



Devotional Guide for October 23-29, 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, October 23RD "Love the Lord our God"

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV

Here in the Old Testament, this passage is the foremost Hebrew text, known as the Shema (Hebrew 'šēma' meaning 'hear'), because of its initial word in Hebrew. This is one of the three texts in Orthodox Judaism to be recited every day. Jesus shared that this particular text was the most important commandment. In verse 4, the double use of the divine name (The Lord) is unique in the Old Testament. When Moses stated that "the Lord is one" (v.4), he was sharing that the Lord is not just God for Israel, but He is God for all. The Lord is one of a kind, absolutely unique, especially in light of the prevalent belief in many gods at that time. The Shema was so important that great strides were taken to make certain it was taught and known.

Question: How are you doing at fulfilling loving God as shared in v.5?

Tuesday, October 24TH "Love your neighbor as yourself"

Scripture: Leviticus 19:18 NIV

Just as yesterday's passage was quoted by the Lord in the gospel of Matthew, so was this verse from Leviticus. To bear a grudge was to retain or harbor vengeful feelings toward someone. Instead, Moses wrote that we should do what is good for others, just as naturally as you would love doing what is good for yourself. Whenever God was instructing the nation of Israel, and He wanted to stress just how important what He was teaching was, He would state "I am the Lord" to show the strength of His divine authority for life.

Question: How are you doing at fulfilling loving others as you do yourself?

Wednesday, October 25TH "The greatest commandment"

Scripture: Matthew 22:34-40 NIV

In Matthew 22:15-46, three groups of questioners attempt to trap Jesus in His own words, but He turns the tables on them. The final one to question Jesus—an expert in the law—naturally asks what the most important commandment is. Jesus replies with the double love command, which encapsulates the entire Hebrew Bible ("all the Law and the Prophets" v.40). Loving God with every aspect of our being

and loving our neighbor as we do ourselves forms the very core of Christian ethics. Love for God and love for all those made in His image form the backbone of everything God says to us in His Word. So it is that the apostle Paul would write, "Love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10).

Question: How do you feel this answer by Jesus addressed the question which the expert in the law attempted to use to trap Him?

Thursday, October 26TH "Let us love one another"

Scripture: I John 4:7-8 NIV

These two verses echo in my heart and mind from a simple song that I had learned in Sunday School as a child: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not (*clap, clap, clap*) knoweth not God, for God is love. Beloved, let us love one another!" Then we would sing out the name of the passage: "First John, Four, Seven and eight!" True love for other believers is evidence that a person knows God. Love is not God's only attribute. Love existed between the Father and the Son, before the creation of the world.

Question: Are you familiar with the children's song I quoted above? If so, why not sing it as a tribute to God's love for you?

Friday, October 27TH "This is love!"

Scripture: I John 4:9-12 NIV

To prove His love, God sent us Jesus "that we might live through Him" (v.9) and that He would be "an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (v.10). Such an expression of God's love for us should motivate us to love one another. The invisibility of God is an important theme in John's Gospel (John 1:18, 5:37, and 6:46). Believers who love one another demonstrate that the unseen God lives in them. The love of God we now experience, as a result of His living in us, completes His work in us, when we show love to one another.

Question: Do you appreciate God's love enough to share it with others?



Reformation Sunday, October 29, 2023

Fabulous Fifth Sunday Schedule:

- 9:00 am Sunday School
- 10:00 am Worship Service (one only)
- 11:00 am Church Potluck Dinner

I John 4:7-12 NIV, Matthew 22:34-40 NIV
Pastor's message: "Love"