



Devotional Guide for December 7-13, 2020

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, Dec. 7TH "She will give birth to a Son"

Scripture: Matthew 1:28-25 NIV

As we continue to reflect on the "Socks and Underwear" theme of receiving what we need vs what we want, Joseph and Mary, as an engaged couple, did not want the news of an unplanned pregnancy, let alone the unusual circumstances as to how it happened. After hearing of Mary's conversation with an angel, Joseph grows skeptical, until his own heavenly encounter. What they may not have wanted became what they—and all of us—most needed: a son named Jesus, a name which means "Yahweh is salvation!"

Question: How would you handle Mary's news if you were Joseph?

Tuesday, Dec. 8TH "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift"

Scripture: II Corinthians 9:6-15 NIV

Using a farming metaphor, Paul shows that the farmer who plants much seed reaps large crops, but small planting yields small harvests. This promise is also true in the spiritual realm. What is given for God's Kingdom is never lost; it is sown. Our giving is only a small imitation of God's own excellent generosity to us. That is especially true of the "indescribable gift" God shares with any who will receive it: the gift of His Son, accompanied by His grace and salvation.

Question: Have you reflected on the vastness of God's love for you?

Wednesday, Dec. 9TH "The world did not recognize Him"

Scripture: John 1:9-13 NIV

Yet as indescribable as the gift of Jesus truly is, there were those in His time—and in our time—that refuse to receive or even recognize the gift. Jesus was rejected "by His own" (v.11) people, those who had specifically received the prophecies of God about the Messiah. There are times, as Christmas comes around each year, that I consider the gifts that I have given and I have received around the family tree. Some gifts were cherished; some gifts were put into a pile to return as soon as humanly possible, not recognizing their worth. Don't make that same mistake with the gift of Jesus—do not seek to 'return' Him.

Question: Have you ever returned a gift you had been given?

Thursday, Dec. 10TH "The Lord will establish a house for you"

Scripture: II Samuel 7:11b-13 NIV

King David had a vision to build a Temple for the Lord, but God declined the offer. The Lord shares the gracious announcement that instead, He will establish a dynasty for David. Verse 12 speaks of the offspring of David, his son Solomon, who would not only become the next king but would be the one to build God's Temple. God returned, if you will, the gift of David to build a Temple with a gift to David... and to all of us... to establish and continue the covenant relationship with His people.

Question: Do you feel "at home" with God? Why or why not?

Friday, Dec. 11TH "The Word was God"

Scripture: John 1:1-3 NIV

Leaving His heavenly home, Jesus put on human flesh to bring us God's gift of the good news. Some might wonder how Jesus would respond if He had read John's words about Him; would He recoil and say, "Whoa! John, you've got Me all wrong! You have gone and embellished and mythologized Me to the point where I don't even recognize Myself!" Or, would Jesus nod approvingly and say, "Yes, I'm all that—and much more!" These first three verses are a deliberate echo of God's work on behalf of the world through Jesus at the time of creation. The Word was distinct from the Father, and yet WAS the same as the Father. The Word was God! John's gospel account of Jesus Christ recalls His existence before the world even began, the re-creation of men and women, the giving of His life in darkness where there is no hope, and the new life we can receive, as we find that light piercing the darkness around us. Who would want to ever return this incredible gift?!

Question: How do you wrap your mind around the concept of God as the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three and yet all One?

Sunday, December 13TH

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday 8:30 & 10:45am

Livestream @ 10:45am

II Samuel 7:11b-13 NIV, **John 1:1-3** NIV

Pastor's message: **"Gift Returned"**

Worship theme: "Socks and Underwear!"





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