



First Things First

Daily Devotionals

Devotional Guide for August 21-27, 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, August 21ST "How beautiful are the feet"

Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-10 NIV

The prophet Isaiah foretells the coming of the Lord, to deliver the besieged city of Zion. The children of God are anticipating salvation, and this is the climax of that anticipation. In Isaiah's typical fashion, he graphically illustrates the scene: he depicts Israel as a city that an enemy army besieged. Yahweh and His armies have won a decisive victory (vs.9-10), and the "watchmen" on the walls (v.8) can see the herald coming with the "good news" of deliverance (v.7). Isaiah describes the feet of the messenger as beautiful. The apostle Paul would speak in part of his discourse about putting on the full armor of God as having "your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15).

Question: Are your feet beautiful... in the sense of being ready to go and share the good news of Jesus Christ?

Tuesday, August 22ND "He began to wash His disciples' feet"

Scripture: John 13:1-17 NIV

Jesus' stunning, humble act of washing His disciples' feet—an act of service usually reserved for the lowliest servant—displays His love, symbolizes spiritual cleansing, and models how Jesus' disciples should serve each other. Jesus adopts the dress and duty of the lowliest of menial servants. Most likely, the disciples would have been happy to wash Jesus' feet, but they could not conceive of washing each other's feet... let alone having their Master washing their feet. Yet Jesus is a servant, and His foot washing points to the purpose of His upcoming death on the cross: the exalted Messiah assumes the role of the despised servant to cleanse others.

Question: How would you feel having Jesus Himself wash your feet?

Wednesday, August 23RD "She wiped His feet with her hair"

Scripture: John 12:1-11 NIV

Here is one of the Scripture passages giving a glimpse at two sisters named Martha and Mary. As we will see in our Scripture lesson this Sunday from Luke's gospel, Martha is the sister who serves as the hostess for the home she shares with her sister Mary and her brother

Lazarus. As Mary anticipates the death of the true Passover lamb, Mary anoints Jesus, displaying sacrificial love for Him—the only kind of any value. She washed His feet with perfume and then wiped them off with her own hair. This gift of devotion was expensive, and it was also an extremely humble act.

Question: What is the most extravagant gift you can offer to the Lord?

Thursday, August 24TH "Lord, if You had been here..."

Scripture: John 11:17-35 NIV

After Jesus learns of the illness of His friend Lazarus—the brother of Martha and Mary—He waits two days before setting forth to the town of Bethany where they lived. Upon His arrival, Jesus learns that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days, irrevocably dead. If Jesus had left immediately, Lazarus would have been dead for only two days before Jesus arrived—not enough time to offset possible superstitions associated with resuscitations within the first three days of death. Jesus speaks with both sisters, beginning with Martha who came to Him first. She said, "If you had been here..." which was not a rebuke but rather words of grief and faith. She remained confident that Jesus would have healed Lazarus had He arrived in time. It was Martha who recognized that if Jesus is "the resurrection and the life" (v.25), then He is God's promised Messiah. Mary—the sister who most often sat at the feet of Jesus to learn—only expressed grief at the apparent late arrival of Jesus.

Question: Why do you believe that Jesus wept, as recorded in verse 35?

Friday, August 25TH "Mary sat at the Lord's feet"

Scripture: Luke 10:38-42 NIV

Just before this passage which introduces Martha and Mary, Jesus had shared the parable of the Good Samaritan. That parable dealt with the concept of loving your neighbor as yourself. This passage now deals with loving the Lord your God. Martha is divided among various concerns in this life, while Mary focuses on Jesus and His teaching. Martha's problem is not her preparations for her guests, but with her being "distracted" (v.40), and "worried and upset about many things" (v.41). The worries of this life prevent the Word of God from growing, and they prevent some people from seeking the Kingdom of God. Transcending cultural perceptions, women are now welcome as students of Jesus. These sisters are forever changed!

Question: Are you more of a Martha or a Mary in your journey of faith?

Sunday, August 27, 2023

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

John 11:17-35 NIV and **Luke 10:38-42** NIV

Pastor's message: **"A Tale of Two Sisters—
Martha and Mary"**

Theme: "Changed Forever—Women Who Met Jesus"



A Tale of Two Sisters:
Martha and Mary