 36:25–27, where water cleanses from impurity and the Spirit transforms hearts. So “born of water and the Spirit” signals a new birth that cleanses and transforms.

*Question: Do you know (or remember) the date of your baptism?*

### **Tuesday, May 23<sup>RD</sup> “The fruit of the Holy Spirit”**

**Scripture: Galatians 5:22-25**<sup>NIV</sup>

As a fruit-bearing tree naturally grows fruit, so a life controlled by God’s Holy Spirit naturally expresses the virtues of love, joy, peace, etc. After listing the fruits of the Spirit, Paul stated that “Against such things there is no law” (v.23). While no law can command or bring about such virtues, no rightful law will condemn the deeds to which they lead. A list directed and empowered by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will grow such fruit. Believers owe their new life to the Holy Spirit; bearing fruit for the Lord is a great gift to return to God!

*Question: How is your life displaying these fruits of the Holy Spirit?*

### **Wednesday, May 24<sup>TH</sup> “We have different gifts”**

**Scripture: Romans 12:4-8**<sup>NIV</sup>

While every believer is to exemplify the whole list of spiritual fruit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are varied from believer to believer. Those who are being transformed daily, through the renewing of their

minds, will refrain from thinking too highly of themselves, as they can recognize the different gifts of the Holy Spirit in others. Spiritual gifts are not given to benefit the individual believer, but rather, they are given for the purpose of edifying the entire church.

*Question: What spiritual gifts have you received from the Lord?*

*If you don’t know your gifts, consider taking an online spiritual gifts inventory: [www.logos.com/grow/spiritual-gifts-inventory-assessment/](http://www.logos.com/grow/spiritual-gifts-inventory-assessment/)*

### **Thursday, May 25<sup>TH</sup> “Your joy will be complete”**

**Scripture: Deuteronomy 16:10-17**<sup>NIV</sup>

The Israelites would celebrate the Festival of Weeks, when seven weeks had passed since the Passover. This period of 50 days after the first ripe sheaf of barley appeared marked the time of the wheat harvest. ‘Pentecost’ is the Greek name for this festival, meaning ‘fifty.’ The Israelites were all encouraged to rejoice—verse 11 mentions no less than seven categories of people. This is a festival of inclusion that will someday be fulfilled when there will be neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female in the future thanksgiving celebrations in the Christian church. As believers would celebrate this festival, they were told that the Lord “will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete” (v.15).

*Question: Have you thanked God for the ‘harvest’ of life’s blessings?*

### **Friday, May 26<sup>TH</sup> “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit”**

**Scripture: Acts 2:1-21**<sup>NIV</sup>

At the Festival of Weeks that took place just after the resurrection of Jesus—fifty days later—Pentecost was being celebrated in Jerusalem. The pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost marks the inauguration of the new covenant and the promised end-time coming of the Holy Spirit. Though the Holy Spirit was present in the old covenant, new covenant believers permanently possess the Spirit’s presence, who uniquely empowers them for witness. The miracle at Pentecost of speaking in other tongues (v.4) also reverses the events at the tower of Babel (see Genesis 11:1–9). Just as that event divided people into diverse nations and languages, so now the arrival of God’s salvation brings the nations of the world (v.5) together, to gather and form one new people of God. The hopeful result is what Peter proclaimed as he began explaining what was happening, that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (v.21).

*Question: How will you celebrate the birthday of the church (or how will you use your spiritual gifts to help edify and build up God’s church?)*

**Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023**

**8:30 and 10:45 am** (Livestream @10:45 am)

Scripture: **Deuteronomy 16:10-17**<sup>NIV</sup>, **Acts 2:1-21**<sup>NIV</sup>

Pastor’s message: **“Do You Love Birthdays?”**

