

FIRST things FIRST

Daily Devotionals

December 1-7, 2025

Devotions are prepared for you to use in your Quiet Time with the Lord and are designed to prepare you for the sermon next Sunday.

Monday, Dec. 1 Prepare the Way

Scripture: Isaiah 40:3-5 and Matthew 3:1-12

Isaiah's message echoes John the Baptist long before he stood at the Jordan River. God often begins His work in the "wilderness". You will find God in the quiet, rough places within us where we finally stop long enough to listen. Preparing the way of the Lord is more than clearing life's clutter; it is opening ourselves to God's presence and direction. What rough places in my heart need smoothing? What barriers keep me from fully receiving Christ's guidance?

Prayer: Lord, help me prepare room for You.

Tuesday, Dec. 2 Turn and Live

Scripture: Ezekiel 18:30-32 and Matthew 3:1-12

God's call to repentance is never meant to shame us. It is an offer to truly live your life. Ezekiel reminds us that repentance is not simply feeling bad; it is turning toward the God who deeply desires our wholeness. Like John the Baptist's message, this is a call to a new beginning grounded in God's mercy. Reflect today on where God might be inviting you to turn around from something. Not doing it out of fear, but understanding that there is a better path.

Prayer: Gracious God, give me courage to turn away from whatever leads me from You.

Wednesday, Dec. 3 Bear Good Fruit

Scripture: Galatians 5:22-25 and Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist's challenge to "bear fruit worthy of repentance" finds its fulfillment in Paul's description of the Spirit's fruit. These are not qualities we produce, no matter how much we try to make them exist in our lives. The fruit will grow in us as we stay rooted in Christ. When our hearts are

changed, our lives naturally bear signs of that transformation. What fruit is growing in me? Where might God be pruning or planting something new?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, grow and strengthen Your fruit in me.

Thursday Dec. 4 A New Heart and a New Spirit

Scripture: Psalm 51:10-12 and Matthew 3:1-12

David's prayer mirrors the heart of John's message: transformation begins inside. True repentance isn't just correcting behavior. True repentance is asking God to do a deep work within ourselves. We come to God not with perfection but with openness, trusting that He can renew and restore what is broken. Today, offer God your heart—your whole heart—and let Him shape it anew.

Prayer: Restore me, O God.

Friday, Dec. 5 A Time to Wake Up

Scripture: Romans 13:11-12 and Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist called people to wake up spiritually, to recognize that God was doing something new in their midst. Paul gives a similar call: to shake off spiritual sleepiness and live as children of the light. Repentance is ultimately an awakening. It is a recognition that God's kingdom is near and our lives should reflect that truth. Where in your life might God be nudging you to wake up, pay attention, or make a change?

Prayer: Lord, awaken my soul.

Saturday, Dec. 6 Let Every Branch That Does Not Bear Fruit...

Scripture: John 15:1-5 and Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist spoke of trees being judged by their fruit; Jesus deepens the lesson by showing us the source of all true fruit—Himself. Repentance turns us back toward the Vine, restoring the connection that nourishes and strengthens us. Fruitfulness comes not from hoping, but from doing. Take a moment to consider: Am I staying connected to Christ, or trying to grow on my own strength?

Prayer: Jesus, help me abide in You.

Sunday, Dec. 7 ADVENT (PEACE) Signs and Stories

Worship at 10:00am

Matthew 3:1-12

by Pastor Clint Phillips