



Devotional Guide for November 13-19, 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, November 13TH “His Word is in my heart like a fire”

Scripture: Jeremiah 20:9^{NIV}

The prophet Jeremiah had a difficult task: he had been appointed to deliver God’s Word to the kings and the Israelites. When he first was called, Jeremiah thought he would be part of a great movement that would bring an end to idolatry, cause people to respect God’s law, and end the troubles in the land of Judah. This was not to be his experience. Instead, if he preached, they hated him; if he refrained from preaching, he was miserable. Yet, he did not lose his faith. He felt compelled to speak the words God had given him; for if he did not, it felt like a fire burning within his bones.

Question: Have you ever felt compelled to speak and share something to someone, knowing it might not be received well? What did you do?

Tuesday, November 14TH “Compelled by the Spirit”

Scripture: Acts 20:22-24^{NIV}

God never promises Christians an easy life, and Paul often speaks of his willingness to suffer for Christ. His only goal is to finish the race, a metaphor Paul uses frequently. Back in college, I remember seeing a movie about the apostle Paul’s life. In one scene, as he prepared to leave for another town to preach God’s Word, he was warned by his colleagues that word had reached them that the Jewish officials in that town planned to stone him upon his arrival. When asked what he wanted to do, he smiled and replied, “I will pray... that the stones in that town are soft!”

Question: Have you ever felt compelled to do something for God that you did not know how it would turn out?

Wednesday, November 15TH “I am compelled to preach”

Scripture: I Corinthians 9:16^{NIV}

One of our top priorities should be enabling others to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though God has given us many blessings and rights, we should be willing to give them up, to help someone to know Christ. You can protect your reputation... or protect His. You have a choice. Jesus “made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness...

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:7–8). Our culture encourages us to stand up for ourselves and demand our rights, even at the expense of others. Yet Jesus and the New Testament writers repeatedly point to the joy we receive from humility and self-sacrifice.

Question: Why not consider giving up your right for free time, and then instead use that time to share with a new Christian a lesson you have learned recently in your journey of faith?

Thursday, November 16TH “I know your eagerness to help”

Scripture: II Corinthians 9:1-5^{NIV}

It might seem strange that Paul can first lift up the Macedonians as a model for the Corinthians to follow (8:1–5) and then the Corinthians as an example for the Macedonians to follow (9:2). We need to carefully distinguish between the Corinthians’ ready desire to give... and their actual readiness in having completed the collection. It was the Corinthians’ eagerness to participate in the collection, not their completion of it that stirred many of the Macedonians to act in faith with their giving. On the other hand, because the Macedonians did successfully complete what they enthusiastically began, under the stimulus of the Corinthian example, their exemplary action formed one ground for Paul’s appeal to the Corinthians to complete their contribution to the work of building God’s Kingdom.

Question: Would you consider yourself ‘eager’ to give to God’s work?

Friday, November 17TH “Christ’s love compels us”

Scripture: II Corinthians 5:14-21^{NIV}

Paul’s awareness of his accountability to Christ, and knowing Christ’s shining example of self-sacrificing devotion, motivates him in all his service. But serving Christ is not always an easy task. For some of you, the journey has been long... very long and stormy. In no way do I wish to minimize the difficulties that you have had to face along the way. It can be difficult to see the horizon in the midst of storms. Sometimes you might have the desire to just turn around and go the other way, rather than sharing the love of God with others. Yet let me encourage you—it’s worth it. You may be tempted to throw in the towel and walk away when life gets hard. When this impulse hits you, stop, relax, pray, and take that next step. Discover new faith and hope, and allow Christ’s love to compel you to serve Him as a grace-filled steward!

Question: How do you feel compelled to love as Christ calls us to love?

Next Sunday, November 19, 2023

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

II Corinthians 9:1-5^{NIV}, **II Corinthians 5:14-21**^{NIV}

Pastor’s message: **“Compelled to Love!”**

